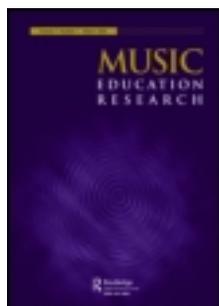


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Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Music Education Research

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cmue20>

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Published online: 23 May 2014.

To cite this article: Ornette Clennon & Carola Boehm (2014): Young Musicians for Heritage Project: can a music-based heritage project have a positive effect on well-being?, Music Education Research, DOI: [10.1080/14613808.2014.909395](https://doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2014.909395)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2014.909395>

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Young Musicians for Heritage Project: can a music-based heritage project have a positive effect on well-being?

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(Received 31 January 2013; accepted 24 March 2014)

This paper examines the intrinsic potential for well-being outcomes in a heritage-related music project. We look at how creative activities that are embedded in a community can serve to enhance the cohesion and well-being of communities through the work of its youth groups. The paper also examines the important roles of partnership working and peer mentoring and how they need the time and resources to be nurtured in order to ensure sustainability and self empowerment as long-term legacies of arts-based community well-being initiatives.

Keywords: arts; music; well-being; health; heritage; young people

Introduction

The Young Musicians for Heritage Project was initially set up by the Contemporary Arts Department at Manchester Metropolitan University to facilitate the exploration of Crewe's heritage by young people using music and music technology. However, it soon became apparent that the workshops needed to address the well-being of the young people as well as the creative and participatory aims of the project. We found that our project very soon located itself in the growing field of arts for health, which is informed by theories of well-being (Swindells et al. 2013) that suggest in different ways that participation in creative activities enhances life experiences. I will outline how the arts can enhance life experiences in my brief literature review of community arts for health. Elsewhere in the university, we discovered two large complex projects where they explicitly investigated the impact of participation in arts activities on health and well-being, the research process itself contained creative methods. These activities included film, theatre, collage making, clapping and laughter processes and bookmaking (Sixsmith and Kagan 2005; Kilroy et al. 2007). However, in order to draw out our well-being outcomes (in the discussion section I explore in more detail what is meant by well-being), our project had to rely on a loose (uncoded) form of grounded theory methodology (Corbin and Strauss 1990), to make sense of the enormous volume of data that was collected from the sessions over the course of the project. We feel that this project is very much the beginning of a research methodology that combines arts and creative methods with social science research (for more about some of the methodologies that comprise creative arts enquiry, see

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Kagan and Duggan 2011; Lawthom et al. 2011; Cole and Knowles 2008; Barrett and Bolt 2007).

As well as being a music and heritage project Young Musicians for Heritage Project very much came to represent:

people working together to express their needs, their hopes, their visions [...] About people being active and creative citizens and having fun together [...] being good for the health, well-being and self respect of individuals and the community. (Angus 1999, 17)

We found that although the well-being outcomes were initially coincidental to our principal creative aims, they were crucial to the project, because they allowed the creative activities to flourish. This meant that we had to continue to work closely with our principal partners to adjust the aims of the project so that they included an awareness and focus on well-being as well as the creative activities. We saw first-hand that community arts for health can be about improving health and well-being in its widest sense and are often focused on individual development, as we conducted many 'on the fly' one-to-one sessions. We also grew to appreciate that the Arts can also offer innovative and effective approaches for tackling social exclusion and strengthening communities (Policy Action Team 10 1999; New Opportunities Fund 2006) and therefore be relevant to national and local programmes to reduce health inequalities. However, in writing this paper, we found that the evidence base proving effectiveness remains small despite strong anecdotal evidence and a strong rationale (Hamilton, Hinks, and Petticrew 2003). We feel that this is because activities of this nature are new and that there are also challenges in finding and using suitable evaluation methods that can represent individual and community change whilst tracking creative and participatory processes (Angus 1999).

This paper reports on the evaluation of a recent community-based music project run in Crewe, Cheshire. The broad aim of the programme was to explore the heritage and history of Crewe using music and music technology. It involved a large number of music workshops that targeted disadvantaged communities.

The paper starts by providing a brief review of the literature on community arts for health.

Community arts for health

Anecdotal evidence suggests that participation in community arts can often have a direct effect on an individual's health and well-being through enhancing their understanding and expression or through developing the necessary skills to enable the adoption of healthy behaviours (Matarasso 1997; Angus 1999; Health Development Agency 2000). Matarasso (1997) discovered 50 types of social impact resulting from participation in art, including improvements in health status. The survey of 243 adults and 270 children participating in arts projects found that 52% of adults said that they felt better or healthier since their involvement.

In a review of community-based arts projects that the Health Development Agency (2000) carried out in England, its results, based on staff observations, reported an impact on mental health where 91% of projects reported an increase in the self-esteem of its participants whilst 82% saw an increase in confidence. Some

projects also reported a reduction in anxiety and social isolation, whilst other projects reported educational outcomes around the development of language, social and creative skills.

Everitt and Hamilton's (2003) systematic evaluation of five major long-term community-based arts for health projects also found good evidence of the impact on mental health in relation to reducing social isolation and improving self-esteem and confidence. Arts activities seemed to enable the development of emotional literacy, which was considered important for good mental health and for the development of strong relationships. Another evaluation of an arts for health programme by Smith (2001) reported that community arts approaches seemed to be successful in creating healthy discussion and expression within groups. Some of the arts projects using group work in community settings saw intermediate outcomes of improved health information or improved environments.

In addition to promoting the health of individuals, community arts can be used to address some of the wider issues around health such as access to services, education and skills, employment, culture and the physical/social environment. In their review, Newman, Curtis, and Stephens (2003) looked at the evidence on the social impact of art. Although only eight studies were of high enough quality to be included in the review, the authors concluded that there was evidence to support art as having a very positive impact in four areas:

- (1) Personal change (e.g. increased confidence)
- (2) Social change (including greater understanding of cultures and sense of community)
- (3) Economic change
- (4) Educational change

These findings are also supported by the Social Exclusion Unit's review of Arts and Sport (Policy Action Team 10 1999), which reported evidence that community-focused arts and sports programmes impacted on four broad areas:

- (1) Health
- (2) Crime
- (3) Employment
- (4) Education

Arts for health and well-being can be used to strengthen communities through promoting social cohesion and community networks (White and Robson 2003). Individual and community health outcomes are perceived as inherently linked (Matarasso 1997; Green and Tones 2003; Davies 2013), and the Health Development Agency (2000) has acknowledged the contribution of art to the building of social capital in communities. Studies of community arts in regeneration projects report that the arts often have an important impact on individual development and community cohesion in addition to environmental and economic aspects of regeneration (Landry and Matarasso 1996; Central Research Unit Scottish Executive 2000; Goodlad, Hamilton, and Taylor 2002). It is also suggested that the arts can be particularly effective within areas of disadvantage and can attract and engage young people and other groups who might be otherwise marginalised (Kay 2000).

The literature seems to point towards the most effective approaches to delivering community arts for health, as being methods that are community-centred, flexible, encourage participation, and those that are based on strong partnership working (Matarasso 1997; Kay 2000; Health Development Agency 2000; Everitt and Hamilton 2003). A national survey found that the main obstacles for projects were short-term or limited funding, lack of time, insufficient resources and poor quality venues (Health Development Agency 2000). Challenges to bringing together creative approaches and mainstream health activities can also exist (Smith 2001).

In summary, there is evidence to support that using arts in community settings can enhance health and well-being. In a majority of the studies, participants and practitioners saw short-term benefits in terms of individual or community development. However, long-term health benefits are more difficult to measure and correlation is a problem (Goodlad, Hamilton, and Taylor 2002; Newman et al. 2003). I will address this difficulty later when discussing the nature of well-being. Since the field of community arts for health is diverse, there seems to scope for further studies that can show the impact of initiatives and also illustrate best practice in this area.

This paper will present the findings from a recent evaluation of a community-based music programme in Crewe, Cheshire, UK. The project involved significant work with two community groups. The following section will describe the background to the programme before going on to outline the evaluation methods. The paper will then present the main findings of the evaluation and discusses the limitations of the research. We will then discuss the implications on practice within the community arts for well-being field.

Young Musicians for Heritage Project

The main purpose of the Young Musicians for Heritage project was to encourage young adults to develop their own distinctive and creative engagement with their local heritage, mediated through musical, media and music-technological activities. In 2010, the Department of Contemporary Arts (DCA) at MMU Cheshire in collaboration with a local social enterprise company (Wishing Well), a heritage centre (Crewe Heritage Centre) and Cheshire East Council was successful in applying for a £23,500 grant from the Young Roots Heritage Lottery. The result of this project was the formation of a larger socially cohesive learning community motivated by the subject area of music. The project was a good example of how academia and social enterprises can play a vital part in allowing transformational partnerships to emerge based on creative practice. We achieved this by helping to create MMU community learning outposts where we were more visible and accessible to the local communities. Learners at different levels were involved in this project, and this allowed different stakeholders and different target audiences to benefit in various ways.

Our model of involving different levels of learners that make up a cohesive 'learning community' with an interest-focus around music and digital media has allowed a long-term partnership to be established between the communities and the university. The recurrent re-invigoration through the entrances of new students and new young people gives the project, on the one hand, a never-ending enthusiasm to

explore all things musical. On the other hand, the project also allows longer learning to be supported through the apprenticeship and Gold Awards Scheme, providing at the same time spontaneity of individuals groups and sustainability across longer time-scales.

Our principal community partners

Although we also worked with a range of partners including; Monks Coppenhall Primary School, Wistaston Green Primary School, the Cheshire Fire Service's RESPECT programme and Youth Village in Manchester, the main community partners with whom we worked the longest were Wishing Well and South Cheshire CLASP.

Wishing Well: Sherborne Youth club

The Wishing Well Project was originally developed by four partners in 1998, Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council, Cheshire County Council, South Cheshire Health authority and Cheshire Healthcare Trust. The aim of Wishing Well is to improve the health and well-being of local people through the provision of a range of participative activities and learning opportunities identified and requested by the community. This resulted in almost 8000 members of the West End community participating in activities over the 5 years of Wishing Well's existence. Additionally, involvement of local volunteers and volunteers from the local college and university has added valuable opportunities for all involved.

Music and drama in a youth club setting

A series of weekly creative sessions were held over the course of a year in the Sherborne Youth club. Over the year, we directly worked with 55 young people whose average age was 13 years with 5% of group aged between 16 and 18 years, all of whom came from disadvantaged backgrounds on the Sherborne Estate. The young people engaged in activities involving historical research around Crewe's murders and Crewe's first suffragette (they went on a historical tour of Crewe, visited the Crewe Heritage Centre and The Women's Library in London), leading to the writing of 'heritage' raps and drama sessions exploring the 1890 Crewe murder that was committed by a young person. Student volunteers from Manchester Metropolitan University also led drama sessions, as part of their Community Arts degree, and some workshops took place on campus in our theatre spaces. A young person accessed by our taster street dance and MC workshops held at Wishing Well's premises also went on to lead the MC the sessions for the 'heritage' rap tracks. Project objectives included accrediting the creative work of the participants with an Arts Awards (Gold and Bronze) and using the creative sessions to further the educational aspirations of the participants.

South Cheshire CLASP: Buzzin'

South Cheshire CLASP offers support and help to those suddenly facing single parenthood; to those who have been a lone parent for a while; to single parents who parent from a distance and to the children and young people within single parent

families. The service of the organisation is based on a Christian ethos, although the support and activities offered are available to all who are part of a single parent family, regardless of their situation or faith. South Cheshire CLASP has been a local support organisation since 1998, obtaining charity status in 2002, and works with over 150 families a year, with the help of a dedicated team of part-time staff and volunteers.

Buzzin' is a drop-in group within South Cheshire CLASP for young people aged between 12 and 18 years living with one parent/carer and was formed in Crewe, as a group in September 2006. It is both valuable and beneficial for young people to have a safe and confidential place/person outside of their immediate family. At Buzzin', there are opportunities to relax and chat, enjoy refreshments, have a game of pool and play board and card games. The young people can also take part in discussion sessions on topics which can affect them, such as coming to terms with just living with Mum or Dad, living in a step family situation, or being a young carer coping with anger and bullying.

Songwriting in a youth drop-in setting

A series of weekly creative sessions were held over the course of a year in the Buzzin' Group. Over the year, we worked with 23 young people whose average age was 12 years with 30% of group aged 16–18 years, all of whom came from disadvantaged backgrounds from around Crewe and the surrounding areas. The young people took part in historical research about Crewe that included a tour of Victorian Crewe and a later history workshop given by a local historian. The history workshop led to the group writing a ukulele song about Crewe that was played and recorded by the pupils at Wistaston Green Primary, a local primary school. The group also researched Dickens' *Signal Man* and used some of the emotional themes in the story to write a screen play of their own whilst exploring their own emotional issues. Project objectives included accrediting the creative work of the participants with an Arts Awards (Gold) and using the creative sessions to explore their emotional issues

Evidencing impact

We chose to use the case example (a short case study) format to evidence impact, because the aim of case studies is to provide 'an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single entity, phenomenon or social unit' (Merriam 1988, 16).

The qualitative approach taken in this study fused elements of ethnography and participatory practice due to the embedded nature of the creative activities. We perceived this as a strength, because more traditional methods of data collection such as the use of questionnaires can often be off-putting in a community context (Kay 2000) and experimental research designs (control groups, etc.) for measuring well-being are often impractical in an inherently transitory community context (Newman et al. 2003). This meant that with our hybrid qualitative methodology of embedded participant-observer research, we focused on generating authentic narratives (Seal and Silverman 1997) by collecting data from all stakeholder perspectives, as recommended by Kay (2000). This was especially important for collecting in-depth data from the participants themselves, in addition to the participant-generated

evaluative interviews (www.facebook.com/YM4HProject). Their views were routinely recorded as part of the data-collecting process for each session.

Evaluation methods

Following completion of the project, a series of participatory evaluation sessions were conducted by both principal groups. The groups were facilitated in the making of their own films about the project which included interviews and presentations by both the setting staff and the young participants, the highlights of which are posted on the Young Musicians for Heritage Facebook page. The participatory nature of this evaluation process gave the participants ownership of the iterative nature of the filmed interview process (the recording, the editing, the out-takes, the rehearsals for recording and the discussions that did not make the final public edits) and as a result provided an extremely rich data-set. The filmed interviews, and accompanying material unused in the final edit, explored the development and implementation of activities, perceptions of the impact of activities and the contribution of the programme to the participants' self-esteem and confidence. The filmed interviews/presentations were reviewed by the interviewees for verification. The interview data was analysed thematically to identify cross-cutting issues (Attride-Stirling 2001). The initial project evaluation framework was then used to analyse all the interview and project data in order to assess whether the project's objectives had been met.

The workshop leaders collected data from the sessions that included flip charts, Facebook closed group pages used for out of session engagement, session diaries that recorded activities/processes and photographic documentation. The data from the sessions served to give a rich context for the participants' filmed presentations.

The evaluation adhered to ethical principles. Participation was voluntary, and everyone was asked for their informed consent (Cassell and Young 2002) for both the evaluation process and the embedded research within the project itself. However, Cassell and Young (2002) warn that informed consent is not always a sufficient framework for gaining consent, especially in dynamic community settings. Part of our participatory evaluation sessions consisted of repeating our request for consent in so doing providing as many opportunities as possible for participants to opt out of the research. In this way, we were able to keep in minds our privileged positions as researchers within the community (Wallerstein and Duran 2006). Quotes and reported experiences have been anonymised.

Findings

This section will present the findings from the evaluation. The first part will examine the delivery of the project and the use of creative methods. The second part will go on to look at identified outcomes and factors influencing implementation. Finally, the paper will present findings on the wider impact of the programme and the contribution of arts to well-being.

Creative delivery and engagement

The style of creative delivery and engagement was characterised by careful relationship building with the participants and peer mentoring. We thought that if

participants could learn how to share their skills with each other, this would build sustainability in the project, as the young people would be able to continue their learning journeys in their groups after the official end of the Young Musicians for Heritage Project.

Sherborne Youth club

The Director of Wishing Well writes:

When Manchester Metropolitan University approached us with the view to us being partners in a joint bid to the Young Roots Heritage fund we felt it would be perfect for our Sherborne folks as they had little opportunity to get involved with activities outside of school and the estate.

When [the workshop coordinator] joined us our young people were quite suspicious about the whole event – why would we want to offer them something special? *Final Evaluation Report*

Relationship building using creative activities

With the above sentiments in mind, we approached the groups with the view towards organically and slowly building a relationship with the participants before conducting any explicit creative sessions around heritage. Our first sessions at the Sherborne Youth club were used to consult the group about its interests which allowed the workshop leader to plan a slow and group needs-led introduction to creative activities. In the first session, the young people at the Sherborne Youth club identified their main interests in Crime Scene Investigation (CSI, the TV show), rapping and dancing. This meant that in the first few sessions, the participants interested in CSI were encouraged to write a story about a murder in Crewe train station (the beginnings of a Crewe ‘heritage’ theme), devising as many CSI type clues in their story as possible (a preamble to studying the 1890 Crewe Murder). These activities culminated in sessions 19–22 when MMU community arts students led CSI drama sessions on campus with the young people in the group.

Casually, in between ongoing youth club activities (session 2), the workshop leader also introduced body rhythms, table top drumming and Steve Reich’s clapping music (very structured and rhythmic clapping) to some of the interested participants who taught these rhythms to other participants (the beginnings of peer mentoring). This was done in preparation for introducing the group to the loop (beat) generating software programme Fruity Loops.

In subsequent sessions (from session 3 onwards), the workshop leader gradually introduced the music software Fruity Loops by installing it onto the youth club’s laptops and encouraging the participants to explore making their own beats that represented moods and emotions from the CSI stories that were being written. Participants were also encouraged to show others how to use the software, whilst he had conversations with them about how they had been earlier in the week (relationship building through ‘on the fly’ unstructured interviews).

To further prepare the group for more explicit heritage work, in sessions 7 and 13, they visited heritage sites around Crewe: Crewe Hall, the Crewe Heritage Centre

and a Crewe Victorian Murder Mystery Tour. These trips were intended to act as inspiration for the young people's creativity and interaction with their local heritage.

Mentoring using creative activities

This gradual work with Fruity Loops, body/table rhythm work, peer mentoring and heritage visits culminated in Heritage rap sessions that used Fruity Loops to write the beats (and create the moods) and Cubase to record the raps about the sights they had seen and the stories they had been told. These sessions, which started from session 25, were partly led by a local young person accessed from another group of older young people in the project and crystallised the peer mentoring and training process for this group. In the week leading up to session 34, the group visited The Women's Library in London to get further inspiration for their 'heritage' rap about the first Crewe suffragette. The outputs from the sessions also acted as portfolios for Arts Awards accreditation at Bronze and Gold Levels.

Buzzin'

Relationship building using creative activities

Similarly with Buzzin' the group was consulted about what it wanted to do that was 'Heritage' related. It was easier to frame the initial enquiry around heritage with Buzzin' than it was with Sherborne, because there was a larger percentage of young people aged between 16 and 18 years. Members of the group identified the trains and the railways as interests. In session 2, the workshop leader introduced the group to the Dickens' story, The Signal Man. The group was inspired by the supernatural overtones of the story and set about writing its own modern version, working into the story, social issues that it recognised as being relevant to young people such as homelessness, male suicide and social networking. In sessions 6 (collecting sound recordings from around the centre), 3 and 19 (jamming sessions on the piano with the participants), the workshop leader carefully used music and music technology to provide a safe and creative outlet for the emotions generated by the group from discussions around bullying, personal relationships and family experiences of child abuse.

In sessions 8 and 9, the group visited heritage sites around Crewe. They visited Crewe Hall, the Crewe Heritage Centre and went on a Crewe Victorian Murder Mystery Tour where they mentored the younger participants from the Sherborne group. As with the Sherborne group, these visits were intended to act as inspiration for the young people's creativity and interaction with their local heritage. As a result of these heritage visits, in session 26, the group participated in a history workshop which was given by the tour guide they had met on their tours of Crewe's heritage sites. This workshop gave them material to enable them to write a song about Crewe's heritage in sessions 27 and 28.

Mentoring using creative activities

During the course of the project, it became clear that the older participants were interested in using the music- and heritage-related activities of the project as opportunities to acquire leadership and mentoring skills. In sessions 13, 14, 16,

17 and 20, older members of the group were mentored by MMU music students in songwriting and workshop leadership skills. This sub-group of older participants wrote a song for the group and had devised teaching strategies it would employ to teach it to the rest of the group. These writing and teaching skills became useful for the writing of their Crewe heritage song in sessions 27 and 28 which was taught to and performed by another group of young people from Wistaston Green Primary School.

The group's mentoring process culminated in the older participants formalising a sub-group in session 33, whose function was to advise Buzzin', on how they would recruit new members to the group and how they would take more responsibility for the activities and learning within the group. This sub-group became known as The Heritage Crew and took a leading role in preparing for the next Heritage Lottery youth project, 'Talking Heads'.

Identified outcomes

Sherborne Youth club

Case example 1: gaining emotional awareness

A worker from the Sherborne Youth club writes:

Eventually [the workshop coordinator] started to introduce workshops around music, rapping and song-writing and that started to break the group up into interested/not so interested. Some of the young people that had originally just looked into the session and left because numbers and characters were too great for them to cope with started to become very interested in the music opportunities – and at that stage I'm not sure whether it was because the music room was 'safer' with less people in it and a 'managed' activity or because they were truly interested in the music.

Eventually our 'shadowy' folks that lacked confidence sidled into the music room at the earliest opportunity and started to write, hesitantly at first, then avidly about lots of issues affecting their lives and the lives of others. [The workshop coordinator] brought along Mike, a local rap artist and writer and between them they helped our young people not only write their songs but record them too – a turning point for the project I felt – even the young people that 'controlled' the estate thought this was really cool and started to attend and record alongside the other more vulnerable young people. What was particularly noticeable at this stage was that the more vulnerable youngsters that had been writing and recording for a while longer held the respect of the newer more challenging individuals from the estate and as a result the confidence of the former individuals grew enormously. *Final Evaluation Report*

The issues about which the participants were writing were generated in session 25 onwards when the group explored the 1890 Crewe Murder where a son murdered his father. The group re-imagined the emotional dynamic between the father and his two sons that might have led to the father's murder. Issues around domestic bullying (physical abuse) were discussed and the group seemed to plot an emotional narrative that sympathised with the sons' plight in terms of the abuse that they imagined they might have faced from their father (although acknowledging that the son's recourse to murder was wrong). This issue-based work took on a new significance when there was a sudden influx of mainly young men to the group as a result of a drugs raid that was carried out on the estate in session 26. The new participants seemed to be really

keen to continue exploring the issue of domestic physical abuse between the father and his sons within the creative rap-writing process and seemed genuinely impressed with the material that had already been written by the other (female) participants.

Case example 2: enhancing self esteem

A worker from the Sherborne Youth club writes at length:

One young person in particular has made huge progress both in her music interests and in her personal life and confidence. She is part of a local family and is one of many children with a mix of true brothers and sisters and step brothers and sisters. Amongst the family set up and the estate she had become almost insignificant and had attended the club spasmodically and often not come through the door due to her lack of confidence. She had few friends on the estate and attended a local high school where again she didn't particularly shine in any subjects.

What the music project proved is that when young people are really interested in a topic – they shine! This young person started to write her own raps and was delighted when she found she could record them too. Every week we could see a growth in her confidence until she actually started to look cool too – experimenting with clothes and wearing accessories that got her noticed such as large glasses and hats. [The workshop coordinator] introduced the Bronze Arts Award to her and she thoroughly enjoyed the process of earning it mainly within the club setting and with his support. She began to play music that she enjoyed on the computer in the main room of the club and would hum along or jig a bit feeling as though she belonged and having an opinion on all sorts of issues – at last. She participated in several trips and became heavily involved in the heritage part of the project including going to the Women's Library in London to research the speeches of a local suffragette, an experience that she wrote about and recorded when back at Sherborne.

This young person started to change at school too and decided she would like to join a performing arts course at the local college upon leaving school – aspiring to this encouraged her to work harder at school and aim for the results that she would need to gain access to the course. She didn't quite make it with the results but has put things into place with a local training organisation to help her upgrade on maths and English – she is very determined now and has been accepted at college so long as she works on the upgrades.

She is now considered someone to look up to at the club and has started to bring other individuals in to join us – only last week she brought in a 'step-cousin' who had a beautiful voice but was so shy she had to sit under the table before she could sing. *Final Evaluation Report*

In session 29, this individual began to mentor others in rapping as part of her Bronze Arts Award.

Case example 3: finding anger management strategies

In session 19, the workshop coordinator negotiated a form of anger management with a participant known for his angry outbursts. During a drama session, the young person became very agitated, because he did not understand the nature of the warm-up activity. He was happy to withdraw himself from the activity and with the support of the workshop coordinator reflect on his emotions where he acknowledged

that he had issues with anger and that he wanted help to manage his emotions. With the support of the workshop coordinator, he slowly re-engaged himself with the group's activities. In an extremely chaotic session 20, this strategy seemed to be very effective, as the individual used this approach as a form of self-regulation and was able to remain connected to the core activities of the evening. In session 23, due to a minor incident, his anger got the better of him and he seemed unable to regulate his behaviour without the intervention of the workshop leader. However, by session 30, he seemed able to engage with the session by showcasing his beat boxing skills without any outbursts of anger despite some challenges he faced from other participants at times. In session 37, this individual was using the Fruity Loops software programme that had been installed on the club's laptops in session 3, as a creative outlet for his emotions, as he created his own loops, analysed them, graphically notated them and showed them to others during a period of self-guided learning. It would appear that the creative activities offered by the project complemented the external support he was receiving for his anger issues by providing creative channels within which he could safely explore his emotions and self-regulate his behaviour in session.

Buzzin'

Case example 4: enhancing self-esteem and confidence around sexual orientation

The issue around adolescent sexuality and youth clubs for LGBTI young people was first discussed in session 5. However, between sessions 14 and 20, during a period of mentoring in music workshop leadership skills, an individual around whom the mentoring sessions were planned 'came out' confidentially in session 18 as gay/bisexual to the setting staff, giving his consent for the workshop coordinator to be informed. This seemed significant, because even though the group had discussed issues around sexual orientation on many occasions before, he did not 'come out' until during his music workshop skills mentoring sessions with an MMU music student. Although not necessarily causal there would appear to be an observable correlation between an increase in confidence that the mentoring gave him and an increase in confidence around his sexuality, because in session 33, he founded the youth sub-group The Heritage Crew for the older young people in Buzzin'. By session 42, this individual openly and confidently discussed his sexuality with the Buzzin' group and supported other group members with their sexuality by offering to take them to a LGBTI youth club called Utopia.

Discussion

This section will examine the key points from the findings and discuss the implications for practice before discussing the limitations of the study.

Relationship building

A strong theme to emerge from the findings was the need for an extended period of relationship building where the participants and setting staff could develop a sense of local ownership of the project (South 2006). This was crucial for both the creative and well-being objectives for the project. In the Young Musicians for Heritage

Project, the relationship-building process took the form of organically introducing heritage-based creative activities through the careful alignment with the needs and the interests of the group. This meant that the creative activities were not viewed as add-on activities; they were viewed as part of the fabric of the groups' activities. This seems to be significant, because the embedded nature of creative activity within the group gave the participants alternative (creative) outlets for some of the more challenging emotional/social issues they were facing. This is important, because this relationship building developed into partnership working between the workshop coordinator and the setting staff, as the participants' creative outlets were fed back to setting staff to better inform their working relationship with the participants, in-session. This was very interesting, because at the start of the project, the setting staff's pre-existing background knowledge of the participants was crucial in assisting the workshop coordinator in his relationship-building process with the participants. However, as a partnership between him and the setting staff developed through the provision of creative activities, new knowledge of the participants was co-generated as alternative contexts for behaviour were emerging, resulting from the creative outlets that were embedded in the activities. South (2004, 13) echoes this generation of alternative context when she writes that the 'arts is [are] unique in terms of creating opportunities for self expression, problem solving and dialogue'.

However, the biggest factor affecting the nature of relationship building and partnership working in this project was time. Due to the year long duration of the Young Musicians for Heritage Project, it was possible to give sufficient time over to this process. Insufficient time and resources can often act as barriers to this crucial stage in a project (Health Development Agency 2000).

Wider impact

Even though this paper only focused on the well-being outcomes of two groups in the project, Buzzin' and Sherborne Youth club made links with other groups within Young Musicians for Heritage Project through shared heritage-related creative activity. The network created by shared heritage seemed to happen in two phases. Firstly, Buzzin' and Sherborne Youth club as geographically distinct communities in Crewe made strong links with each other when they visited Crewe's heritage sites together, where the older members from Buzzin' took a mentoring role with the younger members from the Sherborne Youth club and some young people visited each other's settings. Secondly, both Buzzin' and Sherborne Youth club made connections with other groups within the Young Musicians for Heritage Project. Buzzin' wrote a song for the young people at Wistaston Green Primary school, got involved as youth representatives with a local Internet radio station working with the project and used their mentoring skills to work with young people at the Crewe sea cadets (a group external to the project). Sherborne Youth club via its young youth leader made connections with the Manchester-based community organisation, The Youth Village by working alongside young people in that community. The building of a social network in the project would seem to suggest that the arts can work powerfully to connect areas of disadvantage, whilst engaging young people and other communities who are usually marginalised (Kay 2000; Health Development Agency 2000), although it is difficult to measure the well-being outcomes of these extended connections.

Matarasso (1997) recognises that individuals and communities seem to be strongly linked, as Green and Tones (2003, 240) write about the ‘mutually reinforcing way’ that the arts can both influence individual empowerment (as reported by increased self-esteem, self-efficacy, etc.) and community empowerment (increased networks and social connectedness). This point of individual/community interconnectedness was illustrated during the participatory evaluation process where the setting staffs at the Sherborne Youth club were eager to stress that the way in which their group was presented in this paper and to the larger community was important to the collective self-esteem of that community. Although during the project, the successful partnership working between the setting staff and workshop coordinator enabled them to face many challenging community issues, the staff at the Sherborne Youth Club wanted to stress the positive outcomes of the project and its processes for fear of diminishing the gains made in the self-esteem of the wider Sherborne community to which Young Musicians for Heritage project contributed. These concerns would seem to suggest that the setting staff recognised an important increase in the wider community self-esteem, in part generated by the project and that it was important to protect it at all costs.

Limitations of the study: defining well-being and defining a theoretical framework around evaluation

It has been acknowledged by Angus (2002) and Hamilton, Hinks, and Petticrew (2003) that there is a lack of good quality evaluations in the area of arts and health, mainly, according to Angus (2002) due to the poorly set out aims and objectives of the projects. However, in this study, not only were the aims and objectives clearly set out (as they needed to be for the original Heritage Lottery bid), they were constantly being updated and informed by the close partnership working between the setting staff and the workshop coordinator, leading to systematic and focused data collection and analysis (Table 1). The implications of these ‘limitations’ will be discussed later, as confusion about the differences between evaluation and research and their uses need to be addressed.

Defining well-being

In our project, we collected well-being data from the participants who self-reported experiences of having improved well-being as a result of participating in a project that was about using creative music workshops to reconnect the participants to their local heritage, (Clennon, Boehm, and Hamilton 2012). The well-being outcomes we reported in this paper were:

- Gaining emotional awareness
- Enhancing self-esteem
- Finding anger management strategies
- Enhancing self-esteem and confidence around sexual orientation

Our well-being outcomes largely fell into two broad areas: ‘Personal development and strengthened self-concept’ and ‘Emotional expression and mood enhancement’. Taxonomically, these areas mainly fall under the category of eudaimonic well-being

Table 1. Young musicians for heritage project: aims and achievements.

Aim	Achievement
To use music to facilitate the involvement with a heritage specific to the participants' locality	From across the project, 91 young people were directly involved in producing specific music outputs that include: tracks about Crewe's 1890 Murder and Crewe's first Suffragette, incidental music to an interview about Crewe's local popular music in the 1950s, recordings and performances about Crewe's Rail heritage and Crewe's manufacturing history
To provide opportunities where young people use their musical creativity to reflect on local heritage	From across the project, 131 young people were directly accessed through 116 creative workshops
To provide opportunities where young people can contribute creatively to local heritage	25 young people from Monks Coppenhall Primary School, Cheshire Fire Service and The Youth Village directly contributed to researching and recording 7 heritage interviews, of which 5 have formed an online heritage archive on the project's Facebook page on www.facebook.com/YM4HProject
To provide opportunities for young people to be involved in producing something which in turn will enhance the access of other young people to local heritage	10 young people from Monks Coppenhall Primary School directly contributed to a display in the Crewe 175 exhibition at the Crewe Heritage Centre. Their display explored the life of Victorian children in Crewe whose families would have moved to Crewe because of the railways
To provide additional training on relevant skills, such as 'interview training', 'digital media production', etc.	25 young people from Monks Coppenhall Primary School, Cheshire Fire Service: RESPECT and The Youth Village were given specific training in heritage archival research and interview skills

Source: Clennon, Boehm, and Hamilton 2012.

where well-being is viewed as a dynamic process of 'becoming' or 'achieving-a-healthy-mental-state' (encompassing negative experiences or states of mind as part of the process) rather than a static end-state of 'being' or 'having-achieved-a-healthy-mental-state' (usually associated with 'positive' feelings of pleasure and happiness), which is characterised as hedonic well-being (Swindells et al. 2013)¹; although as will be later outlined, our well-being outcomes, occasionally straddled elements of both categories. Swindells et al. recognise that eudaimonic well-being is harder to measure due to its dynamic form and complex interactions (both social and procedural), whereas the more 'traditional' hedonic form of well-being has a greater number of measuring mechanisms. However, in their qualitative study, Swindells et al. recognised that participatory activities and arts-led participatory activities in particular tended to exhibit longer lasting eudaimonic well-being effects than hedonic, because 'arts participation not only affords pleasure/enjoyment but can

also enable individuals to express symbolically and make sense of difficult feelings' (61).²

In terms of Personal Development, Froggett and Farrier (2011) have observed that the arts can play an important part in allowing individuals with mental health issues the space to reimagine themselves. This important benefit that creative arts-based activities can bring is significant, because individuals can sometimes feel more able to work with their issues by using the arts activity as a creative metaphor, rather than working directly with their issues, (Clennon 2013a). Spandler et al. (2007) also recognise the opportunities that challenging creative arts participation can bring to those with mental health difficulties, as they record that such activities can allow service users to build a more empowered sense of self. This echoes Swindells et al. (2013, 61) who write, 'eudaimonic well-being has been found to require participation in activities that feel challenging and effortful'. In our project, one of our participants reported a significant enhancing of his self-esteem, as he gradually gained the confidence to discuss his sexuality openly and mentor others in the group who faced similar issues. The challenging music leadership activities in the project allowed him to build self-confidence and self-esteem, by tapping into his enthusiasm for music, thus enabling him to develop ways of mentoring others using his musical skills. Even though the benefits of mentoring can be observed in non-arts-based activities, the fact that the participant was able to musically extend his leadership of the participatory activity to others in the group facilitated the development of new social³ and musical skills, effortlessly. Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi (1988, 8) call this feature of arts participation 'the flow', where they would characterise our participant as being in a 'situation that was intrinsically motivating', driving him on to learn new skills without his being aware of the learning process. Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi (1988) also recognise that self-esteem⁴ is an important link between being in the flow and the quality of experience of the activity, where there needs to be an optimal level of challenge associated with the activity to prevent boredom.

Another factor that has been observed by participating in the arts is where the participant gradually begins to see themselves as an artist, which is a highly valued descriptor (Sixsmith and Kagan 2005; Stickley et al. 2007). The perceived performance/exhibiting opportunities that come with being seen as an 'artist' has also been viewed as an important factor in raising self-esteem because of the external validation that can arise from such audience interactions⁵ (Bailey and Davidson 2005; Davidson and Faulkner 2010; Wilson, Caufield, and Atherton 2009). Our other participant from our enhanced esteem case examples exemplified a hedonic sense of well-being with the apparent satisfaction and self-confidence that she gained from recording and performing her own raps.⁶ The workers in the youth club observed how her growing self-confidence (a longer lasting eudaimonic well-being outcome) in her artistic skills spilled over into how she dressed and how she interacted with the other group members. It was also noticed that this new found confidence in considering herself an artist (a rapper) seemed to be a motivating factor for her to work at improving her grades for her college course.

The second area that our well-being outputs fall into is Emotional expression and mood enhancement. The ability to express one's emotions safely in creative arts activities is recognised as an intrinsically eudaimonic well-being process (Smith 2003; Secker et al. 2007). Creative arts activities have been found to help participants with

mental health issues to safely share their issues with one another (Sixsmith and Kagan 2005) as well as encouraging self-reflection for those within youth justice settings who might find formal therapy inaccessible (Clennon 2013b; Daykin et al. 2012). In our project, this eudaimonic process of self-reflection and empathy building was evident in our ‘Gaining Emotional Awareness’ case example where our young people were able to creatively explore issues around domestic child abuse by re-imagining the father–son relationship between Richard Davies and his sons. The hedonic capacity of arts-participation to boost mood, be enjoyable and be fun (Taylor 2008; Dooris 2005) has also been observed to contribute to the ability of participants to regulate their own moods and put their problems into perspective (Sixsmith and Kagan 2005). We also reported a mix of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being outcomes in our ‘Finding Anger Management Strategies’. In the case example we presented, our participant used musical activity to regulate his frustrations and overtime modify his own behaviour. Although the musical activities initially gave him a sense of momentary satisfaction, we found that this hedonic outcome of the activity acted as a motivational factor for him to keep exploring the creative process of music, in doing so eliciting a longer lasting eudaimonic well-being output of mood regulation or anger management.

Defining a theoretical framework around evaluation

However, as our creative project was not designed to directly generate well-being outcomes, we did not set out to create specific measures for capturing their impact beyond the project. This is common in the field of community arts, but it is a point that is generally framed as a ‘limitation’ by policy-makers and researchers alike when assessing evaluation reports from arts projects, as illustrated by Daykin et al. (2008, 261) when they write that ‘there is a general need for more rigorous application and reporting of qualitative research procedures in the field of arts and health’. Community arts practitioners, in general, are not always so focused on measuring well-being outcomes in their programmes (although there is an obvious pressure from funders to attempt to do so), because those well-being outcomes are usually self-evidenced in their own organic and specific terms within the project. This point of focus has a direct implication on the use of the ‘evaluation report’ in community arts projects. Alkin and Taut (2003, 3) make the important distinction between the knowledge gained from evaluation and knowledge gained from research:

Whereas both research and evaluation knowledge are produced in a similar fashion, the purposes and uses of such knowledge are different. In the case of research, the goal is generalizable knowledge-contributions to the body of knowledge in a particular field of research that hold true across all settings, times, and for all individuals represented by the produced knowledge. General theories are built by testing and refuting claims or hypotheses. In the case of evaluation, the purpose is context-specific knowledge - that is, knowledge that is applicable only within a particular setting at a particular point in time, and intended for use by a particular group of people.

This important distinction of specificity to a particular context that distinguishes ‘evaluation’ from ‘research’⁷ leads to questions around use. The use of evaluation is inherently a political⁸ issue as it relates to a specific organisation or setting and as

such, its uses need to be better understood. Rich (1977) identifies two types of use: 'instrumental' and 'conceptual'. The instrumental use of evaluation is largely concerned with knowledge that has been collected that will have a direct bearing on the programme (such as securing further funding). Rich describes conceptual use of evaluation, as knowledge that will not have a direct impact on the programme but will change or modify the perception of a certain process or quality highlighted in the programme, which will in turn inform future opinions about the programme or its efficacy (for example, discovering that the length of a programme had a direct correlation to its uptake by participants). Owen and Rogers (1999) identify two other forms of use of evaluation: 'symbolic' and 'legitimative', where the former uses evaluation to confer status or kudos in terms of appearing to be transparent, whilst the latter uses evaluation to rubber-stamp previous decisions made before the programme's inception. Preskill and Torres (2000) write about a 'process' use of evaluation which looks at how the learning process of the organisation has been affected by the process of evaluation (for example, examining if a participatory and iterative evaluation process empowered workers to make changes to the programme during its course).

Our evaluation of the project was about the efficacy of the programme as it related to our original creative aims (Table 1). The evaluation was both instrumental and conceptual in its use.⁹ Our evaluation also aimed to elucidate the underlying mechanisms of relationship building and creative embedding that occurred in our programme. As already discussed, we discovered the impact of the programme's duration on the ability to build organic and transformative relationships using creative starting points. We also outlined the resource issues that this approach necessarily brought to the fore. Kirkhart (2000) extends the notion of 'use' to 'influence'. It is here that thoughts around 'impact' play their part. Kirkhart (2000, 7) describes influence as 'the capacity or power of persons or things to produce effects on others by intangible or indirect means'.

It is here that the impact of our well-being outcomes needs to be discussed in the context of a programme-specific conceptual evaluation. Kirkhart (2000, 7) continues to define 'effects that are multidirectional, incremental, unintentional, and non-instrumental, alongside those that are unidirectional, episodic, intended, and instrumental'. Kirkhart groups these effects by the categories: intention (intended versus unintended), source (process versus results) and time (immediate, end of cycle or long term). Alkin and Taut (2003) prefer to reframe Kirkhart's 'intention' in terms of 'awareness' (awareness of the intended, awareness of the unintended and unawareness of the unintended). In our evaluation, in the context of our creative project, we became aware of the unintended (albeit inherent) effects of well-being. Using Kirkhart's and Alkin and Taut's combined conceptual framework, I would argue that our evaluation's use was more focused on the specific qualities of the process of the programme (rather than its results) that enabled our aware-unintended well-being outcomes to happen over time (immediate, in terms of the project's duration).¹⁰ This is an important point about many so-called 'limited' community arts evaluations; they need to be judged not on measurable end-of-cycle results (impact measurements) but on the robustness of their awareness spectrum and its (awareness spectrum) impact on the processes behind their reported outcomes.¹¹ If these reports were analysed and evaluated on those terms by researchers and policy-makers, then these evaluations would in fact become a useful body of

programme-specific hypotheses about impacts that depending on how well the processes were documented¹² could be re-created in other settings in order to specifically quantify the ‘hypothetical’ outcomes in an intentional research setting. In other words, I am suggesting that researchers should take well-written evaluations and test the hypotheses¹³ (methodologies and reported impacts) in new specially designed research projects. This would imply that new dynamic partnerships between practitioners and researchers would need to happen more frequently in the field of community arts and health in order to fully begin to realise (quantify) the enormous potential in the field.

Conclusion

The sustainability of good practice and the demonstrable well-being outcomes from the project are key. South (2006) describes the general need for the networking and training of local practitioners to continue to work alongside service providers. Whereas we would agree with that in principle, we think that it is important to embed that potential resource in the project from the very beginning. With this in mind, we put a heavy emphasis on peer mentoring and leadership skill training within the groups we worked with using the expertise of our students. This not only promoted group ownership of the project, bringing about the already identified well-being outcomes but also planted the seeds of self-determination for the groups as illustrated by the emergence of the youth leadership group, The Heritage Crew and the young youth leader working at the Sherborne Youth club who continued to deliver music provision after the official end of the project. We also hope that the strong partnership working between the workshop coordinator and the setting staff would also sow seeds of empowered practice for the staff, as they have been introduced to the potential of embedded creative working.

Community Arts for well-being can undoubtedly offer new ways of relationship building, partnership working, peer mentoring and self-empowerment if sufficient resources are allocated to the process. In our study, we saw that creative methods can be shown to be effective at engaging individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds but also through those individuals, wider communities (Sarkisson and Wenman 2010). As suggested before, we would suggest that more longitudinal research is needed to assess the longevity of the eudaimonic well-being outcomes in terms of both individual and community development. Leading on from this, we would also suggest that further studies are carried out to try to distinguish between the well-being outcomes of the creative intervention and that of external factors. We suspect that the two will be inextricably interconnected, prompting us to suggest future research into the nature of their relationship.

Notes

1. Our creative activities did exhibit some qualities of hedonic well-being especially as new skills were acquired and a greater sense of self-efficacy was achieved.
2. Swindells et al. (2013) acknowledge that both hedonic and eudaimonic well-being perspectives are both generally regarded as comprising a healthy mental state.
3. The embedded mentoring and learning processes that co-creating music with his peers afforded also demonstrated aspects of Situated Learning (Hanks 1991), where learning in a social context enabled our participant to use music as a starting point to gain new

- leadership and social skills. The development of his social skills was a significant factor in the participant being able to discuss his sexuality openly in the group to the point of applying his new social and leadership skills to mentor others in this area.
4. In this context, a eudaimonic well-being outcome gained from the dynamic process of the “flow”.
 5. A hedonic well-being response.
 6. The combination of eudaimonic and hedonic well-being outcomes is evident here, as the participant did evidently gain satisfaction or “pleasure and happiness” from recording and performing her raps throughout the eudaimonic and longer lived process of gaining in self-confidence.
 7. Although I do recognise that this is a continuum of practice rather than absolutely discrete practices.
 8. With a small “p” referring to the specific structures and behaviours of a setting and its programme.
 9. Although slightly more conceptual.
 10. An interesting echo of the definition of a eudaimonic category of well-being outcome.
 11. Unless, of course, they were specifically set up as research projects.
 12. This would be a more sensible way of judging many evaluations of arts projects.
 13. Here I am advocating the use of a modified version of Grounded Theory methodology, where the evaluator (or practitioner) would collect all the possible data about the programme in the way Charmaz (2006, 2) writes, “grounded theory methods consist of systematic yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analysing qualitative data to construct theories ‘grounded’ in data themselves”. This could be an interesting development in evaluation studies in the field of community arts and health, where the reported outcomes would come from a robust system of data collection and analysis that in turn could be used as secondary data in any future research project designed to test the programme’s hypotheses or theories.

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