

Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) & Ageing Research

Presentation to UKARF

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Context

“arts and culture can create a sense of wellbeing and transform the quality of life” *(A prospectus for arts and health, Department of Health and Arts Council England 2007)*

- Rheumatoid arthritis sufferers who listened to 20 minutes of their preferred music daily reported a significant reduction in their perception of pain *(Schorr, J. A. (1993) ‘Music and pattern change in chronic pain’, Advances in Nursing Science, 15, 4, 27–36.)*
- Singing has been shown to improve quality of life for people with dementia *(Clair, A.A. and Bernstein, B. (1990) ‘A comparison of singing, vibrotactile and non-vibrotactile instrumental playing responses in severely regressed persons with dementia of the Alzheimer's type’, Journal of Music Therapy, 17, 119–12)*
- AHRC CEO chairs DCMS Science & Research Advisory Committee working group on health & well-being

New Dynamics of Ageing Programme



- Design for ageing well: improving quality of life for the ageing population using a technology enabled garment system (Jane McCann, University of Wales Newport)
- Ages and Stages: The Place of Theatre in Representations and Recollections of Ageing (Miriam Bernard, Keele University)
- Fiction and the Cultural Mediation of Ageing (Philip Tew, Brunel University)

New Dynamics of Ageing Programme



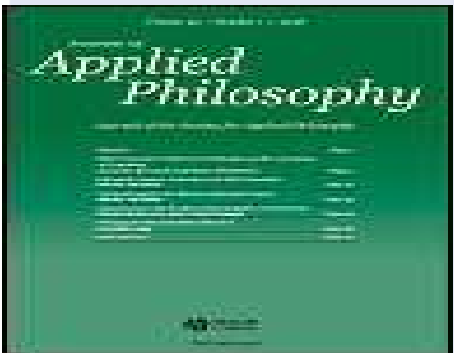
- Promoting social engagement and well-being in older people through community supported participation in musical activities (Sue Hallam, Institute of Education, University of London)
- Representing Self - Representing Ageing (using creative arts to negotiate and challenge images of ageing and encourage participation) (Lorna Warren, University of Sheffield)
- Contemporary visual art and identity construction - wellbeing amongst older people (Andrew Newman, Newcastle University)

Examples of Other AHRC-Funded Research



- Heritage in Hospitals Research Project: How does museum object handling affect wellbeing and recovery? UCL Museums & Collections and University College London Hospitals
- The information needs and information behaviours of carers of people with dementia (doctoral award completed 2009) (information studies Sheffield University)

Examples of Other AHRC-Funded Research



- Women, Ageing and Media - AHRC funded Research Networks and Workshops Project <http://www.wam-research.org.uk/>
- Collaborative Doctoral award with Mersey Care NHS Trust on bibliotherapy, or reading as cure, in improving mental health
- The Role of Moral Theory in Health Care Ethics Research Network 2009-2011 (Thomas Schramme, Swansea University) <http://shsahrcproject.swan.ac.uk/>

Future Plans

- Continue to contribute to the cross-Council **Lifelong Health and Well-Being Programme**
- Leadership of new cross-Council Programme on **Connected Communities**
- AHRC's new '**Science in Culture**' theme exploring the reciprocal relationships between the arts and humanities and the sciences, including emerging area of medical humanities (e.g. how the humanities and arts can provide insight into the human condition, suffering, personhood, our responsibility to each other, and offer a historical perspective on medical practice)

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Programme Vision



To mobilise the potential for increasingly inter-connected communities to enhance self-reliance, regeneration, sustainability, health & well-being by better connecting research, stakeholders and communities.

Aims

To support research on & with communities that contributes to:

- enhanced community participation, self-reliance & resilience
- flourishing diverse, cohesive & culturally vibrant communities
- improved health & well-being (particularly in relation to mental health, addiction & health inequalities)
- regeneration
- sustainable local environments & communities



Understanding Patterns of Connectivity and Change within & between Communities

Community participation, self-reliance and resilience

Community Health and well-being

Community Regeneration

Sustainable community environments

Community cultures, diversity and cohesion

Connecting Research on Communities

Connecting Research with Communities & other Stakeholders, Stimulating Research Partnerships and Enhanced Harvesting of Research for Impact

Adding Value to Research

- Already over £40 million of RCUK funding in communities-based research, including under programmes such as NDA
- Research on communities is fragmented, often small-scale or focused on specific area.
- Need to foreground communities dimension and join up to capitalise on synergies....
- Strong support from stakeholder consultations so far in local, devolved & national Government, third sector, research community, other research funders
- Further development activities in 2010 e.g. Summit in June, expert advisory group, initial scoping studies