

Demonstrating Effectiveness: Competing Discourses in the use and Evaluation of Applied Theatre that Contributes to Improved Health Outcomes for Prisoners.

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List of abbreviations

ACE	Arts Council England
APC	Anne Peaker Centre
CATR	Centre for Applied Theatre Research
CBA	Cost Benefit Analysis
CBT	Cognitive Behaviour Theory
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
DCMS	Department for Culture Media and Sport
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DH	Department of Health
HDA	Health Development Agency
HEA	Health Education Authority
HMCIP	Her Majesty's Chief Inspectorate of Prisons
HMIP	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons
HMP	Her Majesty's Prison
HMPS	Her Majesty's Prisons Service
HMYOI	Her Majesty's Young Offender Institution
JPS	Joint Prison Service
LA	Local Authority
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
NNAH	National Network for Arts in Health
NHS	National Health Service
NICE	National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
NOMS	National Offender Management Service
PAT	Policy Action Team
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PHE	Public Health England
RSPH	Royal Society for Public Health
SEU	Social Exclusion Unit
SROI	Social Return on Investment
TIE	Theatre in Education
TiPP	Theatre in Prison and Probation
WHO	World Health Organisation
YOT	Youth Offending Team

Abstract

This thesis explores the ways in which applied theatre practitioners and companies evaluate their practice that contributes to improved health outcomes for prisoners in the UK. By examining the discourses around evaluation, and specifically how and what influences these, this thesis aims to offer a deeper understanding of the approaches used to evaluate applied theatre work and the wider socio-political influence on the evaluation of applied theatre practice.

This research is driven by a personal desire to understand the contributions and effectiveness of applied theatre in prisons and how understanding around effectiveness between practitioners from the arts, health and criminal justice sector can be enhanced. The research questions that drive this enquiry are threefold: how is applied theatre planned and implemented in prisons when it contributes to improved health outcomes for prisoners; how and to what extent are theatre companies influenced by national policy in the arts, health, and the criminal justice sector when they evaluate their practice; and what approaches and methods do applied theatre companies use to evaluate their interventions in prisons and how do they communicate these to others.

The ontological and epistemological positions held in this study stem from a critical realist position. Adopting a Critical Discourse Analysis approach offered by Norman Fairclough, and supplementing this with Michel Foucault's work and philosophy around power/knowledge, allowed for the exploration of broader discourses and concepts. Focussing on work carried out in prisons by five theatre companies in the UK during the New Labour government period 1997-2010, this thesis charts the impact of policy on evaluation, and critically discusses and examines how evaluation is reported through their evaluation reports and in interviews with company staff. I present the analysis and discussion in successive detail using Fairclough's approach that focuses on the identification of discourses at the macro, meso and micro level. Through the metaphor of the prison bar, I shed light on the macro policy level evaluation discourses that restrict the work of applied theatre practitioners through the explicit drive for measurement, evidence and proving worth (discourses that *create a bar* for applied theatre practitioners). At the meso practice level I examine these discourses through the notion of power/knowledge and authority, present in the evaluation documents produced by these companies and outline how companies uphold policy directives and maintain the status quo whilst simultaneously questioning the dominant discourse of what counts as evidence (discourses that *push at the bars* that policy has created); and finally, at the micro level I explore the discourses expressed by applied theatre practitioners, outlining their rejection of the positivist dominated evaluation policy discourse and the approaches that can demonstrate the outcomes of their work (discourses that *set the bar* for future practice). I conclude this thesis with a summary of these discourses, demonstrating how an understanding of these may assist in the future evaluation of practice, as well as collaborative work that aims to improve the health and wellbeing of prisoners.

Declaration

I declare that no portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

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First and foremost, I would like to thank my research supervisor Professor James Thompson for his continual support throughout what has become a very long research journey. It began with a discussion about my interest in the use of drama in public health, and the impact an experience in a prison arts and health project had on me and my career in public health and as a playwright. During this journey my understanding of the use and effectiveness of applied theatre in criminal justice settings to improve the public health of offenders has been enhanced and I have been able to support others and advocate for its use in these and other settings; but this study has also highlighted further questions and gaps in my understanding. I therefore remain on that journey and the competing discourses outlined in this thesis highlight strands in discourse that I aim to further untangle and explore in my academic career.

There are also a number of other people I would like to thank for their contributions and assistance: I am grateful to the staff at Clean Break, Escape Artists, Geese, Synergy and TiPP who gave permission and trusted me to examine their work; the prison governors and education departments who granted me access to the prison environment and who gave up their time to discuss this project with me; and the University of Wolverhampton for supporting this PhD as well as my colleagues for their patience and support. During this journey I had to undergo surgery on three occasions, I am therefore deeply grateful to staff in the National Health Service, who as a result of their expertise, care and skill, have saved my sight.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and my friends, for their support and encouragement, and in particular to my father, Jai Gurdev, who always encouraged us to work for the good of others and taught us the importance of creating, telling and learning through stories. He passed away before I was able to complete this study; this thesis is therefore dedicated to his memory.

Chapter 1 Introduction

Being in here will make me a better person on the outside...I can think through how I've messed up my life. I realise that they're helping me sort it out, I know that.

Learning this stuff makes me see that I can change on the outside, something better init... like everyone else, like you.

(Daniel, HMP Birmingham. 2003)

The prison population in January 2014 was 84,977 and has averaged around 83-85,000 for the previous 12 months. The majority of prisoners in England and Wales are male, around 81,000, and the remainder are female (Gov.uk, 2014). However, since the late 1990s there has been a significant increase in the numbers of young women and older people receiving custodial sentences; as well as an increase in the numbers of prisoners from minority ethnic groups (Prison Reform Trust, 2005). The prison population continues to grow, and as a result of this researchers, broadly working in the field of criminology, have attempted to understand the wider factors relating to the causes of crime (see Newburn, 2007; Hale *et al.*, 2009) and its prevention through education and the rehabilitation of prisoners (see Raynor and Robinson, 2005; Esherick, 2006; Cullen and Gilbert, 2013). Health workers have contributed to these debates by examining approaches to address the health needs of prisoners that are related to, and exacerbated by, their criminal behaviour or as a result of incarceration (see De Viggiani 2006a; Caraher, Dixon and Hayton, 2002; Condon, Hek and Harris, 2008; Møller, *et al.*, 2007).

This thesis examines the ways in which applied theatre practitioners use and evaluate their practice when it results in or contributes to improved health outcomes for prisoners.¹ By examining the various discourses within the evaluation practices of five applied theatre companies who work predominantly in prisons and criminal justice settings, this thesis aims to offer a deeper understanding of the evaluation methods used and the wider socio-political impact on the evaluation of applied theatre practice in prisons. This research is driven by a personal and professional desire to understand the contributions and effectiveness of applied theatre in prisons and how understanding between different practitioners can be enhanced. This introduction aims to provide the reader with a brief overview of what drove me to focus my research in this field. I also aim to provide context to the study by locating it in the wider field of applied theatre practice in prisons and provide an overview of the key terms that will be used.

In 2003 I was teaching public health at the University of Wolverhampton. I began this role in 2001 after leaving the NHS where I was employed in public health roles as a health promotion

¹ These health outcomes may be core aims of a project or secondary (often unanticipated) outcomes that are either expressed by the practitioners or identifiable as outcomes within their evaluation reports.

specialist, a community development project co-ordinator and finally as a user involvement manager. Alongside this career in health and academia I had also enjoyed five years of success as a playwright focussing on collaborative and devised theatre to address communities' health education needs through the use of drama and performance. It was through this work that I encountered the prison environment and met people like Daniel. Experiences such as this encouraged me to examine the value of drama as a way of engaging prisoners in public health debates and led me to explore answers to the question "does drama help improve prisoners' health and wellbeing?"; an issue I aim to examine and further understand throughout the discourses identified within this thesis. But before I explore this encounter with Daniel and the dramatic effect it had on my work as a writer, it is worth saying a little more about my background and what else led me to focus my attention on this area of study.

My interest in the use of drama in health began in the mid-1990s. Working as a health promotion specialist I noticed that the participatory arts (such as drama, music and dance) and the visual and performing arts in general, were increasingly being utilised alongside other more traditional health education interventions. Health workers were interested in the use of these interventions to engage people and communities in discussions about challenging or sensitive health issues, often where traditional health promotion techniques produced limited results: creative approaches not only entertained, they engaged people in a way that it was hoped would enable them to consider different ways of thinking and behaviour. However, as I will go on to explore throughout this thesis, engaging people in discussions may not result in transformations or improvements in their health; and this *knowledge versus behaviour change* debate is one that has been discussed by many in the field of health promotion (see Prochaska and Diclemente, 1983; Watson, *et al*, 2002; Lynam, 2007; Sharma and Romas, 2011).

Despite being excited about the opportunities, I was also disappointed with much of the drama and health education work that I had seen. In one example, a performance aimed to raise awareness of HIV/AIDs in the Asian community; however, the content was simplistic and the overall structure was weak and predictable. I had the opportunity to discuss this with the company and the health workers who had commissioned the work and discovered that there was a difference in opinion over the overall aims of the piece (for example, priorities between the story and the health message) and the outcomes that would be achieved (i.e. how these would be measured). This was not an isolated example, and following informal discussions with other health workers, I found that many were excited about the use of drama in their work, but when they had used it they had also encountered difficulties in the partnership and were left feeling dissatisfied with the outcomes. This encouraged me to look at how this could be improved and how the needs of all parties could be met. As a result, through this research study I aim to provide the fields of applied theatre and public health with

an understanding of the discourses that influence the use and evaluation of applied theatre in prisons and identify how these influence the evaluation decisions, approaches and methods.

In 1998, my first play entitled *B22* was shown at the Royal Court Theatre, London. Focussing on the relationship between two Asian teenage boys, it was not written with an educational purpose in mind but reviewers commended it for providing a positive account of a same sex relationship to other young people who might find themselves questioning their sexuality. Supported by my background in health, I began receiving commissions for plays with a health promotion aim of education and awareness. Although I lacked a background in drama I quickly developed my knowledge in this area which enabled me to gain the respect of arts workers and my existing peers in health. Throughout these engagements, although health workers, commissioners and managers expressed their desire to utilise drama, I noticed that they held different opinions with regards to the outcomes that they expected from the work, and how these outcomes could be measured and reported. My view was shared by drama workers who felt that health workers' approaches to evaluation were focussed heavily on positivist approaches favouring statistical outcomes that measured short term impacts and outcomes and did not appreciate the value of more interpretivist and qualitative approaches that appreciated the long-term impact or the unanticipated results of their interventions. Drama workers also argued that some improvements simply could not be measured using quantitative approaches. However, this led me to question whether this difference was as a result of a lack of respect for these different practices, or whether there were wider influences impacting on their choice and approach to evaluation and how effectiveness and evidence was viewed, and was this choice in their control or not.

How to measure outcomes and how to prove effectiveness became an increasing concern for me. Project reports, strategy documents and other literature, made it clear that both health and arts organisations were required by their funders to provide *proof*; not only to account for the effects of the intervention but to prove that it resulted in *value for money* for the taxpayer. As a result, I could see that a *cost-effectiveness* debate became increasingly important as a myriad of interventions sought already limited funds. As I will go on to demonstrate in chapter four, funding opportunities for arts interventions often came with a requirement to utilise evaluation techniques that at their best included qualitative ones that gave partial understanding of the outcomes and at their worst were quantitative in nature and therefore totally inappropriate for anything other than for basic monitoring (Belfiore and Bennett, 2010). Qualitative measurements are valued by public health workers, but in a profession dominated by those trained in scientific and medical disciplines, the issue of cost-benefit and health economics is afforded increasing importance, especially as budgets are reduced in all areas of public spending. This also led to increasing demands and conditions being applied to artists engaging in commissions to address a community's health issues.

In 2004 I was invited by a National Health Service (NHS) Trust to carry out workshops with prisoners to understand their health needs, and then devise a play that incorporated positive health messages which would be used in further health promotion interventions with prisoners. The Trust specifically wanted the play to examine and explore drug misuse and positive self-perceptions amongst prisoners.² Once written and rehearsed with prisoners and professional actors it was to be toured around other local prisons. It was a timely opportunity because I had also been appointed as a magistrate a few months earlier, and became interested in understanding how recidivism could be reduced; it was also an ideal opportunity to understand how drama could be used to break the *cycle of offending*.³ I carried out preliminary research by visiting a prison and a young offenders' institution; it was these visits that would prove to have a powerful effect on me, the direction of my career in public health, and my involvement with applied theatre.

Through these discussions I discovered that many prisoners had low self-esteem and could not see themselves ending behaviours that were considered antisocial and generally *unhealthy*. We were viewed as *outsiders* coming in to *change* them, and as a result, interactions were tense at the outset. However, we were able to secure the support of the prisoners and many looked forward to our input and support. However, when talking to the project manager who commissioned the work and the prison staff, who would be instrumental in ensuring that this project was a success, their comments suggested that they were not convinced by the use of drama as a way of engaging prisoners and addressing these ongoing issues. The manager wanted evidence of clear outcomes: measureable reductions in drug misuse, smoking, and improved behaviour; to her investing in this project was a way of utilising surplus funding at the end of the financial year. The prison officer simply saw it as a waste of taxpayers' money spent on people who to him were "never going to change" and did not deserve our input.

Their comments encouraged me to examine my own thoughts and I began to question my own use of drama in health. Questions such as "is it a waste of tax payers' money?", "how effective is it?", and "how can we prove that these interventions are effective?" were beginning to dominate my thoughts. As I will outline in the literature review, at its basic level, drama can engage people in an issue through activity; by drawing on theories from education and psychology, engagement can help people learn new ways of behaving and result in change. But how could we prove that this project would have a successful health promotion

² Crime was considered as an outcome of other poor health indicators; this is supported by research that indicates that poor health attributed to crime includes drug use, mental health issues, self-esteem and anger management (De Viggiani, 2006b).

³ A term that refers to an offender moving through a cycle that involves the act of the offence, through to punishment, to rehabilitation and then returning to offending. Rehabilitative approaches focussing on education, health improvement and developing stronger links within the community are considered important factors in breaking this cycle. These theories are generally based on cyclic models that originated out of research with sexual offenders but are relevant to offenders in general and include Salter's Deviant Cycle Model (Salter, 1995) and Finkelhor's Model of Sexual Abuse Offending (Finkelhor, 1984).

outcome, how could we measure potential impact and changes and then demonstrate this proof to these and other health workers? It was not my role as the writer to dictate how the project was managed but I also needed answers to these questions. After discussing my concerns with the drama workers and the health partners it was clear that our views and professional ethics differed, so I discontinued my involvement in the project. These questions led me to decline other commissions and this began my search for answers.

1.1 Key definitions used in this thesis

I will return to Daniel's influence to this study later, but at this point it is necessary to clarify terms and provide some background to key areas that will be referred to frequently throughout this thesis. Although touched upon here, core concepts and pillars of knowledge in relevant academic fields related to this study are explored in detail in the methodology and literature chapters.

1.1.1 Applied Theatre

Drama in Education (DIE) and Theatre in Education (TIE) are said to have contributed to the development of Applied Theatre. Roger Wooster (2007) indicates that TIE grew out of DIE that developed as a result of advances in education made in the last century by the American philosopher John Dewey, and educationalists such as Harriet Finlay-Johnson and Caldwell Cook. Theatre practice that involved the audience as participants was also advanced by the educationalists and drama practitioners Peter Slade, Brian Way, Dorothy Heathcote and Gavin Bolton. Their theories placed the learner at the centre of their own learning indicating that effective learning took place when learners were encouraged to investigate through play and active approaches to discovery. Therefore, the DIE movement uses the art form of drama as an educational pedagogy; through a set of practices the approach enables learners to develop their learning, to increase awareness of themselves and others, to improve verbal and non-verbal communication skills and to deepen understanding of human behaviour (Schonmann, 2011, p.10).

TIE uses theatre as a stimulus for dramatic interactions between actors and the audience who thereby become the participants in the context created. The emergence of TIE can be traced back to Coventry's Belgrade Theatre in 1965 where theatre practitioners alongside local councillors and teachers developed an organised system of educational outreach using theatrical performance and drama workshops to explore issues of cultural, social, political and moral significance. The Belgrade Theatre encouraged and confirmed a sense of belonging, which addressed "some of the existential issues faced by inhabitants living in a newly built city" (Nicholson, 2011). Coventry's work was in part influenced by Brian Way who founded the *Theatre Centre* (London) in 1953 and was also pioneering work that engaged children in the 1960s. At this time, the UK was undergoing social and economic regeneration in its civic, cultural and democratic life; for example, the first Arts Minister was pointed in the 1960. At the

same time, people were generally dissatisfied with popular theatre and the belief in theatre as a force for genuine positive educational and social change was recognised which led to an increase in funding for arts projects.

Adding to the TIE and DIE movements were Augusto Boal's practice and philosophy. Aligning with ideas from Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) in which Freire proposes a new relationship between the teacher, student and society, Boal developed a theatrical method called *Interventionist Theatre* (1979), which is also referred to as *Theatre of the Oppressed* and *Forum Theatre*. Boal, through his work sought to challenge what Freire called "banking education" where there is a one way exchange between the educator and the educated (or the stage and the audience). He sought to create a "problem posing" theatre, where the audience, known as *spectactors*, are the experts, and the theatre aims to "stimulate and transform them" so they could solve the problems posed (Boal, 1992, p.12). The community decide the issues that are important to them and through revisiting of issues amendments are made and the *spectactors* are invited to join in and experiment or try out new (different or changed) ways of behaving. Boal (1995, p.52) argued that theatre should place audiences on both the inside and the outside of a virtual world, and it is this duality that leads to a significant reflective experience. They can therefore experience an event while controlling the nature of the experience they are having. This focus was not solely in behaviour but in how people change actions they take in order to change the world. Boal (1985, p.104) therefore argues that people become *spectactors* when they consciously and deliberately reflect and act on the implications of their own and others actions, a concept which is central to applied theatre.

Anthony Jackson (1993) in his exploration of the origins of TIE indicates that TIE, drawing on strategies from DIE such as role-playing and character hot seating, enabled participants to carefully reflect on the subject matter being focussed on to "solve the problem" (Jackson, 1993, p.89). Jackson charts the developments of TIE over this and the last century (and the many terms related to the TIE field⁴) and notes that a common element of these practices is how they "aim to effect a transformation in people's lives" (Jackson, 1993, p.1). He goes on to suggest that the *agenda* of the work (such as theatre in health education), the *location* in which it operates (such as prisons) and the *audiences* whom the work aims to target (such as prisoners) have a bearing on the premises on which the work is based and the unstated purposes of it. Roger Wooster (2007, p.21) in his examination of TIE indicates that it also draws from genres such as *agitprop* and *community theatre* where it was felt that theatre should be taken out of its usual environments and transposed to places where a wider audience might have access and benefit. In her outline of the history of theatre in education, Helen Nicholson (2005, p.24) notes how activism has also been a core element of this work,

⁴ Theatre of the oppressed, theatre in education, theatre in health education, outreach theatre, theatre in prisons, theatre for development, theatre for liberation, agit-prop, applied theatre, social theatre and interventionist theatre are just some of the additional terms that are relevant for this study.

highlighting that the motivation and methodology of the *workers' theatre movement*⁵ and its desire to take theatre to the people resulted in words such as “involvement, participation, process and activity” to become core elements of TIE. Therefore, the development of *radical street theatre*, *theatre of the oppressed* and *theatre for change movements*,⁶ developed shortly after the TIE movement, and along with community and popular theatre it attempted to help individuals and groups “to make statements about who they are and what they aspire to become”. These notions around the “hidden premises” (Jackson, 1993, p.2) on which the work is based and “unstated purposes” that may drive it, as well as the transformative nature of the work, support this study’s aim to uncover and examine the hidden discourse within how this work takes place, how it is communicated to others, and the unstated purpose behind some of these activities.

Bolton (in Jackson, 1993, p.77) indicates that DIE and TIE share the same principal objective, that of bringing about a change in understanding. John O’Toole also discusses many similarities in his book *Theatre in Education* (1977) and indicates that an important difference between the two is that whereas the learning area in drama may centre on the theme of the subject matter, the context becoming but a pretext for opening up the theme, a TIE team must bring in a different emphasis on the subject matter. It is also worth noting that both of these approaches are also widely used in public health because of their connections with educationalist theory and approaches which were key to the development of health promotion (Davies and Macdowall 2006). So, instead of an expectation of health promotion advice being only given within a health setting, the use of outreach work, which involved taking messages to the community and using techniques and methods to engage them, encouraged the use of drama, which is congruent with both DIE and TIE philosophy.

A variety of practices now fall under the general heading of “*Applied Theatre*”. It was a term that began to be used in the 1990s⁷ by theatre practitioners such as Helen Nicholson (2005) who also referred to this work as “applied drama” and is a “discursive practice...motivated by the desire to make a difference in the lives of others” (p.16); theatre that is created for a “specific need and takes place in non-theatre spaces and is motivated by a desire to generate social change” (Prendergast and Saxton, 2009); “theatre and drama applied to specific audiences and settings with particular outcomes in mind” (Baim, Brookes and Mountford, 2002, p.xiv); or community theatre, political theatre and radical theatre (Thompson, 2003, 2009; Prendergast and Saxton, 2009; Taylor, 2003; Nicholson, 2005). Ackroyd (2000) suggests that the term is an umbrella that “brings together a broad range of dramatic activity

⁵ An international movement committed to furthering the aims of communism.

⁶ For detailed discussions about these and the influence on the development of TIE and Applied theatre work see work by Jan Cohen Cruz (1998) for *Radical Theatre*; work by Robert Landy (2012) for essays around *Theatre For Change*; and work by Augusto Boal (1979) for *Theatre of The Oppressed*.

⁷ This view is challenged by Ukaegbu who suggests that rather than being relatively new, applied theatre forms can be traced back to the earliest performance rituals and that a new term is not needed for this practice (Ukaegbu, 2004, p.45-54).

carried out by a host of diverse bodies and groups” (p.2). It has also been used to define theatre that is not accurately described by other terms such as *community theatre*, *participatory theatre*, or *theatre in education* (Thompson, 2002; Stuttaford *et al.*, 2006; Jackson, 1993). In Helen Nicholson’s (2005) examination of *Applied Drama*, she argues that a distinction between the label of drama and theatre is unnecessary when the real interest lies in “what is meant by the word *applied*, to what or whom drama and theatre may be applied and for what reasons, and whose values the application of the theatre making serves and represents.” (p.2). However, Neelands (2007) asserts that it has also been taken up by many drama educators, arguing that the UK New Labour’s agenda for social regeneration, social inclusion, and participation (and rehabilitation) created a labour market for applied theatre artists. Hence the broader category of applied theatre gives opportunities that drama in education practitioners may not be offered. In an e-debate in the *Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance* (Anon, 2006), Nicholson also indicates that the term has been used in place of “Theatre for Development” to avoid the problems of *development* associated with the *developing world* (p.91). In this same debate, Murray Cox, using Shakespeare in Broadmoor prison, indicates that the point is not about the play itself, but whether those engaged in the project benefit in specific ways: to him, this is what is meant by applied. Nicholson, in her examination of the definition, refers to the use of the term *applied maths* and its focus on solving practical problems, adding that “most practitioners working in applied drama are motivated by individual or social change and there is, therefore, a similar interest in the effects and usefulness of the work.” (Nicholson, 2005, p.6). But this relies upon a shared understanding that all applied work is for a public good, a point which is highlighted by Ackroyd (2007), where she also issues a note of caution indicating that the term applied theatre has moved from being an umbrella term to refer to a range of particular forms of theatre practice sharing specific common features, to become “a term referring to a specific form itself” (p.5); supporting the view that people who work in theatre in education or community theatre may not refer to their work as applied theatre. She also sees the progression from drama in education to applied theatre as reasonable since many who write on applied theatre are from educational backgrounds (e.g. Nicholson, O’Toole and Taylor). She also calls for vigilance, since it can be “used for dubious as well as humanitarian ends.” (p.2).

More recently, the term has been developed and the word *social* has been added to emphasise theatre’s involvement in social issues such as discrimination and exclusion, which concern *social* groups such as prisoners and with the intention of having a social impact, such as a reduction in crime (Thompson and Schechner, 2004; Preston, 2009). Whilst this addition to the definition has relevance to this study and enables an appreciation of how theatre can have a social impact on a social group, my interest in the use of applied theatre to advance public health aims in prisons draw me to align my definition of applied theatre to refer to community and participatory theatre that aims to *change* or assist in *improvements* or

transformations in the groups that it is used with. However, I am aware that whilst I am looking at specific transformations and changes for participants engaging with applied theatre, the aims of these transformations and the hope of achieving an improvement in people's lives is often held by the practitioner (Ackroyd, 2000; Taylor, 2003) and others would challenge this notion, suggesting that the potential *impacts*, the *outcomes* and the *truths* revealed through the use of applied theatre could be questioned (Nicholson, 2005; Balfour, 2000, 2009; Thompson, 2009). Indeed, this has led James Thompson (2009) to argue that these *effects* are questionable and an "affective realm needs to be the focus" for a renewed practice. This concept is of importance to this study and is explored more fully in section 3.5.4 of this thesis and in each of the discussion chapters.

Of particular relevance to this thesis are the points Nicholson (2005) raises in relationship to the social role of theatre. Citing the work of Baz Kershaw (2004) she supports his point that "globalisation is sustained by carefully managed performances of power", suggesting that "society in the affluent west has become regulated by different forms of non-theatrical performance, 'performative societies' have resulted in every dimension of human exchange and experience is suffused by performance and gains a theatrical quality" (Nicholson, 2005, p.12). The challenge of theatre is therefore to interrogate *how performances of power* have been *constructed* and find different ways to understand experience. This notion of *power* and *constructions* of it, align with Tony Jackson's view of the *hidden* and *unstated purposes* of theatre work. What may seem relatively simple becomes complex and requires a deeper analysis once we understand some of the many issues that underpin and frame its practice and development. It is also a debate that this study aims to contribute to by highlighting and uncovering the discourses within the evaluation of applied theatre practice in prisons.

1.1.2 Health Promotion and Public Health

Public health has been defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as the "science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organised efforts and informed choices of society, organisations, public and private, communities and Individuals" (Detels, 2009, p.369). Health promotion sits within the wider field of public health and is a term that covers all interventions that promote health; it is a relatively new discipline and draws on the disciplines of sociology, psychology, politics and education theory (Kemm and Close, 1995). A variety of activities within health promotion have been used to define this work; these include "health education" with its roots in the education and learning theories of Paulo Freire, David Kolb and Benjamin Bloom (Black, *et al.*, 2010; Bloom, 1956; Freire, 1970; Kolb and Allen, 1984; Sharma and Romas, 2011);, "health improvement" and "health protection" (Orme, *et al.*, 2011); and "community health development", which is also referred to as "community health action" (Ledwith, 2011; Lynam, 2007). However, these terms have been used interchangeably or alongside the term health promotion (Naidoo and Wills, 2000, p.12).

Definitions of health promotion have grown from an initial definition offered by WHO in 1986, in which health promotion was defined as “the process of enabling people to increase control over the determinants of health and thereby improve their health” (WHO, 1986). The definition has undergone many transformations since this time to take account of new health challenges and a better understanding of economic, environmental and social determinants of health and disease (see Sharma and Romas, 2011; Davies and Macdowall, 2006; Tones and Green, 2004; Laverack, 2004; Komatsu, 2004; Seedhouse, 2004; Bunton and MacDonald, 2002; Naidoo and Wills, 2000; Kemm and Close, 1995). Therefore, as well as covering actions aimed at strengthening people’s skills and capabilities, it also includes “actions directed towards changing social and environmental conditions to prevent or to improve their impact on individual and public health” (Department of Health [DH], 2005, p.7). It is also considered to be any activity that promotes healthy ideas and concepts to motivate individuals to adopt health behaviours (Katz, Peberdy and Douglas, 2000, p.31).

Many health promotion theories assert that wellbeing is maintained by addressing issues within a variety of dimensions; these include, at an individual level, mental, emotional, spiritual, social, physical, and sexual health; and broader issues at an environmental and a societal level (Aggleton and Homans, 1987). Health promotion practitioners therefore take a “holistic” view of health which incorporates positive wellbeing and aims to address the wider determinants of health, rather than focusing on disease and an emphasis on individual behaviour. However, since the early nineteenth century, health promotion workers sought to establish the discipline and profession, but have struggled to distance themselves from the field of public health and particularly the medical model of health which has dominated twentieth century thinking (Aggleton, 1990).

Although aspects of health promotion can be seen throughout history, as a professional discipline its roots can be traced back to the health education campaigns in the early 1970s.⁸ In the 1980s, health promotion activity was predominantly concerned with sexual health and drug misuse as evidenced by the *Don’t Die of Ignorance* HIV/AIDS awareness campaign which was the first mass campaign to utilise advertisements to disseminate health messages to the public (Aggleton, 1990). It was also at this time that a variety of creative methods could be seen to promote wellbeing: these included the use of the media, arts workshops, educational talks, posters and fliers (Naidoo and Wills, 2001). Although theatre and development programmes were not new,⁹ health promotion practitioners developed their

⁸ For example, the 1970s *Look After Yourself Programme* offered the notion that changes in the ways of living, especially in youth and middle age, can result in large improvements in health and wellbeing (HEC, 1978).

⁹ By way of example, colonial development programmes incorporated health related messages that aimed to educate populations about diseases that were introduced by the colonists, as well as practices and behaviours that were considered more acceptable and challenged the pre-colonial practices of worship to God for protection (Klaza, 2001). In post-colonial times, theatre for development focused on

working relationships with drama workers and theatre companies to address health objectives.

Overlaps with public health became evident especially when developments in biomedicine shifted the emphasis from large scale population based approaches, towards personal prevention and individual lifestyles and behaviours. An emergence of the *New Public Health* in the late twentieth century was an attempt to move away from this emphasis on individual responsibility for health towards a consideration of the social, economic and environmental factors that collectively influence health and health action (Seedhouse, 2004). This could be seen as a time when the disciplines of health promotion and public health became as one and a modern multidisciplinary public health emerged which brought together all those working to positively impact on the health outcomes of communities and populations. As a result of the overlaps between these definitions, the terms health promotion and public health will be used interchangeably at various points within this thesis.

1.1.3 Evaluation, effectiveness and evidence

Throughout this study, I use of the terms evaluation, effectiveness and evidence in my examination of political discourse, discourses in the research literature and discourses expressed by theatre practitioners in their evaluation documents and when they talk about evaluation. Before examining the definitions of evaluation, it is worth mentioning that these are related concepts and are therefore used interchangeably in the discourse to describe various stages of the process (*evaluation*), the impact and results (*effectiveness*) and how it aids an overall understanding in the field (*evidence*). In other words, the process of *evaluation* considers the value or worth of something, and demonstrates whether an intervention is *effective*, and this in turn leads to *evidence* that indicates whether a belief or position is true.

WHO defines *evaluation* as the “systematic examination and assessment of the features of an initiative and its effects, in order to produce information that can be used by those who have an interest in its improvement or effectiveness” (WHO, 1998a). Others suggest that it is the “critical assessment, on as objective basis as possible, of the degree to which entire services or their component parts, fulfil stated goals” (St Leger, Schnieden and Walsworth-Bell, 1992, p.1). Springett (2001, p.144) indicates that the aim of evaluation is to “contribute towards solving practical problems, in terms of what works and why. It is about collecting information to inform action. Most of all it is about learning from experience.” Finally, Tones and Green (2004, p.52) suggest that evaluation is essentially about “determining the extent to which certain values and goals have been achieved”. A more generic definition is offered by Rossi (2004, pp.182-183) who claims that “evaluation research is the systematic application of social research procedures for assessing the conceptualisation, design, implementation and

addressing social, education and health problems with an appreciation of the specific cultural influences upon these.

utility of social intervention programs.” In other words, evaluation researchers (evaluators) use “social research methods to judge and improve”. Evaluation is therefore a type of research that examines the evidence to help decide what best practice is.

However, there is a difference between evaluation of practice and evaluation as a research process. Smith (1975) highlights five features that set evaluations apart from research. Firstly whilst research is used for a variety of purposes, evaluation is primarily used to assess the achievement of a defined goal and therefore it is often instigated by somebody who has control over the focus and the use of the findings. This point is relevant to this study in which I examine how evaluation is used to understand the outcomes of the predefined goals of an applied theatre project. Secondly, research often contributes to knowledge and understanding, whereas evaluation findings can be used to inform or influence decision makers.¹⁰ In the case of the evaluations analysed in this study, the influence of policy makers and funders will be explored in the way evaluation of applied theatre is carried out and in the way findings are reported. Thirdly, evaluation is not a major priority for participants – which I discovered was clearly true for prisoners who engage in applied theatre projects. Fourthly, there is a wider diversity of stakeholders in evaluation and therefore greater potential for conflict about the selection of appropriate indicators and the means of measuring their achievements. In the analysis of the discourses identified in this study, I examine how evaluation methods used by applied theatre practitioners differ to those of health promotion workers and thus an understanding of achievements differs in the discourses replicated and presented in the evaluation reports and other texts. Smith concludes his observations by indicating that there are greater time constraints within evaluation as the length of programmes is finite. In the case of applied theatre programmes in prisons, I found that projects were often short lived and practitioners are therefore denied the use of longitudinal evaluation studies which may provide more convincing evidence of the long term effects of their work.

Regardless of the definition chosen, a common feature of evaluation is that it assesses the goals of a project. But as Smith alludes to above, we also need to consider the unanticipated outcomes. It is often the case that predetermined goals have not been identified at the planning stage of the intervention; this is particularly evident in applied theatre projects examined in this study where the health outcomes are identifiable but go unreported. Furthermore, the definitions do not suggest how findings can be used to assist in decision-making about future courses of action, for example in building the evidence base more generally. Green and South (2006, p.83) therefore suggests that monitoring is a more useful tool: “a systematic and continual process allowing people to keep track of activities to ensure they are proceeding according to plan”. Monitoring looks at recording what has happened in

¹⁰ This point is disputed by others who suggest that we know fairly little about how policy decisions are really made and that many are not based on the evidence from practice (see Weiss, 1995; Page, 2006)

terms of programme delivery, whereas evaluation is concerned with assessing what has been achieved and how any changes have come about as a result. However, in her examination of applied theatre and prisons, Caoimhe McAvinchey (2011, p.78) is critical of the way different terms are used when discussing the effects of this work and suggests that “the role of monitoring, target setting and evaluation is increasingly being used as a capitalist model of private management in prison environments to measure economy, efficiency and effectiveness.” This supports findings in this study which indicate that the drive for monitoring reflects a discourse that encourages a focus on assessing the economic impact of social funding.

1.1.4 Critical Discourse Analysis

This research study adopts a particular approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offered by Norman Fairclough (1995). CDA comes from the more widely understood discipline of discourse analysis, which literally refers to “the analysis of texts whether written or spoken, in order to interpret the way language functions in a given context” (Wetherall, Taylor and Yates, 2001). In studies of discourse analysis, the term *discourse* essentially refers to the analysis of an aspect of language, i.e. language in use and language in social contexts as opposed to the system of language; and specifically explores meanings which constitute social action, signification and representation which constitute culture (Parker, 1992, p.73). Adherents of discourse analysis would suggest that applied theatre practice in prisons and its evaluation has a discourse that forms a culture which impacts on how practice is carried out and what restricts it, and that this can be understood by analysing the language used.

There are many approaches to discourse analysis and many of these focus on more linguistic approaches where semiotics and the intricacies of language are explored (Potter and Wetherell, 1987). Discourse analysis is different to approaches from the structural linguist field which began with writers such as Ferdinand de Saussure (Saussure, 1983) and was adapted and developed by sociologists such as Wetherall, Potter, and Parker (Wetherall, Taylor and Yates, 2001; Potter and Wetherell, 1994; Potter, 2004; Parker, 1992). Their concept of discourse analysis is one that specifically looks at the spoken word and interpretations of this; focusing on aspects of language use and grammar. Whilst this approach is relevant and would be worthwhile to this study, a pure sociolinguistic approach was not adopted as I did not aim to explore the specific meanings that individual participants attach to their experience of practice; this approach would be relevant if the aims of this study were to interpret and understand a prisoners’ experience of performance.

There are conversation analysts, and there are discourse analysts who work with the written format; there are those theorists who suggest that discourse is essentially spoken interaction whereas at the opposite end of the spectrum of approaches within the field of discourse analysis is the work of the French discourse theorist Michel Foucault (Foucault, 1972). These

will be explored in further detail in the methodology chapter, but for summary here, where the term discourse is used in this thesis it refers to Fairclough's (1992) definition: "discourse is more than just language use, it is language use seen as a type of social practice" (p.28). Therefore, for Fairclough (2001) discourse analysis must involve "analysing the relationship between texts, processes, and social conditions, both the immediate conditions of the situational context and the more remote conditions of institutions and social structures." (p.26)

1.2 Thesis Structure

In Chapter 2 I set out the theoretical dimensions of this study and explore the contribution of constructionist approaches and in particular those of discourse analysis, and finally Fairclough's approach to CDA, providing a rationale for its use in this study. Through this discussion I clarify how the philosophy and relevant works of Michel Foucault are combined with CDA to provide an understanding of the research area to examine the discourses identified. I also outline the approach to analysis using the framework offered by Fairclough and detail the methods and data that will be used to examine the macro level discourses (in policy) the meso level discourses (through company evaluation reports) and the micro level discourses (through interviews). In doing so I demonstrate how this thesis works across disciplines and uses different methodologies in a unique way to examine this issue.

I then outline why I focus on applied theatre practice that took place under the New Labour Government (1997-2010). In CDA, an analysis of literature is an important element of the macro level of analysis, and enables discourses identified at other levels to be understood in their wider context; therefore, the review of literature in Chapter 3 begins this process and examines a large body of literature from the fields of applied theatre, public health and criminology. My analysis of the literature moves from broad debates to specific debates in these fields that examine evaluation practices and the influences on these practices. In doing so I highlight how the arguments in this thesis both contribute to these debates and provide original and new contributions to knowledge.

In Chapter 4 I discuss the discourses identified at the macro level of analysis. I explore how government policy discourses around evaluation, health, collaboration, power and control encouraged health and criminal justice workers to use creative methods in their practice which provided an opportunity for applied theatre practitioners to work in collaboration with them; however, accompanying this was a requirement to demonstrate the effectiveness of applied theatre that ultimately served to restrict practice and hindered an understanding of the true benefits of these approaches in the rehabilitation of prisoners. The themes and arguments in this chapter are drawn upon in Chapter 5 to assist an understanding of how discourses were replicated, challenged or created by applied theatre practitioners in their work and their evaluation practices.

In Chapter 5 I combine the meso and micro levels of analysis to examine how theatre companies and practitioners respond to macro level discourses in their evaluation documents and in their speech. This chapter reveals the challenges applied theatre practitioners and theatre companies faced when working within a political framework that attempt to control their practice and their choice of evaluation methods. This resulted in discourses that demonstrated an attempt to reflect and incorporate wider level discourses in practice but also resulted in conflict and challenge between what was reported and what was said.

Throughout chapters 3-5 I examine how applied theatre has become increasingly popular and as a result the need for an understanding between health workers and applied theatre practitioners requires attention to ensure that future collaborations are effective. In particular I indicate that an understanding of what counts as effectiveness (and discourses relating to this), and to have a shared and respectful understanding of this between workers from different disciplines, is crucial if collaborations are to be successful and worthwhile for all stakeholders.

In Chapter 6, I reflect on the aims of this study and summarise how they were achieved. In drawing these debates together I indicate how the discourses and themes identified and discussed in this thesis contribute original knowledge to the theoretical, methodological and empirical debates in this field; providing those working in health, criminal justice and applied theatre with a better understanding of the discourses that influence practice and how evaluation principles could assist in the development of this work and future collaborations. I also reflect on some of the limitations to this study and identify recommendations for practice and policy as well as recommendations for further research and the dissemination process.

1.3 Chapter summary

The statement at the start of this chapter was made by Daniel in 2003; a 32 year old prisoner serving a two year sentence in HMP Birmingham. He told me he received a custodial sentence for theft because of his continued offending and because all other sentencing options had been exhausted. It was his third time in prison, but because of the drama activities he was engaging with, he felt things were going to be different for him this time. His optimism and desire for change was powerful. But for all his support for interventions using drama, my own experiences left me feeling that those working within public health would refer back to an understanding of *what works* based on discourses that reflect a positivist epistemology that does not fully acknowledge these personal journeys. This thesis therefore brings together thoughts and views from a growing but disparate body of research around the evaluation of applied theatre in prisons and casts new light on these debates through a broader examination of the field. Through the use of CDA, I aim to critically examine the discourses at a socio-political and economic level, to provide an understanding of how these

influence approaches to evaluation and how these are communicated by applied theatre practitioners and companies.

The metaphor of the bar is a useful way of conceptualising the connections I make between discourse and applied theatre practice throughout this thesis. The physical and metaphoric representation of these '*bars*' reflects the differences and difficulties of working in such environments. On a literal level the bars present the first obstacle for applied theatre and health professionals who wish to work with people within this space: they keep people in and they keep people out. The bars therefore not only serve to *restrain* and *limit* prisoners' freedom and liberty but they also *restrain* and hold back those who wish to work within prisons to help them change their lives. The attitudes of the prison staff, the personal motivations of prisoners or their social circumstances present a further more subtle bar; and it is not that difficult to stretch this metaphor further, and suggest that policy presents one of the biggest bars to the effective development and implementation of work within prison contexts. One could argue therefore, that whilst policy aims to *direct* and *lead*, it also has the *power* to *detain* and *restrain* the work that is carried out within these contexts.

The bars may restrict and cause a barrier, but as well as overcoming these through collaboration with others and using their techniques alongside their own, applied theatre workers have been pushing at these bars, pushing against a *power* that constrains, restricts and at times *bars* their artistic freedom and ability to work in these places and with these people. They have also pushed against the bars often posed by other disciplines that challenge the effectiveness of their approach or practice, identifying increased health and wellbeing outcomes for prisoners as a result of their engagement in drama activities; and through models that enable evaluation to be better understood.

By examining these discourses I aim to demonstrate how applied theatre practice assists in the rehabilitation of prisoners, reduces recidivism, and addresses their wider health concerns; providing a deeper understanding of how effectiveness can be measured, understood and demonstrated to others. I suggest that applied theatre practitioners can seek closer collaborations with health promotion workers and can do this through an appreciation of what counts as effective practice through an understanding of evaluation discourses. It is hoped that this understanding will assist applied theatre practitioners and health workers to consider their evaluation of this work and contribute to a greater respect between applied theatre, health and prison workers, and those that fund this work.

[In answer to the question "what do you think will help prevent you from returning to prison?"]

Dunno really, this is my third time... third 'visit'. First time it's a shock, but you learn to cope, you realise it ain't that bad. Only thing that helps is learning how to change on the outside I guess. Drama is good. People

don't know until they've done it...it's not like it was at school, you know, fucking Shakespeare and shit; you can practice things here, then come out a different person. Never to come back. [laughs]
(Daniel.)

Chapter 2 Methodology

The introduction and the literature review chapter that follows this chapter, provides a clearer understanding of the research and assists in the formulation of the research questions through an understanding of the underlying theoretical and methodological issues. This chapter begins by examining the ontological and epistemological approaches which underpin this work. After outlining the theoretical dimensions of this research, I explore the contribution of constructionist approaches and in particular those of discourse analysis and finally Norman Fairclough's approach to CDA, providing a rationale for its use in this study. In addition, relevant works of Michel Foucault will be explored to explain why and how his philosophy forms a central theme within this thesis for understanding the research area. The sampling strategy employed to identify cases for investigation is then detailed, an introductory outline of the five applied theatre companies whose evaluation practices are examined, the ethical considerations that were considered throughout the research process, the data collection process and how the data was analysed. The chapter concludes with a summary of the key points raised, and a summary of what contributions this study makes to the overall body of knowledge in this field.

2.1 Focus of research

Public health and health promotion researchers utilise a wide range of research techniques to examine effectiveness ranging from methods located in the positivist quantitative paradigms such as randomised controlled trials, and large scale longitudinal studies, to more naturalistic qualitative studies which explore smaller groups of people or 'cases' to understand meaning, context and content; for example through interviews and observations. The review of literature and research in chapter 3 shows that when it comes to the use of the arts in health, health promoters using these techniques have used a variety of methods to evaluate their work; ranging from qualitative research methods to provide an understanding of the impact of an intervention to quantitative approaches that aim to measure and account for the effects of an intervention (Carey, 2005). Historically research into the effectiveness of applied theatre practice in prisons has tended to use qualitative research methods; however, these have also been ad hoc and have not utilised "robust scientific methods or adopted long term follow-up approaches" (Hughes, 2008, p38). Few studies have opted to utilise quantitative methods, and where they have, the findings have been limited in their depth, or take the form of assessments using pre and post-test surveys that tell us little about the long term effects of the intervention (Gussak, 2005).

As an academic and a researcher with a predominant public health background this study began with a need to understand how I should approach this research. My background in public health kept drawing me towards positivist approaches, but my ontological and epistemological positions were heavily influenced by my encounters as a playwright and with

Daniel and other prisoners, subsequent discussions with prison staff, arts workers and public health workers. Adopting a positivist approach to this study would have led me to consider ways that applied theatre could be measured; however, my interest was in how these companies who used applied theatre in their practice demonstrated their effectiveness and what influenced these evaluations and the reporting of them. I knew from my own experiences that what applied theatre and health practitioners considered as effective practice was in dispute: whilst many researchers attempted to explore the wider social and political impacts around the need for and methods of evaluation, the ideas or constructs which underlie the interpretation of effectiveness was largely missing. There is also much research and debate around the methods that can be used to demonstrate effectiveness, but little in explaining and providing an understanding of the wider determinants and impacts on these choices.

The literature indicates that approaches to evaluation and evidence are underpinned by varying ontological assumptions, i.e. assumptions about what evaluation, effectiveness or evidence is. In public health, evaluation is generally seen as an ontological reality which requires measurement; findings can lead to action to improve practice or adopt alternative methods, for example, to increase effectiveness; these positivist notions feature heavily in the literature around evaluation approaches in general.¹¹ However, the literature around the use of applied theatre in prisons highlighted many examples of interpretive approaches to evaluation that recognise the meanings attached around effectiveness to the individuals experience as a participant in a project (Møller, 2003), the applied theatre practitioner's understanding of the outcomes (Heritage, 2004) and how these outcomes are communicated to funders and others (Belfiore and Bennett, 2010). These interpretivist approaches acknowledge the fact that evidence, effectiveness and evaluations are to some degree socially constructed.

The literature confirmed that many researchers were already looking at ways and approaches to demonstrate effectiveness, which encouraged me to consider a more constructionist approach to understand meaning. This would enable me to add to this body of knowledge and understanding around the evidence base for applied theatre. Therefore, the ontological position of this research will be that the *truth* about how applied theatre companies evaluate their work can only be acquired by interacting with those engaged in delivering this work in prisons in order to seek their opinion about the issue being investigated. Based on this, the epistemological position for this study will be that the best way to understand the *truth* is to ask companies and to examine documentary sources to enable a deeper contextualisation and discussion of the issues around the subject being investigated.

¹¹ This issue is explored further in section 3.5 and the analysis of discourses in chapters 4 and 5.

Positioning myself in the theoretical work of critical realism enabled me to not only appreciate the positivist roots of my public health background, but also acknowledge the constructionist views of the world and recognise that there are multiple epistemologies. The term critical realism was a term initially proposed by Bhaskar (1998) in the 1970s. It provides an alternative to positivism and post-modern constructionist views of the world whilst recognising the strengths and weaknesses of both approaches, focussing on three ontological premises about social reality: intransivity, transfactuality and stratification. The notion of intransivity proposes that objects can exist independently of their identification or verification; so, there is a real material and social world whether or not this is known by individuals or society at large. Therefore, evaluation practices can be seen as intransitive objects, and the meanings given to them by individuals will therefore differ between applied theatre practitioners, health workers and educationalists in the criminal justice sector. Transfactuality relates to the constancy of social or physical mechanisms; so to understand the mechanisms associated with evaluation practices one has to understand the specific historical and political context in which these practices take place. Critical realists accept that these will remain relatively consistent; however, over a period of time they may change. Stratification refers to an understanding of three domains of reality: the empirical in which events can be observed, the actual realm in which events take place, and the real mechanisms which produce different events such as ideas or discourses. In this study, the concept of stratification recognises that applied theatre practitioners operate in an agentic manner with institutional and discursive structures when carrying out and evaluating their practice. Critical realists therefore suggest that as a result of these, knowledge is always mediated and is therefore transitive (Cruickshank, 2003). The transitive construction of knowledge includes ways of knowing and approaches to generating knowledge, including the researcher's own perspective and the way in which the research subject is approached.

Based on the ontological and the epistemological positions held in this study, and from a critical realist position, a methodology that could integrate different approaches and recognise how evaluation is constructed in varying areas of practice, and considering the influence of power, was required. Discourse analysis was seen as most appropriate and in particular the CDA approach offered by Norman Fairclough.

2.2 Social constructionism

Many approaches to discourse analysis adopt a social constructionist¹² foundation in their view of language (e.g. structuralist and poststructuralist linguistics), and in their understanding of the individual based on a version of structuralist Marxism. Vivien Burr indicates that the term social constructionism cannot cover all social constructionist approaches since they are varied and diverse. However, drawing on the work of Keith Gergen (1985) she indicates that

¹² The term *social constructionism* is used in this thesis to avoid confusion with Piaget's *constructivist* theory (Burr, 1995, p.2).

there are several concepts shared by all social constructionist approaches. Firstly, social constructionists take a critical approach to taken for granted knowledge, and therefore knowledge of the world should not be treated as objective truth. Reality is only accessible to us through categories and is a product of our own ways of categorising the world, they are products of discourse (Burr, 1995, p.3). Secondly, social constructionists assert that our views of, and knowledge about, the world are the product of “historically situated interchanges among people” (Gergen, 1985, p.267). Therefore, the ways in which we understand the world are historically and culturally specific and our worldviews and their identities could have been different, and they can change over time. Discourse plays a part in producing the world (including knowledge, identities and social relations) and thereby in maintaining specific social patterns. Thirdly, there is a link between knowledge and social processes so our ways of understanding the world are created and maintained by social processes (Burr, 2003; Gergen, 1985). Knowledge is created through social interaction in which we construct common views and compete about what is true and false. Finally, different social understandings of the world lead to different social actions, and therefore the social construction of knowledge and truth have social consequences (Burr, 2003; Gergen, 1985).

Social constructionism also has roots in French poststructuralist theory and its rejection of totalising and universalising theories such as Marxism and psychoanalysis. Jørgensen and Phillips (2009, p.6) indicate that most discourse analytical approaches draw on structuralist and poststructuralist language theory, but the approaches vary as to the extent to which the poststructuralist label applies. As I outline later, different elements of social constructionism can be seen in different aspects of discourse theory. The idea that something is socially constructed would suggest that it did not previously exist outside of this construction and it is only through being constructed that it has a reality (Liebrucks, 2001). This argument would then suggest that applied theatre interventions with prisoners did not exist prior to their *construction* under the term *applied theatre* (or other terms that are used to describe this work), or that they were not *effective* until this was examined through evaluation. For example, a great deal of literature pertaining to applied theatre frequently gives the impression that this form of theatre was *discovered* mainly during the 1960s and did not take place before (Preston, 2009). However to suggest that applied or participatory theatre had been “discovered” and is new is problematic in that it would deny the existence of approaches that engaged people in theatre practices and methods that allowed them to explore their behaviour prior to its construction, and this would be untrue. This then raises the question: “is the effectiveness of applied theatre real, or constructed?” It is my view that this approach is particularly useful as the use of theatre in prisons and in the criminal justice setting in general, which is given the title of *applied theatre* is still relatively new and there is much debate and discussion surrounding its effectiveness, as exemplified by many writers in this field (Thompson, 2001; Hughes, 2001; Thompson, 2000; Stuttford, *et al.*, 2006; Preston, 2009). This thesis therefore attempts to highlight how the discourse surrounding evaluation helps to

further construct the field of applied theatre, and in particular, as a way of categorising practices under this term.

2.3 Discourse analysis

Through an examination of some key approaches to discourse analysis, I aim to locate this study more clearly within this complex theoretical area and demonstrate the differences and benefits of each approach to this study, but ultimately why they were rejected in favour of the chosen approach. Moreover, each of these approaches uses the term discourse in different ways, and although a definition was briefly explored in the introduction to this thesis, this examination also aims to further clarify how the term *discourse* will be used in this study.

Building on the definitions outlined in the introduction to this thesis, a discourse is composed of semiotic sequences (relations among *signs*) between and among objects, subjects, and statements (Rapley, 2008). The term *discursive formation* conceptually describes communications (either written or spoken) or actions that produce such discourses. They can essentially be understood as the way by which we engage with reality. Thus discourse through language allows us to connect with and make sense of the world (Gee, 2004, p.48). Discourse is therefore *constructed reality*: while *material reality* may have ontological existence, in epistemological terms it is always mediated discursively (Olssen, Codd and O'Neill, 2004, p.68). Discourse is therefore “a practice not just of representing the world, but of signifying the world, constituting and constructing the world in meaning” (Fairclough, 1992, p.64).

Potter (2004) suggests that there various domains within discourse analysis which reflect roots in linguistics, cognitive psychology, sociolinguistics and post structuralism. There are theorists who suggest that discourse is essentially spoken interaction and others who suggest that a more thematic level of analysis enables a clear understanding of the different interactions taking place; the latter includes the work of Michel Foucault (1972) who suggests that utterances are regulated and maintained by rules and wider discursive structures. Furthermore, Potter and Wetherell (1987) note that there is no standard method to approach discourse analysis in the traditional way of experimental methods. This is further emphasised by Parker (1992, p.73) who states that “discourse analysis is seen as an intuitive activity shaped by the conceptions of discourse.”

Sociolinguistic approaches that focus on language *in use* describe methods for the analysis of language and discourse at the micro level. A particular form of sociolinguistic discourse analysis is conversation analysis which examines the type of language and the way in which it is used and how it differs according to the settings in which it is used (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 2008). Sociolinguistic discourse analysis and conversation analysis operate at the micro level, examining language in detail, rather than offering an opportunity to consider discourse in a

broader context. They therefore do not explore the specific meanings that participants attach to their experience of evaluation practice; this approach would be relevant if the aims of this study were, for example, to interpret and understand a prisoners' experience of applied theatre performance. Whilst useful in understanding interaction within a prison drama project, it does not explain the broader influences on practice (i.e. to societal or political discourses) and the resultant outcomes. This approach has also been criticised by Fairclough (2001, p.37) who argues that it "continues a positivist belief that there are observable truths rather than practices which are constructed by the participant and the observer."

2.4 Foucault and Discourse

The philosophy and works of the French post-structuralist philosopher Michel Foucault are drawn upon within an overall CDA approach in this research, and in particular, his concepts of *truth* (incorporating his concept of *understanding*), *power and knowledge*, which essentially constitutes discourse for Foucault. Foucault's work is divided between an early archaeological phase and a later genealogical phase. Discourse theory forms part of his archaeology, where he *archaeologically* studies the rules that determine which statements are accepted as meaningful and true in a particular historical epoch, which in his work, *The Order of Things* (1970), he refers to as *Episteme*. However, his work is not a system of ideas or a general theory, and his notion of discourse is not situated within a larger system of fully worked out theoretical ideas, but is one element in Foucault's work. As Sara Mills (2004, p.21) notes, a lack of system causes difficulties for discourse theorists, but also enables flexibility when theorists are trying to use Foucault's work to fit changing social circumstances. Therefore, elements of his work were seen as useful in this research, in that they allow for an examination of how truths about how applied theatre interventions in prisons are evaluated: to understand how practitioners delivering this work indicate its benefits to those who take part in or fund this work, and ultimately how this effectiveness or impact is reported.

Foucault wrote extensively about prisons and health and although a full examination and outline of his work is outside the remit of this thesis, by examining some aspects of Foucault's work here, in particular his notion of power, and applying it to discourses around effectiveness and what influences evaluation later in this thesis, I aim to provide an understanding about how power can be seen as a central construct that binds the disciplines of public health and applied theatre together (Jones and Porter.,1998; Foucault,1995; McNay,1994; Foucault, 1972; Foucault, 2003). Therefore, the main argument that runs throughout this thesis is that the notion of power in Foucault's work offers a productive way of exploring how and why applied theatre interventions in prisons are evaluated, which enables a deeper understanding that can assist practitioners in future evaluations.

Foucault adheres to the general social constructionist premise that knowledge is not just a reflection of reality. To Foucault, truth is a *discursive construction* and different regimes of

knowledge determine what is true and false. Jørgensen (2009) indicates that Foucauldian analysts aim to investigate the structure of different regimes of knowledge - i.e. the rules for what can and cannot be said and the rules for what is considered to be true and false. To Foucault we have an infinite number of ways to formulate statements; statements that are produced within a specific domain are often similar and repetitive. Moreover, there are innumerable statements that are never uttered, and would never be accepted as meaningful. He suggests that the historical rules of the particular discourse delimit what it is possible to say (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2009, p.13), so, discourses are rule-bound sets of statements which impose limits on what gives meaning and truth is something which is created discursively. Evaluation is a form of knowledge production that produces a certain type of *authority*; in this thesis I therefore explore the discourses that help create this knowledge and identify to what extent they are bound by rules dictated by policy and those replicated by applied theatre practitioners themselves.

Foucault's theory of power/knowledge was developed in his genealogical work. To Foucault, power does not belong to particular agents such as individuals or the state or groups with particular interests; instead, power is spread across different social practices. Power should not be understood as exclusively oppressive but as productive; and therefore, power constitutes discourse and knowledge (Foucault, 1981, p.119). He indicates that it is in power that our social world is produced and objects are separated from one another and thus attain their individual characteristics and relationships to one another. For example, he suggests that crime has been created as an area with its own institutions (prisons), particular subjects (criminals), and particular practices (rehabilitation and re-socialisation). Power is also always bound up with knowledge; for example, the modern prison system is linked with a study of criminology (Foucault, 1995). Therefore, power is responsible both for creating our social world and for the particular ways in which the world is formed and can be talked about, ruling out alternative ways of being and talking.

The focus on power is relevant for this study, as understanding how and why evaluations take place involves the defining of power relations between theatre companies, prison authorities, funders and public health workers. So for Foucault the relationship between power and discourse is not seen as a purely one dimensional concept and he makes a distinction between discursive power and sovereign power. In the context of understanding evaluation practice we can distinguish this between power which is a result of institutional structures (*sovereign power*) and the power which is a result of discourses constraining individuals (*discursive power*) (Allen, 1998).

Foucault's concept of power/knowledge also has consequences for his conception of truth. He claims that it is not possible to gain access to universal truth since it is impossible to talk from a position outside discourse; so called *truth effects* are created within discourses. In his

genealogical phase, he makes a link between truth and power, arguing that truth is embedded in, and produced by, systems of power. Because truth is unattainable, he indicates that it is pointless to question whether something is true or false, instead, the focus should be on *how* effects of truth are *created* in discourses. What needs to be analysed are the discursive processes through which discourses are constructed in ways that give the impression that they represent true or false pictures of reality.

He also makes an important point regarding ideology; drawing on the work of Louis Althusser, he indicates that an individual becomes an ideological¹³ subject through a process of interpellation.¹⁴ Interpellation denotes the process through which language constructs a social position for the individual and thereby makes them an ideological subject. For example, evaluation policy, which I will go on to indicate, *interpellates* applied theatre practitioners with a *responsibility* to use public funds to *transform* or *change* the behaviour of the prisoners they work with. By accepting the role as addressees of the policy text, applied theatre practitioners affiliate his/her subject position that the interpellation has created (in Althusserian terms, s/he recognises his/her *subjecthood*). By accepting the role as subjects in this relationship, hegemonic power reproduces itself: individuals recognise themselves as subjects through ideology, illustrating how they can be complicit in their own domination. In the analysis chapters of this thesis, examples of this interpellation can be seen through the replication of discourses present at policy level, within evaluation documents, and in practitioners' speech.

Foucault's archaeological analysis of discourse is important because as well as being interested in analysing the discourses which are circulating in society it allows an examination of those which are different and unfamiliar. Groups of discourses make up the structures of an *episteme*; epistemes are constructed from sets of *statements*, grouped into different discourses or discursive frameworks. Statements are therefore, those "utterances which have some institutional force and is thus validated by some form of authority" (Mills, 2004, p.61). Statements do not exist in isolation since there is a set of structures which enables those statements to make sense and gives them their force. Foucault uses the term *discursive formation* to recognise the relationship between statements and ideas which create or define a discourse; a discourse therefore contains a pattern of statements which is repeated by different people or in different *genres* or *contexts* (Foucault, 1995; Foucault, 2002; Hall, 2001). In the *Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault, 1972), he indicates that over time the epistemes change in *discursive systems*, and these changes subsequently affect views of

¹³ Althusser (1971) defined *ideology* from a Marxist perspective, as a system of representations that masks true relations to one another in society by constructing imaginary relations between people and between them and the social formation. Thus ideology is a distorted recognition of the real social relations. According to Althusser, all aspects of the social are controlled by ideology, which functions through "the repressive state apparatus" (for example the police), and "the ideological state apparatus" (for example the mass media). Ideology essentially functions as a mediator between systems of power and individuals.

¹⁴ A term originally coined by Althusser (1971) to define the constitutive process where individuals acknowledge and responds to ideology, thereby recognising themselves as individuals.

reality. Furthermore, Foucault refers to *discursive rules* and *structures* which he suggests are shaped by the internal mechanisms of discourse and the relation between discourses. So, through analysis of the structures of discourse around evaluation practice, the mechanisms which allow it to be said and kept in place, can be uncovered. This will be achieved by charting the development of *statements*, *discursive practices* and *discursive frameworks*; in doing so, I hope to demonstrate that, rather than being permanent, discourses are constantly changing and their origins can be traced to key shifts in political thinking, policy and practice; reflecting Foucault's view that a discourse is not a set of utterances which is stable over time and is subject to change; therefore, discourses presented and examined later are shifting concepts that compete, interact and transform over time.

Power and the notion of *agency* is significant to this thesis in that it enables the influence of others factors (such as funders or policy) in the evaluation process and how these evaluations are disseminated. However, the notion of *discursive* or *disciplinary power* has been challenged as it suggests it leaves no room for individual agency: a lack of agency amongst *interpellated subjects* (i.e. those who comply with the discourse), suggests that they are passive subjects rather than active agents (Joseph, 2004). Furthermore, through subjecthood, individuals are subjugated as passive beings, but the notion of disciplinary power does not explore the ways in which individuals resist this power (Al-Amoudi, 2007). So, although Foucault's work can provide a useful lens to consider the social structures that maintain and uphold power, other forms of investigation such as CDA, would be required to examine the role of agents within these structures.

Foucauldian discourse analysis is not interested purely in language use, but also in the practices that are implicated in particular discourses and about the social structures that form the context for those (Burr, 1995). For example, as will be discussed later in this thesis, prevailing discourses around effectiveness which involve representations and utterances that have constructed effectiveness as *measurable*, sets one practice against another, talks of what is *better* and, for policy makers, relates essentially to debates around *value for money* (e.g. through impact assessments). Those who experience applied theatre have been constructed as *participants*, and accompanied with the prevailing discourse around *transformation* and *behaviour change* suggests something can be done to them, and in doing so, they are construed to be relatively helpless, powerless and in need of support. In this context, discourses bring power relations with them. For example prisoners may not feel that they own the outcomes of the intervention, as this is often evaluated in terms that fit the funder's request.

The implications of the creation of particular constructions of *what works* and the related discourses are twofold. Firstly the dominance of the discourse around measurement has implications for the way in which applied theatre is considered to be an effective way of

addressing complex problems and to be of value for money. This focus upon the effectiveness and the need to identify *measurable outcomes* suggests that there is less emphasis on how the work is delivered and how it addresses or contributes to other ways of working with prisoners, and more emphasis on the impact it has on prisoners. The second implication is related to the way in which effectiveness is constructed and by whom. As previously discussed, applied theatre as a practice has appeared over time in many different guises and the category of what constitutes success is changeable and debated by many. However from an organisational perspective, the way in which effectiveness is constructed, and its related discourses, has implications for how services are organised, delivered, evaluated and ultimately if their funding is continued. This raises the question as to which constructions of effectiveness in applied theatre become *dominant* and which discourses therefore carry greater *authority* and *power*. This study therefore contributes to these debates by attempting to understand where these discourses originate, or at least how they are maintained, and the disciplinary effect this discourse has on those using applied theatre in prisons.

By examining Foucault's work and applying it to the findings of this research, a deeper conceptualisation of the systems of knowledge and forms of discourse that are demonstrated within evaluations that have taken place can be possible. It also enables a critical examination of the power relationships between workers who enter the prison environment and the regime of prison itself; because, in Foucauldian terms, workers uphold the power dynamics and relationships when they enter into these settings, interpellating with discourses they go on to repeat and uphold these in the discourses they produce (Foucault, 1977). Thus, Foucault's work makes available an analysis of discourses around evaluation within issues of power, understanding and knowledge; these and other concepts from Foucault's work will frame the analysis and discussion chapters in this thesis. However, from the exploration of his work above, his limited views on agency and material reality meant that a purely Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis would not be suitable for this study.

2.5 Critical Discourse Analysis

A Foucauldian perspective on discourse has been highly influential in the area of CDA and is reflected in the work of many authors (Wodak and Meyer, 2001; Fairclough, 1992; Dijk, 1993; Fairclough, 1993; Fairclough, 1995; Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 2001; Fairclough, 2003). There are numerous ways that the CDA approach can be applied to research and this has led to confusion over what constitutes CDA and how it should be carried out (Cheek, 2004). Furthermore, critics indicate that those using this method make limited connections between the theories underpinning its use and the methodological processes used (Buus, 2005). It is therefore necessary to demonstrate a clear understanding of the approach in this research study so that others, if they wish to critique the approach and the findings, can do so.

Norman Fairclough, and his colleagues Ruth Wodak and Teun van Dijk, pioneered the CDA approach which combines a critical perspective with a number of approaches to discourse analysis and other theoretical approaches; indeed Fairclough calls for CDA to be a trans-disciplinary approach incorporating other theories and disciplines. Moreover, the methodology varies between researchers as to the nature of the research questions being asked and according to the particular discursive event under examination. CDA therefore, describes a group of approaches to discourse analysis and to account for the diversity of approaches which exist under this heading, some suggest that the term critical discourse studies would be more appropriate (Wodak and Meyer, 2009). Furthermore, by being *critical*, CDA differs from other approaches to discourse analysis in a number of ways and therefore researchers argue that CDA cannot be seen as a single methodology but as a “field of research” (Taylor, 2001, p.5), or a “scholarly orientation” (Locke, 2004, p.2). The theoretical underpinnings bring together a wide variety of critical social theories, including those of Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu, Jürgen Habermas, Antonio Gramsci, Anthony Giddens, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (Smith, 2007).

Before providing a detailed account of Fairclough’s CDA approach, it is necessary to note that he indicates that the concept of discourse, and any instance of it, a *discursive event*, has three-dimensions (Fairclough, 2003). These are, first, the context in which the text is produced (the macro level); second, the way it is produced and received (the meso level); and finally, the details of the text itself (the micro level). Analysis of these three levels, and an examination of the interplay between them, provides a comprehensive examination of the discourse as opposed to analysis confined solely to either the social or textual level. He relates these to three levels of social context identified by Halliday and Hasan (1985, p.45): the immediate “context of situation” in which a discursive event occurs (micro); the level of the social practices associated with the domain or institution in which it is embedded (meso); and current trends in the larger societal level context (macro).

CDA adopts some of the methodological underpinnings of discourse analysis and therefore it is important to outline what these are, as well as some of the key differences. Terry Locke, in his summary of CDA, outlines the theoretical positions taken by those operating within a CDA approach (Locke, 2004, pp.1-2). He provides a framework for the use of CDA; elements of which are useful to frame how CDA is used in this research study. He suggests that CDA theorists hold the view that the “prevailing social order is historically situated and therefore relative, socially constructed and changeable”. CDA can therefore provide an understanding of how evaluations are carried out and what influences their creation and use at that time, which change over time. He goes on to suggest that “the prevailing social order and social processes as constituted and sustained less by the will of individuals than by the pervasiveness of particular constructions or versions of reality.” This is where the notion of

discourses and an examination of them (from the macro to the micro level) enables an understanding of how evaluations take place and the different meanings attached to their outcomes. Locke suggests that proponents of CDA hold that “power in society is not so much imposed on individual subjects as an inevitable *effect* of particular discursive configurations or arrangements, privilege the status and positions of some people over others.” This is a view that is also held in this study and reflects my initial thoughts that policies (macro level discourses) have an effect on how evaluations are carried out and reported (meso level discourses) and how effectiveness is reported by theatre companies and applied theatre practitioners (micro level discourses). This point is developed in another principle of CDA that “views human subjectivity, as at least in part constructed or inscribed by discourse, and discourse as manifested in the various ways people are and enact the sorts of people they are.” In this study I attempt to examine the motivations behind the actions of the theatre companies; however, I am not using CDA to understand *individual motivations* and do not consider them as some homogenous group that could be easily understood. CDA suggests that “reality are textually and intertextuality mediated via verbal and non-verbal language systems, and texts act as sites for both inculcation and the contestation of discourses” and therefore, although various forms of data will be analysed for this study, with so many policies from the areas of criminal justice, arts and health, and the availability of company evaluation reports, a decision had to be made as to what was going to be examined and what was to be excluded. Furthermore, as will be outlined further below, although some textual level analysis would take place, this will be limited because it would not allow for a broad set of data to be examined and because the overall aim is to examine the interplay between different levels of discourse; another reason for why I steered away from a purely sociolinguistic or conversational approach to discourse analysis. A final principal outlined by Locke suggests that CDA “views the systematic analysis and interpretation of texts as potentially revelatory of ways in which discourses consolidate power and colonise human subjects” and as I will outline in my analysis chapters, the influences at a wider socio-political level clearly influence how these evaluations are reported and spoken about.

When examining work using a CDA approach, Locke goes on to suggests that it operates in three ways. Firstly, he indicates that it is *analytical* because it involves a detailed systematic examination of a particular object with a view to arriving at one or more underlying principles. However, other readings into CDA suggest that it could lead to multiple principles and could leave researchers with unclear aims to arrive at many conclusions (Smith, 2007, p.23). Secondly, he indicates that it is *discourse oriented*; this could be through language in use or text, and with the way in which patterns of meaning are socially constructed, or in the case of work carried out in prisons, organisationally constructed within funding frameworks and requirements. Finally it is *critical*, so a central outcome of analysis is to enable consideration of the social effects of the meanings the reader is being positioned or called upon to subscribe to in the act of reading, and the contestation of these meanings.

In Locke's (2004, pp.66-7) examination of Foucault's work, he indicates that Foucault sees discourse as an *active relation to reality*, that language "signifies reality in the sense of constructing meanings for it, rather than that discourse is in a passive relation to reality, with language merely referring to objects which are taken to be given in reality". With this definition in mind, discourse makes the world meaningful, or as Locke suggests "only in discourse is the world made meaningful". There are many epistemological questions that arise from this, the key one of concern here is that in the world outside of discourse, can meaning making take place outside of socially constructed signifying systems? In other words, if a theatre practitioner's account of an event, e.g. through their evaluation report, suggests that engagement *was beneficial* for participants, can this view be criticised or challenged? Their view is made as an active participant according to their understanding and interpretation of that event in their world; an outsider's view may be different, but simply relates to their reality and the meaning that they construct. Thus, Fairclough's discourse analysis approach is similar to Foucault who defines a discourse as "a practice, not just of representing the world, but of signifying the world, constituting and constructing the world in meaning" (Fairclough, 1992, p.64). Put another way, CDA is a way of "constructing the process of meaning-making in society" (Fairclough, 1992, p.12), and through a comparison of discourses at different levels of analysis, it also enables a critique of these to take place. This definition is helpful to this study as it clarifies how discourses are to be identified and then examined which will lead to an understanding of the ways in which evaluation is carried out and the associated meanings and purposes attached to this.

CDA also views discourse as central to the functioning of power in social processes and attempts to examine the process of power and how these processes use discourse in a subtle, yet controlling way (Fairclough, 2001). Discourses are therefore viewed as being instrumental in the *reproduction of power* within a given social situation (Dijk, 1993). However, as outlined through an analysis of Foucault's use of the term power, the issue of power is complex and requires a deeper understanding of how language is used and in what context it is used by organisations and individuals; an issue that will be explored further in each of the discussion chapters later in this thesis.

In CDA both social structure (the macro approach) and social agency (the micro approach) are necessary perspectives to examine. Fairclough indicates that every *social practice* is an articulation of diverse social elements which always includes discourse and each of these elements are dialectically related. Social practice is an important concept as it allows for an understanding between the perspective of social structure and the perspective of social action and agency. Social practices are seen as being networked or ordered in a particular way. Discourse is related to other social practices through "dominance" and that some discourses and genres become more dominant or mainstream than others. Fairclough also distinguishes

discourse types that is, “ways of signifying experience from a particular perspective” (which he argues should specify both perspective and domain of experience, for example “holistic medical discourse”) and *genres*, that is “uses of language associated with particular socially ratified activity types, such as the job interview” (Fairclough, 1992, p.135). In the context of this study, these orders of discourse and discourse types could manifest and display themselves in evaluations of theatre work that is funded by those that do not fully understand the discipline and their approach. Therefore, the political concept of *hegemony* and *hegemonic struggle* can also usefully be applied in an analysis of the orders of discourse; for example, there are a number of power relationships at play when a funder requests an evaluation.

The dialectic process of CDA also considers the *enactment*, the *inculcation* and the *reflexive* aspects of discourse (Fairclough, 1995). The enactment aspect relates to the representations of how things are and have been, as well as how things might be, could, or should be. This is seen as a projection of *possible worlds* which may be enacted as actual networks of practices. These discourses can become enacted as genres, for example in the form of new *management discourses* that focus on *targets*, *outcomes* and *partnerships*. Discourses may also become inculcated as new ways of being and new identities. This involves the process of people *owning* the discourse and positioning themselves within them, and seeing themselves in terms of the new discourses. Inculcation is a complex process and whilst people may learn the new discourses they may not necessarily identify themselves with them. The reflexive aspect is concerned with the way in which people act and interact within networks of social practices and also with how they interpret and represent to themselves and each other what they do. However, a new discourse can exist without being enacted or inculcated.

Critics of CDA have suggested that an analysis using Fairclough’s three dimensions (textual, discursive, social) in a way that reduces them to exercises in description, interpretation, and explanation respectively, is too clinical in its divisions and it would be better to view these three activities as permeating and linking with each dimension (Titscher *et al.*, 2000 p.153). This view is countered by others who point to its lack of systematicity, its lack of transparency, and its lack of strict guidelines or governing principles (Flick, 2002; Coyle, 1995). However it is the flexibility of the approach that assists this research in aiming to explore and uncover the discourses around evaluation and the meanings attached to them. Therefore, through a CDA approach and analysis of data at the macro, meso, and micro levels, the data can be explored in successive detail and themes can then be explored and explained in their relative complexity. As each stage is dependent on another, the discussion chapters will be structured around the discourses identified within firstly the macro level, before examining these in relationship to the meso and micro levels.

2.6 Methods

As I will go on to identify in the literature review, there are a variety of ways in which applied theatre in prisons is evaluated. However, using CDA as the methodology, I accepted at the outset that there was no single interpretation or construction of what *effective evaluation* is, and therefore my approach is to gain an understanding of the approaches used by the different theatre companies, and the discourses that influence these constructions, so these can be analysed and critiqued. My interest therefore is to examine discourses that take place in and around the practice of evaluation and in doing so I aim to shed light on discursive frameworks and discourses that may assist practitioners both in the evaluation of their practice, but also in the communication of their outcomes to health, criminal justice and other people who work with prisoners. I therefore accept that different interpretations and constructions may be made of the same phenomena, and I hope to explore, uncover, explain and discuss these within this study.

2.6.1 Research aims and questions

This study aims to analyse the specific ways that applied theatre practice is *planned*, *implemented* and *evaluated* in prisons when it contributes to improved health outcomes,¹⁵ and to understand the discourses that *influence* the evaluation approaches and methods that are used. The research questions that drive my enquiry are threefold:

- How is applied theatre planned and implemented in prisons when it contributes to improved health outcomes for prisoners?
- How and to what extent are theatre companies, in their use and evaluation of applied theatre in prisons, influenced by discourses in health, arts and criminal justice policy?
- What approaches and methods do theatre companies use to evaluate this practice, how do they account for the evaluation methods they use, and how do they communicate the health outcomes to others?

Through an examination of discourses I hope to demonstrate how applied theatre practitioners seek to prove that they assist in the rehabilitation of prisoners, reduce recidivism and address their wider health concerns. By identifying the discursive constructions of evaluation these will contribute new knowledge and a wider understanding in this field of study. On a practical level, an understanding and critique of these discourses may enable clearer and more meaningful evaluations to take place when applied theatre is used to improve prisoner health and wellbeing or when it is planned and delivered in collaboration with public health and workers

¹⁵ When examining reports it was clear that many did not consider the possible health outcomes in their work at the outset, so in the reports that were shared with me, those in which I could identify health outcomes were included in this study.

2.6.2 Research design

This is a qualitative study utilising CDA as an approach to analyse the data which will consist of policy, project evaluation reports and interviews. As mentioned earlier, CDA researchers are not guided by fixed methods; however, clarity about the process of data collection and analysis is required. This point is supported by researchers who state that when a mixed method approach is used it is important for the researcher to state the context of the research and provide a detailed account of the approach (Glatthorn and Joyner, 2005). Furthermore, qualitative studies are often criticised for their subjective nature, and thus, my opinions may differ from those of another researcher or reader of the study (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003). I therefore had to be very clear and structured in the way that I both collected and examined the data and ensured that I articulated the considerations that were made throughout the study. Moreover, questions for further research were either discussed, if relevant to the aims of this study, or highlighted as areas for future consideration.

This study was carried out between 2005 and 2013. The research focuses on applied theatre practice that aims to improve health outcomes for prisoners in England. It was decided not to broaden this discussion to work carried out elsewhere as judicial systems, prisoner health care and health care for the general population differs across the world. However the findings of this research may be of use to researchers and practitioners in other geographical areas and disciplines, and at times it was necessary to draw on research and literature that explored applied theatre practice in prisons in other areas due to the limited work in this area.

2.6.3 Critical Discourse Analysis Framework

The analyses undertaken in this research followed Fairclough's CDA approach and therefore required three main categories of data collection and analysis:

Macro Level - Sociocultural practice

This level comprises of practice produced as a result of particular historical, political, institutional, economic and social environment (Fairclough, 1992). At this level, an analysis will be made of historical, political and social constructions around the effectiveness of applied theatre initiatives in prisons. So, of importance here is *what* and *which* policy level issues affect how theatre companies use applied theatre and how they evaluate it. Although I provide a separate chapter to discuss the macro level findings, the literature review forms an important part of this, so some aspects of the literature will be reserved for this analysis.

Analysis at this level allows the researcher to assess the text within the environment in which it is created and thereby link the language used within the text to the particular operations of power and ideology taking place at a broader level. Fairclough argues this has a strong bearing on how the text is created, received and what it includes, and needs to be examined as an integral part of the overall analysis of the text.

Meso Level - discourse practice

At this level of discourse practice, analysis focuses on the production, distribution and consumption of a text (Fairclough, 1992). At this level my examination and discussion will focus on how evaluation documents are created, the rules which govern their use of language, the way that they are distributed, how they are read, and who they are produced for. Fairclough uses the term discourse practice, based on the work of Foucault, who described this as “a system of anonymous, historical rules”, which guide a particular form of “text production” (Fairclough, 1992). Signs of these relationships are visible in the text: i.e. the process of production “leaves traces in the text, and the interpretive process operates upon clues in the text” (Fairclough, 1993, p.136). The analysis of orders of discourse, production of discourses and the dialectic of practice are only meaningful in the context of the first level. So, at this level, what is of importance is the history and practice surrounding the textual medium through which the text under analysis is presented. In the case of the evaluation documents that will be examined, I am interested in discourses that enable an understanding of how the work was carried out, what influences the choice of evaluation methods and how they are shared with other applied theatre practitioners, public health and criminal justice workers, and those funding the work.

Micro level - Text analysis

This level is concerned with the text: how it is formed and what vocabulary and style is used in order to produce meaning. Fairclough defines text as the “written or spoken language produced in a discursive event” (Fairclough, 1992). This analysis is only meaningful in the context of the other two levels. The analysis can be either highly detailed at the semantic level, or conducted at the thematic level, depending on the aim of the research (Smith, 2007). My analysis focuses mainly on a thematic level, with some semantic analysis, and makes links to discourses identified at the other two levels. In this way, through an analysis of interview data, I aim to provide useful insights into the discourses which influence the way evaluations are used both internally to help develop a company’s own practice, and how these findings are shared externally with funding bodies, health workers and those working within the criminal justice sector.

The discussions are grouped into two chapters; the first examines the macro level discourses whilst the second combines the meso and micro level analysis.

2.6.4 Data management

The data was managed using NVivo. This software package enabled the linking, comparison and searching of themes within multiple documents (policies, evaluation reports and interview transcripts). The software allowed for transcription and the ability to easily identify sections of

a transcript or report for deeper analysis. It also allowed for thoughts to be noted throughout the analysis, so greater and deeper analysis could occur at each level.

This study is not interested in drawing a generalisation of the findings to the wider population (as would be the case in quantitative study), and therefore there was no need to identify a representative sample; however, to examine the work of companies that use applied theatre approaches in their work, it was felt that a manageable number of cases needed to be identified. A purposive or convenient approach to identifying these was adopted. The case studies were selected considering the range of work to be sampled, events and processes, activities undertaken and time available for this study (Stake, 1995).

Companies were considered and included as cases if they utilised drama in their work with prisoners, this work had a health or wellbeing outcome (even if this was intentional or not), was carried out during 1997-2010, and if they were willing to engage in this research. Companies were excluded if they did not meet this criterion, but also if they were individual theatre practitioners or companies who only engaged in a few prison projects (e.g. one or two and these were relatively small projects).

Using the Anne Peaker Centre¹⁶ database of arts organisations involved in arts in criminal justice, I was able to quickly and comprehensively identify and examine an overview of all arts organisations that utilise applied theatre approaches when working within prisons. Using the inclusion and exclusion criteria outlined above, a detailed examination of these organisations could be made and 28 organisations were considered suitable for further examination. I examined these further by reading their promotional material, information on their websites (if they had one) and in some cases, contacting them for an informal discussion about their work. Appendix one summarises this search and includes a short rationale for which were rejected and which were included in the final sample. Following the initial filtering process, 14 arts organisations were considered suitable for examination in this study. An email inviting them to take part in the research included an overview of the study, and indicated that if they did have an interest in taking part, they would be contacted and a full discussion would then take place regarding their involvement (see appendix two for a copy of the email). Of the 14 organisations contacted, seven replied and expressed an interest in taking part in the study. Following informal discussion with contacts from these organisations, five companies were considered suitable and these form the cases to be examined in this study. The following outline provides context for each of the companies, and is summarised from descriptions in their promotional material.

¹⁶ Originally called *The Unit for the Arts and Offenders* (until 2005) and in 2010 renamed *the Arts Alliance*.

Clean Break is a “women's theatre education and new writing company for ex-offenders, prisoners, ex-prisoners and women at risk of offending due to drug or alcohol use or mental health issues”. Based in London and set up in 1979, Clean Break produces theatre which engages audiences in the issues faced by women whose lives have been affected by the criminal justice system. They believe that by engaging women in theatre, new opportunities for these women can be created as well as enabling them to develop their personal, social, artistic and professional skills. (www.cleanbreak.org.uk)

Escape Artists uses “the arts to break down barriers and encourage social inclusion and empowerment across many marginalised groups”. As an integrated arts and education company, they indicate that they are committed to presenting high-quality and challenging artistic productions which “focus on issues of social inclusion and open access to such work across all sections of the community”; and “to developing innovative education projects which help to engage, empower and inspire a wide range of clients and deliver real results.” (www.escapeartists.co.uk)

Synergy Theatre aims “to assist reintegration into society by supporting the continuing personal development of offenders and ex-offenders through the provision of theatre performance opportunity and access to the resources of professional theatre whilst placing the wider issues surrounding imprisonment in the public arena”. Founded in 1999 their work follows a number of strands of activity which meet their aims including: productions in prisons; resettlement prisoners performing in theatre venues; ex-offender tours to prisons, youth offending teams, colleges and theatres; crime prevention work for schools in partnership with the police. (www.synergytheatreproject.co.uk)

TiPP (Theatre in Prisons and Probation - initially called the Theatre in Prisons and Probation Research and Development Centre) was set up in 1992 by James Thompson and Paul Heritage and works from the belief that “theatre and related arts have the power to transform people's lives”. Originally part of the University of Manchester's drama department and still located there but funded by ACE as a National Portfolio Organisation, they develop and implement participatory arts projects and undertake training for artists and for professionals working in the criminal justice system. (www.tipp.org.uk)

Geese Theatre Company was established in 1987 and aims “to develop theatre as a rehabilitative and motivational tool within the criminal justice system “. Working exclusively within the criminal justice system, the company is based in Birmingham and delivers performances, workshops and group work programmes with offenders in prisons and the community. Geese also run training events for staff and performances at criminal justice conferences. (www.geese.co.uk)

2.6.5 Ethical Issues

As a researcher, I was conscious of the duty of care I have to the applied theatre companies I examine, and therefore there are six ethical principles that are relevant for this research study. They are beneficence, non-maleficence, fidelity, justice, veracity and confidentiality. These six ethical principles can be transformed into four rights of participants (Parahoo, 2006), the right not to be harmed, of full disclosure, of self-determination and of privacy. The rights and principles of the organisations, and the workers within them, have been strictly honoured during this research study through the stages outlined in the invitation process earlier on.

One of the most fundamental ethical principles in research is that of beneficence which encompasses the maxim; “above all do no harm” (Polit, Beck and Hungler, 2001, p.143). Individuals participate in a study for a number of reasons and generally do so out of a desire to be helpful and researchers should therefore strive to maximise the potential benefits and minimise any harm and discomfort to respondents. I was mindful that an examination of how companies evaluate their work and any detrimental findings to both the arts organisation taking part, and the discipline as a whole, may impact on future funding and collaboration with health workers and others. Fenn (2003) notes this may be a particular concern for arts organisations engaging in research as workers have to spend a lot of time *proving* their work for arts funding. As a result, I shared the interview quotations and the draft commentary on them with the interviewees themselves inviting them to comment or clarify if needed.

The companies and the interviewees are also named because in a relatively small field of practice it would be impractical not to name them as many working within the field would easily be able to identify who the participants. Furthermore, by naming the companies and the individuals, this acknowledged and valued those taking part.

2.6.6 Research design quality - trustworthiness

A key concern within qualitative research is the degree to which we can trust the findings that have been reported. Discourse analysis is a reflexive research that recognises that the outcomes are a reading of the text, an interpretation, rather than the truth. CDA researchers suggest that the conventional research values of reliability, validity, and generalisability or replicability, are inappropriate for CDA because the very epistemological claims upon which CDA rests actually problematise such concepts (Rapley, 2008; Taylor, 2001). Rapley (2008) suggests that the claims of CDA should be judged in terms of them being *credible* and *plausible*, and that this can be addressed by the research being open and transparent both about the textual evidence under review and about the basis of the claims made about it. Potter and Wetherell (1994) similarly suggest two features of CDA methodology; it should impart *coherence* to a text, showing how it fits together in terms of content, functions and effect, and that it should be *fruitful* in that it provides insights that may prove useful. The most

widely used method of evaluating the trustworthiness of data and interpretations in qualitative studies, is provided by Lincoln and Guba (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). They offer an approach in which the criteria of *credibility*, *dependability*, *confirmability* and *transferability* of the research can be explored.

Credibility refers to the confidence in the truth of the data and interpretations of them. Credibility involves firstly, carrying out the study in a way that enhances the believability of the findings, and secondly, taking steps to demonstrate credibility to those who read it. Triangulation of methods, data sources, data collection, and data analysis are factors that improve the credibility of qualitative research (Polit and Beck, 2004) and the findings in this study are enhanced through the use of CDA by employing policy, documentary and interview analysis.

Dependability refers to the stability of data over time and over conditions, it also relates to how confident the researchers are about the data collected (Bowling, 2002). As detailed above, I employed a strict and thorough process when collecting data; this included how the literature was searched, the examination of company reports and conduct during the interview. Because my background, knowledge and approach is directly relevant when adopting a CDA approach, questions such as whether the data is biased or not is also important.

Confirmability refers to the objectivity or neutrality of the data, that is, the potential for correspondence between two or more independent people about the data's accuracy, relevance, or meaning. Objectivity, as mentioned earlier, cannot be attained within a social constructionist approach, however attempts were made to avoid any personal bias in two ways: firstly, through ongoing discussion of the process with my research supervisor, who is a leading researcher in this field of study and yearly discussions and feedback from a research panel, and secondly, by sharing interim findings and engaging in discussions about the findings with other researchers at conferences. This process enabled further identification of the discourses that are reported and discussed later in this thesis. However, as this is a qualitative study, I accept that my own frame of reference may have an impact on how discourses are analysed and reported. It is therefore not possible for another researcher to replicate this study in the same way as one could a quantitative study.

Finally, transferability refers to the generalisability of the data, and the extent to which the findings can be transferred to other settings or groups. The research does not aim to identify theory but aims to provide an insight into discourses that frame and influence evaluation, which can lead to a common understanding about effectiveness. However, I have provided sufficient descriptive data so that the readers can evaluate the applicability of the data to other contexts.

2.6.7 Potential benefits of research and the contributions of the study

As I will go on to detail in the literature review, research has shown that traditional methods to rehabilitate prisoners have only demonstrated limited success in enabling an understanding of how offenders may break the *cycle of offending* (Watson, Stimpson and Hostick, 2004) . Writers such as Fujioka (2001) argue that methods which exclude offenders from society, simply serve to exacerbate problems that offenders may have when they entered prison; in particular, around mental health issues. Thus, these interventions have not ensured that behaviour change occurs, both in the short or the long term, although this is what many claim to have done in their evaluation reports, often through the citing of anecdotal accounts from prison workers or prisoners themselves. This is the gap where applied theatre practitioners suggest they can offer something by engaging offenders in different ways (Lepp, 2002)

In her extensive review of the arts and prison literature that will be discussed in the next chapter, Jenny Hughes (2008) explores the application and impact of arts practice in key areas of criminal justice service provision. In her findings she identifies a range of models of change that are utilised by arts workers to highlight the effectiveness of their work. This suggests that arts workers are not only deeply interested in showing how successful their work is, but that there also exists an anxiety and need to do this effectively and to be understood by those collaborating in projects with them, be that health workers or prison staff who also have a remit to promote and support the wellbeing of prisoners. The literature review highlighted a number of studies where evaluation has been considered, however none have explored discourses in the way theatre companies evaluate their work and discuss this in relationship to *what influences* these decisions to do so.

By choosing to examine one area of the arts, i.e. applied theatre, and not music or the visual arts, this should not be interpreted as an indication that I believe that one technique is better than another. Although this thesis focuses on one area of rehabilitation that uses applied theatre practice as a way to do this, there are other methods and techniques that are used in collaboration with drama in an applied theatre project to help serve these goals, so when and where these are used, they will be discussed under the collective heading of applied theatre.

The analysis and discussion will be enhanced by drawing on my practice and knowledge in health promotion and public health, my role as a magistrate, and my experience of working with theatre companies as a playwright. In doing so, the research aims to contribute new insights and knowledge and fill gaps in both practice and knowledge.

The contributions of this study are therefore threefold:

At the *theoretical level* this research aims to contribute to a better understanding between health and applied theatre workers. Although funding opportunities have reduced across the

arts and health sector, there is greater scope for securing funding when working collaboratively with other disciplines; therefore, the need for a better understanding of the contributions that applied theatre practice offers, and in particular about the health impact of applied theatre practice is required. By disseminating the findings of this research, and encouraging companies to consider the discourses that they engage in when they evaluate, it is anticipated that a deeper understanding and respectful approach can be appreciated and help develop future collaborations.

At the *methodological level* this study demonstrates pragmatic approaches of using CDA to identify a deeper conceptualisation and understanding of a phenomenon. In this study, this is done through an understanding, examination and application of Fairclough and Foucault's work.

At the *empirical level* this investigation will contribute to the expanding body of research carried out on the use of applied theatre within prisons which contributes to improved health outcomes. It also helps to identify why, when and how health and applied theatre practitioners can work more closely together, by providing an understanding of the discourses surrounding evaluation practice and makes suggestions as to how evaluations can be more effective.

2.7 Chapter summary

This chapter provides an outline of the underlying theoretical and methodological considerations within this research. As this study stems from an interest in the relationship between applied theatre practice in prisons and understanding how evaluation is carried out and reported, it was necessary to explore the interplay between the disciplines of applied theatre, health and criminal justice. An approach which was sensitive to the contextual, socio-economic and cultural factors which influence this work and the evaluation of it was required. Drawing on my professional background in public health and from a critical realism position, I decided to utilise a social constructionist approach and in particular Fairclough's approach to CDA. His development of Foucault's work around power enables the relationship between policy and practice to be examined further; allowing me to systematically explore the area of evaluation in greater detail than a purely discourse analysis approach would offer.

Chapter 3 Review of literature

3.1 Introduction

Questions from prison staff as to why applied theatre exists within the system, and from researchers who suggest that “the practice of theatre and drama in the criminal justice system...has perhaps become ‘fashionable’?” (Thompson, 1999b, p.11) have been replaced with more searching ones from the field of applied theatre, with increasing debate around its effectiveness. Researchers examining the use of applied theatre practice within the criminal justice system have provided evidence that goes some way to demonstrate how these practices assist in the rehabilitation of prisoners; this has largely been influenced by the rapid development of work in in this area over the past two decades.

Hughes (2008, p.13), in her critical review of arts practice in UK prisons, highlights that research and evaluation in the sector has tended to be “short-term, lacking in conceptual and methodological rigour, over-reliant on anecdotal evidence, unable to adequately specify, quantify or explain outcomes, or to demonstrate clear causal connections between participation in the arts and a positive outcome”. In her review she indicates that there was limited evidence for the specific impact of participation in arts interventions on key social policy goals, including (alongside rehabilitation) improved educational attainment and mental and physical health; whilst I will go on to outline how this has improved to some degree since her study, the research and literature in this area remains scant. Many of the studies examined in her review are useful as a foundation to the body of knowledge in this study and are explored alongside more recent literature below. In carrying out this review, I found that literature specifically examining the use of applied theatre with a health focus in prisons was lacking and therefore it was supplemented by reading from the field of research evaluation, drama, health, education and learning theory.

The purpose of this chapter is therefore to situate this study within relevant debates, research and literature in the fields of applied theatre, public health and criminology; and critically explore the gaps in knowledge that this study aims to contribute to. The outline focuses on key themes that emerge from the literature with an analysis of research that examines the methodology, evaluation and effectiveness of different approaches discussed within each theme. Thus, by drawing on the broader debates and outlining the key areas of research within these core domains of knowledge, I aim to demonstrate where this research sits within these and how this study aims to add, and contribute new insights, to the overall body of knowledge. As discussed in the preceding chapter, this literature review also contributes to the development of a social constructionist framework (at the macro level) within which to examine the discourses that are identified in the discussion chapters.

This chapter is structured around four areas:

1. Firstly, in order to examine the nature of any activity that operates within the prison system, the system itself must be examined. I therefore begin with an examination of key debates in criminology by outlining the role of the prison system in England and Wales, charting the key policy shifts which have impacted on prisoner reform and rehabilitation. Due to space I only offer an overview of key milestones and will not provide a comprehensive review of different policies that impact on the work that takes place within prisons. Further analysis and discussions of discourse within policy is dealt with in chapter four.
2. In an attempt to situate the thesis in the wider field of public health and prisoner rehabilitation I then provide an overview of the goals of public health practice in prisons and how public health workers have contributed to the aims of rehabilitation through addressing prisoner health concerns.
3. I then locate this study within the field of arts in health. I examine the contributions of applied theatre by charting the history of this practice in prison (and in the probation service) by examining key debates and examples of practice within this field. In doing so I aim to highlight how the aims and goals of applied theatre practice have developed in the criminal justice sector and how my research contributes to these debates.
4. Finally, the fourth part of the review draws together the debates around evaluation in applied theatre by providing a deeper understanding of this from various analytical perspectives. In particular, an examination of the “affective turn” in applied theatre scholarship and its relevance to this study is provided; in doing so I aim to prepare the ground for an examination of how an understanding of effectiveness is discursively constructed by drama companies.

The literature review began when the study was initiated in 2005 and an ongoing review took place assisted by journal database alert services. This was necessary to ensure that emerging research, policy documents and other literature was considered throughout the period of the study. Further reviews were carried out throughout the analysis process, this extraction and synthesis of data assisted in the discussion and the formulation of findings.

3.2 The Role of Prison in England and Wales

Key developments that have had an impact on the purpose and direction of prisons have largely taken place over the past four centuries. Prior to the 1779 Penitentiary Act, prisons in England and Wales were places that did not distinguish between “those awaiting sentence, those who had been sentenced, detaining debtors and those found guilty of minor crimes” (Hale *et al.*, 2009, p.12). It was thought that the harsh environment of prison would

discourage offenders from repeat offending and that the rehabilitative element would contribute to offenders thinking about the impact of their offending on themselves and others (Marshall, Simpson and Stevens, 2000). The role did not change until the late eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century when the reforming potential of prisons had been identified and they were seen as places to provide “opportunities for inmates to change their attitudes and behaviour, rather than just as places to punish” (Joyce, 2013, p.296). However, evangelical reformers such as Elizabeth Fry and John Howard, and utilitarian thinkers such as Jeremy Bentham, encouraged prisons to take on a new purpose as institutions to deter crime and reform criminals. For example, Jeremy Bentham believed that the prisoner should suffer a severe regime, but that it should not be detrimental to their health. Moreover, in 1777, John Howard condemned the prison system and called for wide-ranging reforms including the appointment of paid staff, outside inspection, a proper diet and other necessities for prisoners. However, reform was not integral to the prison ethos and was seen as an optional decision.¹⁷

This role of prisons to reform prisoners and deter further criminal activity, shifted during the nineteenth century when a balance towards deterrence and reformation became more prominent. This challenged the dominant philosophy which placed an emphasis on secure confinement to protect the public. Despite the attempts of Fry, Howard and Bentham, to see prison as an opportunity to reform prisoners, after the 1860s prisons were made unpleasant through harsh conditions and severe punishment in order to deter offenders from returning. As Esherick (2006) notes, an element of reform remained, but this was now centred on engendering a strong work ethic and other positive values, and did not look to address the root causes of criminal behaviour because criminals were viewed as having permanent personality defects. Towards the end of the nineteenth century growing interest in rehabilitation to deter offenders from reoffending upon release began to emerge as a key function of prison and approaches focussing on education were used to enable prisoners to change (Hatton, 2005).

The Gladstone Committee report of 1895 presented a key development in the promotion of prison as a rehabilitative institution. Herbert Gladstone wanted to move away from the harsh conditions that had existed in Britain's prisons since the middle of the nineteenth century and suggested that at the time prison “treats prisoners too much as reclaimable criminals, rather than reclaimable men and women”, suggesting that the emphasis on this label just reinforced recidivism (Joyce, 2013, p.296). The committee indicated that prison was seen as punishment rather than *for* punishment, and to achieve the goals of rehabilitation, a change to conditions was required. The report argued that prison discipline and treatment should be designed to train prisoners to change their attitude and behaviour, and wherever possible “to turn them out of prison better than when they came in”; this included their physical health and wellbeing.

¹⁷ See Hatton, 2005; Whitfield, 1991; Semple, 1993, for further discussions around the contributions of Bentham, Fry and Howard.

The Committee also emphasised the need for community support and after-care to be available to prisoners on release and for voluntary bodies to have opportunities to establish contact with prisoners before their discharge. The report also included measures to reform young offenders through the introduction of the first institution for young people which was opened in 1902 at Borstal Prison in Kent which emphasised work training and skills acquisition. These provisions around reform, rehabilitations and consideration of the care of prisoners were incorporated into the 1898 Prisons Act.

The Gladstone Committee report remained the key penal policy for the next half century emphasising prison as being a place of punishment and as a place of reform. However, over the 1900s it was increasingly felt that a reduction in repeat offending would not be achieved through the use of a regime designed to deter through fear alone (Joyce, 2013). This resulted in the concept of “positive custody” which led to an emphasis on the constructive aspects of imprisonment through activities such as work and education. Prisons as an opportunity to rehabilitate prisoners continued to feature in post-1945 government policy, and accompanying it was a move to focus on criminal recidivism. The next major shift in prison policy can be seen to take place during the 1979-1997 Conservative government. During this time the ideology of individualism reflected their attitude towards those who broke the law and prison rehabilitation gave way to a retributivist objective. *The Criminal Justice Act* of 1991 (entitled *Crime, Justice and Protecting the Public*) included a commitment to limit the use of custody because, as stated by the former Home Secretary Douglas Hurd, it was thought that prison was “an expensive way of making bad people worse” (Davis, 2003, p.29). However, this was not reflected in the 1994 *Criminal Justice and Public Order Act* which introduced absolute offences to make it easier to convict and punish offenders and increased penalties for a range of offences. According to the criminologist Peter Joyce (2013, p.236) the Conservative government pursued a “punitive approach towards those committing crime, assuming that the public required evidence that its policies were working” and therefore to organisations such as the Prison Reform Trust the rise in the prison population at this time could be attributed to government policy concerning imprisonment rather than any dramatic rise in crime.¹⁸ This rise led to overcrowding and deteriorating conditions, resulting in worsening health and wellbeing (Nutley and Davies, 2000). In response, 20 new prisons were constructed under the Conservative government; Hurd’s successor, Michael Howard, claimed that prison population statistics proved that criminals were being caught and that “prison works” (Howard, 1993). However, countering Howards claim was research conducted by the Home Office which suggested that one half of prisoners discharged from prison were reconvicted of a standard list of offences within two years of release (White, 1998).

¹⁸ According to Berman (2012) the political goals to “get tough with criminals” resulted in dramatic increases in the number of offenders imprisoned, from just under 20,000 in 1900, dropping to 10,000 in the 1940s followed by a steady increase of prison populations of 50,000 in the 1980s and then dramatic increases to populations over 80,000 in the 1990s and 2000.

After these Conservative government policies, New Labour government (1997-2010) prison policy focussed on the role of prison as being fourfold: retribution, incapacitation, deterrence and rehabilitation (Wells, 2007). The first two points relate to punishment and deprivation of liberty through the removal of the individual from society so that the public can be protected. The second two points relate to educational and rehabilitative initiatives which aim to assist prisoners in improving their behaviour. However, the four purposes have not played an equal part and discourse around the purpose and, as I will go on to show, the effects of various techniques used to rehabilitate prisoners has been given various degrees of attention in the literature. These and other shifts in New Labour government prison policy, and the discourse around the need for better evaluation and greater evidence to support a discourse around *what works*, is examined in detail in chapter four (i.e. discussion of macro level discourse), but for now, I will summarise some of the key shifts in prison policy that contribute to this debate.

Early New Labour prison policies were very similar to their Conservative predecessors; however the aim of the prison service was amended in 1999, so it became the “effective execution of the sentence of the court so as to reduce reoffending and protect the public” from offenders who clearly could not change (Coyle, 2005, p.48). Therefore the prime aim of prison was now to serve the needs of society by protecting it from those who acted antisocially. The rehabilitative focus was not new, and policy analysts note that the previous party’s criminal justice policy between 1979 and 1990s focused more on rehabilitation and was less punitive than perceived image might suggest (Blakemore and Griggs, 2007).

Attempts were also made to reduce crime and resultant prison numbers and to develop alternatives to prison. Early New Labour legislation included the *Crime and Disorder act 1998* and the *Youth, Justice and Criminal Justice act 1999*; which were at the heart of New Labour’s “tough on crime” law and order agenda. The second half of the Tony Blair slogan “...tough on the causes of crime” linked with the concept of social exclusion, a major concept in New Labour social policy that would see the focus and development of further rehabilitative approaches in prisons (Young and Matthews, 2003). New Labour developed a comprehensive strategy for crime reduction and prevention based on statutory, and therefore compulsory, partnerships between police and local authorities; and they had some success. According to the British Crime Survey (2005), crime rates improved since 1995; there has been a 39% fall in all crimes and a 24% fall in violent crimes since that date (although a rise in violent crimes of 12% in 2003-4). Domestic and acquaintance violence had fallen by 50% since 1997, and theft accounted for 70% of all crime. Burglaries fell by 39% between 1995 and 2005, and car crime by 31%. Some of this was due to improvements in home and car security, a key focus of New Labour policy, but this reduction in crime was an international phenomenon so it is questionable as to whether these could be credited simply to the New Labour policy.

Despite these approaches to reduce crime and a resultant reduction in crime, prison populations rose. New Labour's desire to use prisons to reform and rehabilitate prisoners was promoted by Charles Clarke (Home Secretary, 2004-6) in his attempts to lower the rate of recidivism. However, despite numerous attempts to do so, statistics suggested that things were becoming worse. When New Labour came to power the prison population stood at 66,000, when they left office in 2010 it stood at 85,000. As mentioned earlier, this rise did not reflect the increase in the rate of crime, which actually began to decline during the 1990s, but arose from changes in sentencing policy that resulted in the increased use of custodial sentences to certain offences.

Having set the context by charting the shifts in the development and the purpose of prisons as a place for punishment and rehabilitation, the remaining discussions around applied theatre practice in prisons and prisoner health will focus on the debates and political impact of policy on practice during the New Labour government of 1997-2010. This is also the period in which this research study focuses its attention.¹⁹

3.3 The Health of Prisoners

3.3.1 New Labour Prison Health Policy

Prisoner rehabilitation is also assisted through the efforts of public health workers who use health promotion techniques in their work with prisoners to address some of the many ongoing health concerns that they have. To situate this thesis in the wider context of public health I will examine the health needs of prisoners, New Labour government policies that support and direct this work and explore examples of work that highlight how work was carried out to address prisoners' health needs.

In March 1999 the government issued the *Future Organisation of Prison Health Care* report which set out the arrangements for a formal partnership between the prison service and the NHS (DH, 1999a). On 1st April 2003, the NHS formally took over the provision of health care within the then 138 prisons in England and Wales. However to maintain continuity of service delivery, day to day running and delivery was transferred back to the prison service. The next change came in 2004 when the government released its white paper entitled *Choosing Health: Making Healthier Choices Easier* (DH, 2004a). In this paper, Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) were expected to take a public health approach to identify the causes of health inequalities and social exclusion among prisoners and make concerted efforts to prevent them. One of the results for this was that the responsibility of prison health care in England should be fully shifted from the prison service to PCTs, a process begun in April 2004 and

¹⁹ To place this study in the current context, there are a total of 133 prisons in England and Wales, included within this are Young Offender Institutions (HMYOI) intended for offenders aged between 18 and 20. Public sector prisons are managed by Her Majesty's Prison Service (HMPS) which is part of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) for the government; a number of prisons have been contracted out to private companies.

fully implemented in April 2006. Under these new arrangements, PCTs were expected to develop prison health care delivery plans based on assessment and analyses of health care needs (DH, 2004). This involved the responsibility for providing a broad range of services in prison, including GP care, dentistry, mental health services, as well as public health and health promotion services.

According to many public health workers, the transfer of responsibility to PCTs brought with it opportunities as well as disadvantages (De Viggiani, 2006b; Forrester, *et al.*, 2013; Miller, 2013). The goal of a better well-resourced and well supported health care service for prisoners was enhanced by its new partnership with external health services. This went in line with the prison health service aims to reduce inequalities by providing the range and quality of primary care services, equivalent to that available in the community (DH, 1999). However, a key disadvantage that had not been anticipated was the lack of training for current health staff, and consequently, a poor understanding of prisoner health needs and the approaches required to work effectively with this population (Marshall, Simpson and Stevens, 2000).

The increase in the rate of recidivism has caused a shortage of prison places available, which has led to overcrowding and worsening mental and physical wellbeing (Plugge and Fitzpatrick, 2005; Berman, 2012). Many public health workers adopt a holistic view of health, which incorporates not only personal wellbeing but a society's wellbeing; statistics disseminated by HMPS which highlight a growing rate of reoffending may therefore suggest that current interventions used to rehabilitate offenders are not working and alternative methods should be explored (HMPS, 2007). This is clearly articulated within the report of the Joint Prison Service (JPS) and NHS Executive Working Group which states that: "Good health care and health promotion in prisons should help enable individuals to function to their maximum potential on release, which may assist in reducing offending." (DH,1999). These points support the use of creative approaches such as applied theatre in prisons, which I will go on to suggest have led to the increase in its use to address health issues.

3.3.2 Health care needs of prisoners

The health care needs of prisoners are diverse and complex and a full outline of the many issues and the causes are beyond the remit of this thesis; however, in their extensive study of prisoner health and wellbeing in England and Wales, Marshall and Simpson (2000) summarise many of the key health problems faced by prisoners.²⁰ They note that relative to the general population, prisoners experience poorer physical, mental, and social health. These include "acute and longstanding physical and mental illness and disability, drug, alcohol, and tobacco dependency, sexual health problems, suicide and self-harm, physical, and sexual violence, a lower life expectancy, and breakdowns in family and other

²⁰ This remains the most comprehensive study of prisoner health needs in England. Other studies have examined specific health needs for different groups of prisoners. (See Møller, *et al.*, 2007; Miller, 2013; Forrester, *et al.*, 2013 for other examples).

relationships” (Marshall and Simpson, 2000, p.9). This is supported by statements made in the *Choosing Health* white paper cited earlier, in which prisoners are considered to be a “vulnerable” and “socially excluded” population (DH, 2004a). In more recent studies, researchers have suggested that the health needs identified over the past decade have worsened or at best remained the same (Rutherford and Duggan, 2009; Miller, 2013). Other studies report that mental health problems are more prevalent amongst the prison population than the general population and therefore are a cause for concern due to the potential for further deterioration in prison (Allen and Rich, 2007; Durcan, 2008; Singleton, Meltzer and Gatward, 1998). Closely related to mental health problems are poorer physical health (Lester, Hamilton-Kirkwood and Jones, 2003; Fazel and Baillargeon, 2011), suicide, and substance abuse (Boys, Farrell and Bebbington, 2002; Fazel, Benning and Danesh, 2005; HMIP, 2007).

Over the past three decades substance abuse has become increasingly common practice among prisoners and research has noted that dependence is closely related to crime and contributes to a cycle of offending and results in poorer health status (Fazel, Bains and Doll, 2006). Despite very clear and structured drug control policies in prisons,²¹ evidence also indicates that a prisoner’s drug taking might increase in prison as a result of drug testing policy. Ramsay (2003) found that prisoners may turn to opiates as opposed to marijuana, because they have a shorter life span in blood, so will be detected on fewer occasions. More recent research suggests that prisoners have also turned to so-called *legal highs* that cannot be detected by testing equipment (Measham, 2011; Blakemore, 2013). Substance abuse also poses further risks to individuals around communicable disease due to high risk sexual practices prior to entering prison, and whilst in prison. This is supported by research which indicates that prisoners tend to have more sexual partners than the general population, and that these partners are more likely to be sex workers or substance misusers themselves (Green, Hetherington and Heuston, 2003; Simms, Nolan and Randall, 2008; Stewart, 2007). Communicable diseases have also increased over the past three decades, in particular sexual transmitted infections and most notably HIV and AIDS (Peate, 2011). To address this issue, prison health workers have attempted to solve the problem through interventions to prevent the transmission of such diseases. This has included making available condoms, clean needles and other equipment to prevent transmission through sexual activity and drug taking. However, these initiatives have been argued to send out a mixed message to both prisoners and the public and therefore these health promotion interventions have been challenged by prison authorities and in many cases have been removed (Fraser, Gatherer and Hayton, 2009).

²¹ These include methadone drug treatment which has been the default drug treatment across prison estates since 2006. In a Home Affairs Committee report “Drugs: Breaking the Cycle” it was reported that in 2010, 60,000 prisoners were prescribed methadone – more than half the prison population at any one time (p.149).

The health and wellbeing of prisoners from black and minority ethnic communities, and overseas prisoners residing in UK prisons, is also a matter of increasing concern (Ministry of Justice [MOJ], 2008). For Shah, Plugge and Douglas (2011), the issues outlined above are exacerbated as a result of issues related to their ethnicity, and not ethnicity in itself. For these groups, they argue that language and communication difficulties pose key challenges for health staff and others working with these communities. However, despite an increase in government commissioned research into the needs of these groups, very little is known about their specific health promotion needs (Condon, Hek and Harrisa, 2008). As I will identify later, this is an area where applied theatre practitioners have been able to support the health promotion goals, by using techniques that cut across barriers to literacy.

3.3.3 Health promotion in prisons

Health promotion activities in prison have developed against a growing recognition of the extensive inequalities in health experienced by the prison population, and the subsequent consequences for public health (MOJ, 2008; Miller, 2013). As a result, the health promotion function of public health is considered of vital importance to help educate prisoners; for example, about the dangers of substance abuse, as most will eventually return to the community where these positive new behaviours could continue and/or be passed onto others. This is supported by studies which indicate that a reduction in substance abuse may reduce recidivism and reduce the problem of substance abuse in the general population (Coid and Ullrich, 2011; Nunn, *et al.*, 2010).

In 1995 WHO issued a good practice guide to encourage health promotion practice in prisons (WHO, 1995), it was quickly followed by another which specifically looked at mental health promotion in prisons (WHO, 1998b); both suggested that prison was a setting in which health could be promoted and inequalities could be addressed. This approach was incorporated in a health promotion strategy in England and Wales entitled *Health Promoting Prisons: A Shared Approach* (DH, 2002) which led to the notion that prison should become more “health promoting”, this was finally incorporated in the HMPS Order 3200 (HMPS, 2003). These directives aimed “to improve health, prevent deterioration in health during custody and encourage prisoners to adopt healthy behaviours which can be taken back to the community” (HMPS, 2003, p.5). The HMPSO 3200 lists required actions for prison governors, who now had a responsibility to promote health as part of a whole prison, or settings approach, and to work with NHS health organisations to integrate this into their core business. This included focussing on mental health promotion and wellbeing, smoking, healthy eating and nutrition, healthy lifestyles and drug and other substance misuse. More recently, the new NHS Commissioning Boards, in partnership with NOMS and Public Health England, have a responsibility to ensure that prisoners have access to these services (DH, 2012)

This “settings approach” embraces the perspective that health and wellbeing is influenced by a number of determinants, not just simply individual choice. Building on the holistic nature of health and wellbeing, the settings approach proposes that health is determined by an interaction of social, political, environmental, organisational as well as personal factors within the places that people live their lives (Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991). The premise of the settings approach is that investments in health should be made in social systems where health is not their primary remit. Although the primary aim of prisons is not in promoting health they do provide an opportunity to access marginalised, and therefore often unhealthy, groups of the population who would otherwise be classified as *hard to reach* in the wider community. This means that prisons offer a unique opportunity for health promotion to contribute to tackling inequalities in health (Baybutt, Hayton & Dooris, 2010).

However, despite wide acceptance of prison as an opportunity to promote health and wellbeing through rehabilitative approaches (Caraher, Dixon and Hayton, 2002; Caraher, Bird and Hayton, 2000; Smith, 2000) the tensions between the correctional and rehabilitative (and healthcare) aspects of being in prison that were seen in prison history over the last few centuries continue to this day. The general view is that the primary business of prison is not to promote health, even though evidence cited earlier suggests that *good* health reduces reoffending. This point is highlighted by Sim (2002, p.49) who indicates that delivering a health promotion strategy is challenged in prisons because they are founded on concepts of “self-control, empowerment and choice”, whereas prisoners are restricted in meeting their own needs by reduced autonomy within the prison regime. Therefore, the environment has an impact on the ability to promote health, and in particular, prevent the adverse effect on prisoners’ mental health (Sim, 2002). Furthermore, one of the problems with health promotion policies in prisons is the overemphasis on individualistic and disease oriented interventions, such as the management of illicit drug use and reduction of communicable disease (Whitehead, 2006). More recent work by Sim (2009) indicates that historically health in prison has been aligned with a biomedical perspective, and as a result they are underpinned with a focus on the prevention of disease and illness, and this has changed little over the past three decades: approaching health through a biomedical lens, rather than a social model of health, encourages health workers to utilise approaches that address health as the absence of disease and not the attainment of positive health and wellbeing. Sim (2002, p.92) goes on to suggest that it can also impact more widely on prisoners’ health by “obscuring the wider political, social and environmental determinants on health such as poverty employment, education and housing”. Thus, these studies indicate that despite policy support, health promotion has struggled against models of health which focus on disease prevention. I suggest that this is a factor which also affects the ability of applied theatre practitioners to work with health. This is further supported by Caraher et al (2002), who indicate that health promotion in prison is often focussed on a mechanistic approach to addressing health issues such as self-harm and the prevention of suicide. They note that the promotion of health has

also played a secondary role to other issues, both in prison and in the wider health economy; health promotion has historically been under resourced and underfunded and the already stretched health workforce in prison cannot easily subsume these principles into their work. Furthermore, prison staff often view it as an additional burden and “outside of their contracted professional remit” (De Viggiani, 2006a, p.310). As a result of this narrow focus health workers in prisons are restricted in their ability to address the wider determinants of health. However, through this study I suggest that opportunities exist for applied theatre companies to work with health partners in collaboration within education departments.

Strategy and policy that support the need for health promotion and public health interventions have shown promise, but little has been done to embed and evaluate their impact on prisoners’ health and wellbeing (Condon, Hek and Harrisa, 2008). Translating policy into practice can be undermined by the values held by health promotion especially if the values of empowerment, free choice and control cannot be applied in an environment where all activities must be controlled. This has led to writers such as Smith (2000, p340) suggesting the notion of health promotion in prison is a “*contradiction in terms*” McCallum (1995, p.7), arguing that the healthy prisons notion is nothing but an “*oxymoron*” and others suggesting that it struggles to secure a place in prisons at all (Douglas, Plugge and Fitzpatrick, 2009; Baybutt, Hayton & Dooris, 2010).

Although health policy is based on the concept of the prison as an institution capable of producing a positive impact upon health and wellbeing, little is known about the lifestyle choices of prisoners in priority areas of public health. Furthermore, much of policy seems to be preoccupied with disease prevention activities and less on health promotion (Miller, 2013). However, as I will go on to outline in other chapters below, policy has also shifted to focus more on offender rather than prisoner health. It has been argued that by focusing health promotion activities on all people who come into contact with the criminal justice system, rather than just prison populations, a silo approach to working can be prevented and this will enable interventions that occur outside prison to follow those offenders who are incarcerated, and vice versa (Department of Health, 2009). However, despite an attempt to prevent the prison bars from creating a barrier to this work, this desire to support prisoners both during and post release has been hampered by difficulties in maintaining contact with ex-offenders; a challenge that is shared by those using applied theatre approaches in their work and one that is discussed in other chapters below.

3.4 Prisoners, applied theatre and health

Thus far the literature reviewed has provided a contextual backdrop to this thesis. This next section examines the specific literature that combines the three areas of criminal justice, health and applied theatre. I begin by drawing on the broader debates in the literature within

these three disciplinary areas, before moving on to specific areas that inform and shape this thesis.

In addition to these texts and journal articles, developments, guidelines and analysis of applied theatre practice in prisons during this period has also been assisted by the efforts of a few key organisations. The Anne Peaker Centre (APC) was formed in 1992 and worked collaboratively with artists, those working in the criminal justice sector, educationalists and policy makers, to promote the use of the arts in the criminal justice sector. They developed and collated a record of research, but funding issues led to the centre being wound up in February 2010. The work was continued by the organisation *Clinks* through a strand of their work entitled *The Arts Alliance*. Funded by the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and the Monument Trust, *Clinks* supports, represents and campaigns for the voluntary and community sector working with offenders in England and Wales and has campaigned for the effective use of the arts in prisons as a rehabilitative tool (see clinks.org). Through The Arts Alliance they have attempted to map and record this work and have created an evidence library that houses key research and evaluation documents on the impact of arts-based projects, programmes and interventions within the criminal justice system.²²

3.4.1 Arts for Health and the use of Applied Theatre in Public Health Promotion

The *Art for Health* movement is based on the idea that “exposure to the arts, and more importantly participation in creative activities, is life enhancing and can promote wellbeing” (Clift, 2011, p.102). Arts interventions have assisted with health goals by providing support for both the patient and the health professional, by creating new approaches to aid the diagnosis and treatment of health disorders (Lock, Last and Dunea, 2001). For example, in mental health care, arts can help individuals to find new ways of self-expression and acts as a vehicle for establishing communication with others (Killick and Allan, 1999a; Killick and Allan, 1999b; Killick, 2000; Argyle, 2003). The arts have also been seen to contribute to enhancing the healing environment, and help to promote recovery and rehabilitation, and in community settings, workers and researchers have suggested that participation in arts activities brings people together with a sense of purpose in a common creative endeavour (Gilliver, 2004). However, the evidence for this is not conclusive there has been much debate between positivist and interpretivist researchers, many of these debates have resulted in calls for better and more effective evaluation methods and for clearer policy direction (Mirza, 2006).

Studies have focussed on the use of music to induce feelings of calmness and help recovery; for example, a study by White (1999) examined the effects of music on cardiovascular issues and found that playing music resulted in significant reductions in heart and respiratory rates in patients recovering from acute myocardial infarction compared to a control group. In another study, patients who were admitted with ischemia of the heart showed reduced levels of blood

²² These organisations and relevant documents they have issued are discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

pressure, heart rate and anxiety after listening to classical music (Elliot, 1994). Music played to premature babies in a neonatal intensive care ward showed that it improved oxygen saturation and behavioural states (Standley, 2002). With regard to cancer care, music was also found to be beneficial in addressing the levels of anxiety between groups who listened to music on headphones before treatment compared to those who did not listen to music (Smith, *et al.*, 2001).

Music and relaxation recordings have been used in the control and management of pain (Good, *et al.*, 2002). In a randomised control trial examining the reduction in the level of pain and the use of patient controlled analgesia on post-operative time, anxiety levels of patients who listened to music during the preoperative period were found to be significantly reduced (Walker, 2002; Wang, *et al.*, 2002). Music has also been used extensively to help patients relax and assist with eating and sleeping problems, memory loss and other disorders (Lou, 2001; Hicks, 2002). Studies examining the visual arts have also reported many benefits to patients; for example, the perception of pain and stress decreased in subjects who had blood taken in a room with visual arts compared to those in a room with no visual arts (Palmer, *et al.*, 1999). Despite these studies reporting such successes, critique focuses on the way music and the visual arts distracts patients when they are undergoing treatments (Kweekkeboom, 2003). Debate around effectiveness is also clearly divided; in a randomised study no difference was found in the control and trial group during the post anaesthetic period when evaluating the impact of music on perceived pain following abdominal hysterectomy (Taylor, *et al.*, 1998).

The arts have been also been used extensively in the field of mental health and have been recognised by mental health professionals as a positive intervention to facilitate counselling (Gladding and Newsome, 2003). In their study Gladding and Newsome highlight that the integration of visual art activities into counselling treatment plans with adults can move a client forward when talk therapy is resisted or ineffective. However, critics have rightly pointed out that as a result of using their own clients and a lack of a control group to compare the effects of the intervention, their study was highly subjective (Malchiodi, 2005). In later studies, Gladding (2011) has gone on to examine the research in a range of arts practices including music, dance, imagery and literature in counselling practice and provide a stronger argument for the use and effectiveness of these techniques. However, supporters have also highlighted the importance of using trained art therapists suggesting that it is crucial for them to be trained because of the psychological effects that drama can have on the individual (Mottram, 2003; Dobson, 2000).

The arts have also been seen to provide much to health education and promotion practices. In health promotion practice, it has been suggested that the use of drama helps people to practice skills, develops skills of observation, increase awareness of dealing with health

problems and strengthens confidence in one's own abilities (Mallika, 2000). In a study by Snow et al. (2003, p.74), the use of what they call "therapeutic theatre" proved to be a highly effective method of therapy for people with poorer communication, cognition and social skills providing a number of positive effects in alleviating these challenges. The use of drama therapy has also been proven to assist with the deeper psychological needs of people with dementia; enabling them to express and understand their own world (Knocker, 2002). In health trainee education, researchers have identified that drama can help to challenge power positions and promotes empathy and understanding between students, teachers and patients (Wasyliko and Stickley, 2003). It also allows health practitioners to reflect and discover new insights into ways of practicing and increases their understanding of the experience of illness and suffering (Kirklin, 2001). Again, music and visual arts dominate this field.

Turning now to examples of arts projects carried out in the UK that demonstrate how the main art forms of music, theatre and drama, visual arts, dance, and literature or creative writing can promote health and wellbeing²³, a few examples will be outlined to provide an understanding of how these have been used in health promotion settings. *Loudmouth Theatre Company* have used drama with young people for many years to explore issues such as sexual health and teenage pregnancy (e.g. their production and workshop of "Ben, Nat and Baby Jack"), and *Women in Theatre* also use drama to devise work with communities that they then extend to other audiences. *Ladder to the Moon* theatre company provides another example of a company that extensively uses the arts in health; through what they call "relationship theatre", where dramas are created to address health and social care issues associated with dementia care. *Big Difference Company* has also used drama to explore a range of health issues such as teenage pregnancy and smoking with young people.

The visual arts have been used extensively in health care environments from hospital wards, GP waiting rooms and health care centres. Paintings in hospitals have been used to enliven the hospital environment and have been argued to encourage patients and staff to feel more optimistic and provide distractions from the anxieties associated with illness (see artinhospital.org). Dance has also been used to enhance physical activity while offering wider benefits to physical, emotional and mental wellbeing; examples include classical Indian dance to engage women from the South Asian community in areas of Birmingham to alleviate isolation (sampad.org.uk), and *Extend* which has delivered movement to music classes for the over 60s in PCTs and voluntary organisations across England (extend.org.uk). Writing has also been used to help people understand and deal with issues they are facing; examples include the *write for change* writing group for people with mental and emotional issues in Staffordshire (writeforchange.co.uk) and the prison writing schemes offered by Clean Break. Initiatives such as the *East Kent Singing for Health Network Project* have created choirs since

²³ Many examples can be found on the Arts Council England, National Alliance on Health and Wellbeing website (<http://www.artshealthandwellbeing.org.uk>)

2009 for people with a history of mental health challenges. Together with family supporters and health professionals, they have been able to challenge stigma associated with mental health and reduce social isolation and social exclusion. As a result, it has been argued that education and employment opportunities have been enhanced, as well as physical health and wellbeing (ACE, 2012). However, the evidence of this is largely anecdotal and the actual numbers of individuals who have gone on to education and employment are not provided.

Uses of applied theatre in health emerged from the TIE and DIE movements and have been used in public health promotion, education and the training of health professionals for many years and is well documented (see Landy and Montgomery, 2012; Edminston, 2000; Gray, *et al.*, 2000; Thompson, 2000; Thompson, 2001; Fenn, 2003; Lazarus and Rosslyn, 2003). However, Nicholson (2005, p.45) indicates that this work has been undergoing a transformation both artistically and politically. Politically she suggests that there is no longer one single ideology that unites theatre makers who work in education and this means there are multiple reasons for bringing theatre into education. This is a point that this study concurs with, and it is clear through this literature review that the arts have been afforded an increasing role in helping to achieve wider public health objectives, such as developing social capital, promoting social inclusion among disadvantaged groups, and ultimately promoting public health. Nicholson indicates that by allowing participants to express their thoughts and feelings through their actions in role play and re-enacting scenarios, barriers around literacy and poor educational performance are removed. It has also been argued that applied theatre practice is able to address issues that traditional education programmes have failed at. This approach is exemplified by the NHS Health Development Agency (HDA), in their *Art for Health* report, which reviews good practice in this area (HDA, 2000). The authors indicate that the arts may be one of the “intersectoral interventions” that the *Acheson Report* (DH, 1998a) viewed as being important in redressing social and health inequalities. This literature examining the role of applied theatre and health policy that supports such partnerships and collaborations provides further support to this study and enables further insights into how theatre companies view their contributions through their debates around effectiveness.

In a review of the evaluation studies that have been carried out within the arts and health movement, commissioned by the HDA, the report author concluded that it was impossible to give precise details of improved health, particularly in light of the fact that so few projects “directly provide information on health, or social matters related to health, which are based on formal instruments of measurement” (Angus, 2002, p.8). It was suggested that there was more evidence, albeit anecdotal, of increased wellbeing and/or self-esteem. This would add support to the social constructionist argument that the discourse of effectiveness is self-constructed, and one that is given further attention later in this thesis. Furthermore, Marilyn Larkin (2000), writing in the *Lancet*, supports the use of arts in health, indicating that “people working in the field of arts and health have felt very much like islands in a vast sea, very

alone, without a public forum in which to engage with others.” (Larkin, 2000, p.1451). Her comments highlight the fragmented approach to this work, supporting the point that work may take place without collaboration with others and result in evaluation approaches and effectiveness not discussed between disciplines.

Having explored the literature relating to the use of arts in health and the use of applied theatre in health promotion; applied theatre in criminal justice literature will now be examined. I do this by examining the contributions made by researchers, writers and organisations that use applied theatre in their practice in prisons and outlining key thoughts, shifts in policy, and debates. Once again, these highlight how this thesis contributes to existing knowledge as well as where it can make a meaningful contribution to new knowledge and practice.

3.4.2 Applied Theatre in Criminal Justice

Thompson (1999b, p.6) indicates that there have been many “significant moments” in the history of prison theatre, many of which have not been documented. This view is supported by Philip Taylor (2003) in his examination of applied theatre practice who suggests that charting the history of applied theatre work in prisons is difficult, in particular because of how companies define their work, but also because applied theatre practice is still relatively new. In addition, Michael Balfour and Lindsey Poole (1999, p.17) refer to a “fragmented picture of a longer contested history”. However, since these observations, many practitioners,²⁴ researchers²⁵ and organisations²⁶ have made attempts to chart parts of this history, develop these discussions and enhance applied theatre practice in prisons.²⁷ Indeed, it is now widely believed that engaging in arts activities are considered to have a range of benefits, from increased self-confidence, improved health and transferable skills, which can help divert people away from crime. However, as McAvinchey (2011) indicates, the use of theatre methodologies applied to educative and social problems associated with crime is considered to be a “relatively recent trend” (p.73), and therefore researchers have been critical about the political and economic framework that support this work; issues that this research aims to examine in further detail.

Writing about what he refers to as “transformative encounters” Philip Taylor (2003, p.3) claims that applied theatre acts as a *transformative agent* and can help raise awareness of the difficulties that prisoners face around their health issues, the sense of isolation from community and the loose ties which perpetuate and reinforce their criminal lives or it can

²⁴ Key works include those by Thompson, 1999b; Thompson, 1999a; Thompson, 2003; Taylor, 2003; Thompson, 2005; Nicholson, 2005; Prendergast and Saxton, 2009; Preston, 2009; Thompson, 2009; Thompson, Hughes and Balfour, 2009; Balfour, 2009.

²⁵ In a field that is often new in its development, examining the work of key researchers is often useful as it highlights the differing and developing views. In the field of applied theatre and prisons work, key researchers include James Thompson, Jenny Hughes, Alison Jeffers, Michael Balfour, Jonathan Shailor, and Caoimhe McAvinchey.

²⁶ These include The Arts Alliance, CLINKs and the Anne Peaker Centre.

²⁷ The key themes within these texts are briefly explored here but in line with the CDA approach, will be discussed in more detail in the analysis and discussion chapters.

highlight the health care needs within a prison. For Taylor, in these contexts applied theatre practice generates a *thoughtful enquiry* allowing key issues around behaviour to be addressed. However, behind this neat and uncomplicated outline of applied theatre lie a number of challenges and critiques, especially when it is used in prison contexts and in how it is evaluated. One of the key challenges focuses on the suggestion that applied theatre *results* in change or transformation, which suggests that other factors do not impact in the practice and that the intervention *will* result in change, no matter what (Neelands, 2007). The issues he raises have some significance for this study, in that the premise of change supports the goals of health promotion; however, Taylor's notion of a *thoughtful inquiry* is less tangible and it is here that evaluation, and measurement of outcomes, becomes a challenge.

Hughes (2008, p.52) indicates that the use of the arts (including applied theatre) in the criminal justice sector "is not bound together by a coherent set of practices or consistent thinking"; and her enquiry leads her to identify six thematic strands, or practice models of arts interventions, in the sector. The first of these is that the arts are used to *enrich the prison curriculum*, in particular the teaching or delivery of traditional or special arts based education programmes. The second strand is where art classes are used in prisons to *develop skills* in specific art forms. In a third strand, Hughes indicates that the arts are used as a *therapeutic intervention*, either as a tool in a broader intervention or ongoing programme, or in one-to-one art therapy. Arts as *adjunctive therapy*, forms the fourth strand and suggests that arts interventions can aim to have broad personal and social development outcomes that may involve some therapeutic outcomes and procure readiness for future therapeutic interventions. For example, TiPP's drama based offending behaviour programmes for anger management and offending behaviour: *Blagg!* and *Pump!* (Thompson, 1995; Thompson, 1999a; Hughes, 2003) raised issues that were fed into one-to-one counselling and support sessions with participants (Hughes, 2003). In the fifth strand of work, arts for *participation and citizenship*, Hughes indicates that the arts can prepare offenders to play a positive role in the community; included within this are arts programmes that adopt a peer education model aiming to employ the skills and abilities of offenders to provide a useful programme for others, and arts programmes based on a restorative justice model. In the sixth strand, Hughes indicates that the arts are also seen as a *cultural right*; a view based on the idea that every social group has the right to participate in high quality arts opportunities, including theatre performances. The themes that Hughes identifies are of use to this study because they provide an understanding of the areas where applied theatre practice has received the most attention with regards to effectiveness. In particular, the third, fourth and fifth strands are ones where applied theatre practice in criminal justice sector is used most widely and ones where, I will highlight later, interventions examined in this study have mainly focussed.

To place this study within the broader debates of applied theatre, a summary and examination of work within key texts and journal articles will be examined.²⁸ This review aims to provide an understanding of how applied theatre practice has developed and also highlights some of the discourses that have impacted upon its development.

The first text in this examination is offered by Thompson (1999b) in an edited book entitled *Prison Theatre*. The contributors provide an overview of the debates in this field at the end of the twentieth century, from questioning practice through to how applied theatre can assist with therapy and rehabilitation. The role and function of theatre is considered by Hughes (1999) in her examination of the use of drama with women prisoners. In this she outlines her experience of working with women prisoners and in particular through her involvement with the TiPP project *Blagg!*. Considering the view that women prisoners are more resistant, volatile and less predictable to work with compared with men; she examines this through the concepts of resistance and expression and notes that despite her experience which shows variable levels of engagement from women, she feels this difference could be attributed to the lack of confidence many of these working class women face as a result of the contradictory and oppressive treatment they face in prison. As a result she argues against the offence-focused projects that are largely based on a cognitive behavioural model. Sally Stamp (1999) provides an informative account of the role of dramatherapy and outlines where drama ends and dramatherapy begins, looking at the clear distinction between the two and arguing that the blurring of the role between these two can lead to complexities (in terms of understanding, by those within the prison system) but also causes possible dangers (of providing hope for those who wish to change their behaviour). This is further explored by Alun Mountford and Mark Farrall (1999) in their examination of Geese Theatre's work in prisons around violence and the cycle of change. Through an outline of *The House of Four Rooms* project, in which they combine work from the psychodramatist Fernando Santos Viera and his conceptualisation of change, they integrate this with Prochaska and Diclemente's (1983) six stages of change model. This is a theatrical representation of the process through which a person moves from pre-contemplation (before entering the first room they are asked to make a *declaration of intent*), to permanent exit or change (in the final un-named room a decision is made to *leave behind* their destructive behaviours). In these few examples the contributors outline, examine and often "struggle with the issue of evaluation and demonstrating effectiveness" (Mountford and Farrall, 1999, p.115). However, they were conscious that the *final ingredient* in any offender project is that of testing the effectiveness of the practice; they argue that it "would be very easy for someone to take on board the language and manner of change only to discard them on leaving the group." For Sally Stamp (1999, p.97), evaluating and then disseminating the effects of a dramatherapist's work is crucial so others can

²⁸ The key debates around the use of applied theatre in prisons and the impact of policy on this practice have been discussed by many researchers and writers since the late 1990s and contributions useful to this thesis are provided by Thompson, Hughes, McAvinchey, Shailor and Balfour. These texts are given brief attention here; further issues in their work will be examined in the discussion chapters.

understand the work and that the profession becomes recognised in the same way as prison staff and nurses are, so that they “don’t exist in a no-man’s land”. For Jenny Hughes, acknowledging the impending changes around the need for evaluation demonstrates her awareness of the evaluation discourse that is constructed within economic debates that encourage practitioners to make the work *attractive* (to both the public and funders). She argues that this will neutralise the radical impact of the work and this dilemma to evaluate will create a challenge for work that remains relevant and beneficial to offenders. This pressure to evaluate and desire to understand how best to do it, is captured in Balfour and Poole’s (1999) contribution in which they argue that for the field to mature they need to incorporate sound evaluation into all projects. Thompson, in his summary of these arguments, calls for greater dissemination of practitioners’ findings, because in doing so practice can be sustained and these debates can then enter into the wider debates on criminal justice, and “to advocate a standard of effectiveness in criminal justice against the increasingly popular but ineffective and destructive performance of retribution” (Thompson, 1999b, p.18). This point resonates with this study, in that this understanding will also assist health professionals working within these settings. Therefore, debates in this collection demonstrate a practice that is confident in its approach to working within these settings, but is also aware of the shortfalls in how to prove this practice.

The next collection that examines and charts the work of theatre in prison is edited by Balfour (2004). Directly following on from the debates in Thompson’s book it seeks to record the development in the field in the interim years; once again the contributors examine the diversity of theatre and drama work in prison and other criminal justice contexts. Relevant contributors are again examined in further detail later in this thesis, but the arguments, perspectives, theories and practical experiences suggest that theatre practice was increasingly concerned with how it works within the power structures and the wider discourses within criminology by specifically asking the question, “how do the practices of drama and theatre best engage with systems of formalised power to create a space of radical freedom?” (Kershaw, 2004). The way the prison environment constructs a symbiotic, destructive relationships between guards and prisoners is explored through seminal work by Zimbardo. In the work offered by Thompson (2004), the analysis of performance is extended and he offers the notion that prison and punishment are forms of performance texts in themselves and consequently need to be read with great care. In this chapter Thompson (2004, p60) highlights how theatre and drama practice have been used in the service of a *performance of punishment*: “a system that de-individualises the criminal, in order to break down the body and mind, to strip the self into component parts and then reconstruct it, re-socialise it with a new role and a learnt script to the satisfaction of the tax paying public and policy makers”. Thompson’s use of a constructionist approach resonates with the wider social constructionist approach in this study as it indicates that those who use these practices identify with a discourse that interpellates them in a practice which is guided by policy makers

and funders. The cognitive behavioural approaches that are frequently used in prison theatre work are questioned through Goldstein's work (2004), and in particular the use of this as a tool to reinforce pro-social behaviours. It is through this that once again the practice of applied theatre is questioned; to Balfour, simply using role-play does not constitute applied theatre practice, but it highlights how "theatre methodology, education and psychology can become entwined in the pursuit of a criminological goal". This text therefore begins to chart a history of theatre in prison that is increasingly diverse and one that draws on many other disciplines and practices. Other chapters explore the use of different techniques in theatre, such as cognitive behavioural projects using naturalistic representations of addictions in devised comedy routines that draw on surrealism and metaphor to explore the internalised world of a drug user (McCoy and Bond, 2004), and Clark Baim's (2004) use of psychodrama with offenders who have committed sexual abusive and violent offences. As outlined earlier in this chapter, the political backdrop to these chapters is characterised by a discourse that demands for more robust evaluation techniques and evidence around the use of the arts in prisons; however, the debates in this text include limited reference to this. The discussions focus on where theatre is positioned in rehabilitation practice and a lack of discussion around evaluation could be viewed as a collective rejection of discourse that is pushing those working in this field to prove their worth. This view is reflected in the chapter by Paul Heritage (2004, p.190) which documents his experience of developing work in Brazilian prisons. Tracing his *entrances and exits*, the *ins and outs* of making theatre in Brazilian prisons, he frequently questions the efficacy of the work. He considers the immediate impact of the work and the long term impacts for participants, providing reflections and further questions around purpose, power and effect. These conflicting debates demonstrate the intersection of competing discourses that this study aims to further highlight and understand through an examination of theatre company practice.

So far, the literature reviewed in this chapter discusses applied theatre practice in prisons predominantly in the UK, Europe and some parts of Africa, Asia and South America. However, *Performing new lives: prison theatre*, edited by Jonathon Shailor (2011a) contributors examine applied theatre practice across central and eastern US prisons to provide "a useful example of advocacy for other practitioners and proponents of arts in correction" (p. 189). The chapters serve as case studies where techniques such as role play, classic text improvisation and creative writing are used to demonstrate the challenges of this practice in prisons as well as the effects of this work on prisoners. The text is worth examination in this thesis because the contributors' reflective accounts enable an understanding of the wider discourse on the transformative nature of prison theatre.

In his introduction, Shailor sets up the framework for the book indicating that the use of theatre in prisons presents three key strengths: it provides "a place of sanctuary", "a crucible for transformation", and an "effective vehicle for (re)integration into society" (p.22). The

challenge of using theatre for transformation is demonstrated in the Brent Buell's (2011) examination of the *Rehabilitation Through the Arts* project in Sing Sing Correctional Facility. He states that such theatre is transformative, but asserts that it is a process and is not something that happens overnight. Describing how, through participation, the men become enthused by learning, he concludes that theatre can stimulate a desire to learn and provide a legitimate language for engagement. Similarly, Jean Trounstone (2011) in summarising her experience of performing Shakespeare behind bars²⁹ examines the "transgressive nature of theatre", as well as its "political" and "spiritual power" (p.232 – 234). Through storytelling in the "sacred spaces" that prisoners have created, she talks about how prisoners search for meaning, and the way prison official's tested and questioned her process at every stage. In other examples the contributors are clear about the rehabilitative and health benefits of their work. This is demonstrated in Judy Dworin's (2011) chapter exploring texts with the women in the York Correctional Institution and in Laura Bates' (2011) outline of her Shakespeare classes with men in solitary. In both of these examples they talk about the changes and the developments prisoners made through engagement with the theatre process. Sharon Paquette Lajoie's (2011) chapter also focuses on health outcomes through a description of the rehearsal process for *Waiting for Godot* in New Hampshire State Prison, focusing on the casts' "process of growth" and healing through the project (p.101), and mental health is a key focus for Julia Taylor's (2011) chapter in which she charts developments in her own learning and understanding in the use of theatre through her Prison Creative Arts Project, concluding that "art is dangerous" because it provides "opportunities for confidence, self-worth, and accomplishment" (p.198). She also reiterates points made by other contributors indicating that it empowers people to make change in their own lives. In line with other texts examined in this thesis's literature review, these practitioners often use the terms "healing" and "growth", in place of any direct reference to a health benefit, demonstrating their belief that theatre practice in these contexts allows the practitioner an opportunity to engage with individuals and facilitate change. In a similar way to those practicing elsewhere in the world, Jodi Jinks (2011), in her description of prison training in Texas, refers to the tensions and personal political compromises that many practitioners in this field have had to make to gain access to an institution. Moreover, in a description that resonates with the aims of this thesis, Curt Tofteland (2011) in his chapter indicates that artists need to gain an understanding of what is motivating the prison staff and the prison's mission in order to be effective in their practice, concluding that practitioners need to be able to describe their work (and the outcomes on prisoners) in ways that the prison warder can understand providing an insight into how the design of the programme contributes to the prison's goals. The final chapter presents a discussion between the contributors which highlights some of the more fundamental questions that arise from these practitioners' work. However, although they provide a significant depth of experience in the field, none of the authors deeply engage with the

²⁹ Trounstone's chapter summarises key points within her text "Shakespeare Behind Bars: One Teacher's Story of the Power of Drama in a Women's Prison" (2004).

political or socio-cultural issues within the criminal justice system, and at times this debate presents an unchallenged and optimistic view that their practice has resulted in positive outcomes for prisoners – and in some cases “saved” them from a future of re-offending (p.41). The work further supports a call for research and an approach to understanding effectiveness.

Issues from a UK perspective are examined in further detail in McAvinchey's (2011) book *Theatre & Prison*, in which she considers how theatre and performance can help to investigate and understand the political, social and economic consequences of the use of prison in the twenty first century. After examining the purpose and effectiveness of prison as a place of punishment and rehabilitation, and the shifting role of prison (informed by ideas of representation, narrative and audience in the “performance of punishment” and justice) McAvinchey goes on to examine theatre about prison. In an examination of John Galsworthy's earlier works, and in particular his play *Justice* staged in 1910, she begins by highlighting how early twentieth century thinking led to theatre being used as a means to discuss “pressing social issues”, and how changes to the prison system led to modern uses of theatre in prison (2011, p.40). In the third part of her examination she addresses the use of theatre in prison outlining its history since the mid-1980s, and after identifying that there has been no survey of the practices of theatre in prison which draws the methodological politics of these practices across the twentieth and twenty first centuries into conversation with each other, she attempts to address this gap. By acknowledging that each prison institution is “distinct, operating in a specific cultural and historical context”, she argues that some commonality in generalisations can be drawn across different models of penal practice. Through theatre and performance practice, she argues that the institution of prison can be *made visible*, allowing us to critically examine its social economic and cultural impacts. She is particularly critical of the intentions to develop specific educational and social impacts through participation in drama, arguing that increasingly theatre in prison practice is referred to only in terms of *success* of the predetermined outcomes where “the participants involvement is examined and measured for what skills or learning they gain from the participation” (2011, p.58). She also asks similar questions to those within this research study; broadly questioning whether these interventions work, and with the move to accreditation and a link with practice to employment policy, she questions whether theatre increases skills and therefore employability, resulting in a corresponding reduction in crime. In a debate that echoes with Thompsons call for attention to the affective realm, she argues that a focus on the outputs have led to a practical and critical impact on theatre in prison, “one where the effectiveness and the evidence is questioned more frequently than the aesthetic or political terrain of their work”. Therefore, in an analysis that resonates with some of the core aims of this thesis, she argues that the language of social exclusion and inclusion, which are rooted in the cultural and social policies of the New Labour government, led to the expansion of the growth in the *business* of arts activity in the criminal justice system. This *business* of theatre she argues

reflected the *discourse of investment and return* which directly reflected models of operation in private management, which were increasingly being used in the public sector. To her, the pioneering radical spirit which characterised early theatre in prison work has been compromised by the impact of private management principles embraced by the government. This text can be seen to draw together key debates over the New Labour government period and whilst acknowledging the developments made in this field, appears critical of the acceptance of practitioners to work within a constricting policy discourse that, in a sense, has compromised the foundations of applied theatre practice. These strands of thought that echo the focus of this thesis will be examined in further detail alongside the discourses identified within applied theatre practice that contributes to improved health outcomes for prisoners.

Other scholarly articles that assist in an understanding of how applied theatre practice in prisons has been articulated and examined were identified within this review of the literature. Some of these are examined below, but others are reserved for other sections of this thesis because they specifically relate to the evaluation of applied theatre practice in prisons. Moreover, as a result of this thesis's aims, texts chosen for review focus on examples specific to the UK; however, there are some pieces of work that help develop an understanding of how this practice has been shaped and developed outside of the UK and are of use to this review.

Research into prison theatre is examined from an insider's perspective, rather than a facilitator/director's, in Prendergast's autoethnography of a prison theatre production (2013). In this she outlines the meticulous approach to obtaining permission for themselves (and their props) that theatre workers wishing to enter the prison system must go through and, through a Foucauldian stance, how she negotiated with the power relationships and the dehumanising relationships in prison. Through poems she was able to assess her deeper affective responses to the experience. However, whilst very useful to the field, she fails to comment on the bias inherent in her position as a professional from the *outside* taking on a role within the play, as opposed to an offender who is resident *inside* the prison.

The facilitators' influence on the prison theatre is explored in Young-Jahangeer's (2013) examination of how women engaged the issue of lesbianism within a theatre project in Westville Female Correctional Centre in Durban, South Africa. Her work combined African popular performance³⁰ with Freirean problem-posing methodology in order to generate debate around socio-political issues of the offenders' choosing. The content of the performance was hijacked by community leaders who did not want to create a condition where lesbianism was an acceptable practice in the prison, leading Young-Jahangeer to confront the fact that her "democratic values may not always be in the best interests of a community whose

³⁰ Barber, Karen (1997). "Views of the field". In *Readings in African Popular Culture*, Edited by: Barber, Karen. Pp.1–12. Oxford: James Curry.

culture/identity, although different, is no less valid" (p.203). This work assists in an understanding of the impact of the theatre facilitator on the prisoners, but also the complex negotiations they have to engage in within these environments.

Sutherland (2013) examines the performative and performed notions of gender and sexuality in relation to a prison theatre project located in a medium-security male prison in South Africa. She outlines how sexual violence in the South African prison system has been used as a means of power and control, and questions when and how prescribed gender scripts that dictate an aggressive and often violent masculinity might simultaneously be enacted and violated through theatrical performance. Reflecting on her experience, she explores how participants make sense of the gender choices they made, and how these related to the wider questions of identity for prisoners. She was interested in how they would translate to a lived experience beyond the theatre space and outside of prison. How changes and transformations that are made in prison translate to the outside world, are concerns for many applied theatre practitioners in prisons, including those who aim to improve the health of prisoners.

In *Imagining Medea*, Rena Fraden (2001) outlines the work of the *Medea Project* which is founded on the belief that when women tell their stories on a public stage, they are empowered to change and even "to save their own lives" (p.26). Through mythical journeys the group works to transform concepts such as death and violence, into life and hope. By drawing on a discourse of self-esteem, self-care and personal responsibility Fraden argues that this shifted "attention away from governmental responsibility for social inequality toward the personal realm" (p.186) and that the promise of personal transformation has served to rationalize the growth not only of community-based performance, but also of the prison system. Her examination is of use to this thesis as it suggests that the merits of theatre in prisons, although obvious to theatre practitioners, requires further examination and understanding before it can be considered as an effective tool to effect change.

Retaining a focus on the US, through her work exploring community based performance, Jan Cohen-Cruz (2005) indicates that the use and development of theatre in prisons which began in the 1970s was initially considered a "luxury" (p.12) but the power of the approach to connect with prisoners and tackle social justice was something that kept drawing her back to this work. She goes on to chart the developments of this in the US, referring to specific socio-political factors that have impacted on the work. Her notion of the transformative benefits of this work is only challenged in passing and although the issue of evaluation is of concern she only refers to the need to focus on "multiple methods" (p.10), and avoids any in-depth engagement with this issue.

The use of Shakespeare with prisoners is examined in Amy Scott-Douglass' (2007) examination of theatre in US prisons. She asserts that Shakespeare can be used as a "disciplinary and an educational tool" (p3), and provides prisoners with "a venue for improving literacy and social skills" (p.5) as well as cultivating artistic talent. She draws on a number of projects where Shakespeare has been used³¹ and argues that this creates "an outlet for artistic expression and a tool for learning literacy and social skills such as tolerance and conflict resolution" (p5), as well as a safe space for offenders to come to terms with the past. She also suggests that performing Shakespeare can provide a "spiritual" and "a moralising" force. Again this work draws on the benefits of this practice but does not engage with debates concerning the funding of this work or how the projects are evaluated.

Shailor continues this examination of how applied theatre leads to empowerment for prisoners in the US in two other publications (2011b and 2012) talking in particular about how prisoners can develop skills for reintegration back into society following engagement in these contexts. Within these he talks of the positive "development", "learning," and "growth" opportunities that theatre provides, but his enthusiasm for this work rarely leads him to challenge the assumptions upon which these assertions are made. Whereas, Møller (2013), in her descriptive account prison theatre at Bayview Correctional Facility in Manhattan indicates that it increases role repertoire, in particular for women of colour who are in a "critical situation" because of their experience of oppression. In her work she touches on the challenges and obstacles of working with female offenders arguing that women's narratives provide the strongest evidence of the effectiveness of this work.

3.4.3 Applied Theatre and Public Health in Criminal Justice: models of change

Throughout the literature, applied theatre practitioners and researchers can also be seen to construct and describe practice in ways that suggest that participation in these activities may achieve changes in the behaviour and actions of individuals and/or groups and communities.³² In making and substantiating claims that applied theatre has a positive effect on the factors that influence reoffending, and in attempts to link their practice to prevention and rehabilitative outcomes, many draw on relevant strands of psychological and sociological theory to support specific approaches to practice and models of change. Hughes (2008) provides a useful framework in which to examine this literature, identifying several theoretical stands and models. Some of these are relevant to this study and were utilised to help identify

³¹ Examples include the Luther Lockett Correctional Complex, a medium security men's prison in Kentucky where the Shakespeare Behind Bars project was founded by Curt Tofteland, Jean Trounstein's theatre group at the Framingham Women's Prison in Massachusetts, Agnes Wilcox's *Prison Performing Arts Project* in Missouri, Laura Bates' Shakespeare group for prisoners in solitary confinement at Wabash Valley Correctional Facility, and Jonathan Shailor's Shakespeare project at Racine Correctional Institution in Wisconsin with his full length production of *King Lear*.

³² For example, Jackson (2007) in his account of TIE indicates how these practices aim to *effect transformation in peoples' lives*, and Philip Taylor's (2003) concept of applied theatre indicates that it encourages *transformative encounters*.

further literature and structure the debates in this section. There are some overlaps between these, but in general, they focus around five key areas:

1. Cognitive behavioural theory (CBT)
2. Role theory/social learning theory
3. Learning theory
4. Intelligence theories
5. Cultural Capital and Social capital theory

Elements of these theories have influenced the development of specific approaches to practice which have been adopted and adapted by theatre practitioners working within the criminal justice system. I go on to outline two which are of key relevance to this study. Firstly, Thompson's *marking theory* which helps to understand how the effects of applied theatre practice can be communicated to others; and secondly, Prochaska and Diclemente's *transtheoretical model of change*, which is increasingly being used by many applied theatre practitioners, and because of its popularity amongst health promotion practitioners, enables a shared understanding of change and the process of change to take place.

Cognitive Behavioural Theory (CBT)

Prompted by policy demands to demonstrate effectiveness, CBT is one of the most popular theoretical models adopted by many applied theatre practitioners working in prisons, and has therefore attracted a lot of debate in the field. It is a compound model rooted in a range of personality and social psychology theories including *Social Learning Theory* (Sheldon, 2011). The premise of CBT is that deficits in the relationships between thoughts, feelings and behaviour, which an individual learns to manage from experience and by example from significant people in their lives, can be corrected through training which reinforces positive behaviour rather than negative behaviour in a consistent way (Sheldon, 2011). It consists of three elements, the *cognitive* element relates to thinking skills, *emotional* elements examine self-awareness, self-expression and self-control, and the *behavioural* element of this approach encourages the learning of *pro-social* ways of acting to achieve goals.

Proponents of this model and approach hold the belief in the agency and free will of the individual. Programmes are designed to address the *criminogenic* factors that may influence offending behaviour, for example, these may include anti-social attitudes, poor problem solving capacities and low levels of training and educational skill (Gendreau and Andrews, 1990). The aim of the intervention is to use applied theatre techniques to develop and restructure thinking habits and belief systems to develop pro-social behaviour. However, Balfour (2004, p4) suggests that this is far too simplistic and a more complex relationship exists: "the assumption that these factors will lead an individual to criminal activity cannot be taken for granted". He argues that CBT ignores the existence of other influential factors that

impact on individuals and leads them to breaking the law; these include, for example, political reasons, economic hardship and biological determinants.

Hughes notes that in the arts and criminal justice literature an explicit move can be seen away from CBT approaches towards engaging with offenders on a more affective or imaginative level which appears to have coincided with Home Office evaluation findings which have cast doubt on the impact of cognitive behavioural group work (Cann, *et al.*, 2003). However, in a more recent study, Blacker, Watson *et al.* (2008) maintain and support the role of CBT in these contexts, indicating that its acceptance in the wider political arena has meant that practitioners are returning to this approach. The debates around CBT are important to this thesis in that they demonstrate how applied theatre practitioners have incorporated elements from the discipline of psychology to provide stronger evidence of the effectiveness of their practice.

Role theory and social learning theory

Rooted in many of the basic concepts of traditional learning theory, the main proponents of social learning theory, Robert Sears and Albert Bandura, believed that direct reinforcement could not account for all learning arguing that people can learn information and behaviours through observational learning (also referred to as *modelling*) which they then re-enact at a later stage (Grusec and Hastings, 2007).

Role Theory, influenced by the theoretical work of George Herbert Mead and Jacob Moreno, proposes that human behaviour is guided by expectations held both by the individual and by other people. The expectations correspond to different roles individuals *perform* or *enact* in their daily lives, such as that of offender. Individuals generally have and manage many roles; these consist of a set of rules or norms that guide behaviour. Proponents of role theory propose that in order to change behaviour it is necessary to increase the repertoire of, or change roles; roles correspond to behaviours and vice versa. In addition to heavily influencing behaviour, roles influence beliefs and attitudes; suggesting that individuals will change their beliefs and attitudes to correspond with their roles (Goffman, 1959, and 1961).

Role and Social Learning Theory overlap with aspects of CBT, in that the ability to play a social role, to understand and perform to expectations of others, as well as to develop and sustain personal style and identity, are both important for successful development. Role theory relates to social learning theory in that the formation of self and social roles occurs through interaction with others; therefore, participation in applied theatre practice provides opportunities to learn and develop role-taking and role-playing skills via the social process of creating or presenting a piece of art, the fictional space of a creative process (such as performing roles in plays) and the opportunity to take on different life roles in a group or team process. Møller (2003) draws on role and social learning theory in an analysis of the

Rehabilitation through the Arts, prison theatre programme. Arguing that taking part in a theatre ensemble in prison can prepare offenders for release by providing opportunities to play fictional and new life roles, and the ability to take on roles and consider different perspectives, enables change to take place. Geese Theatre Company also use role theory as it provides them with a framework for identifying which skills and roles would be beneficial for individuals to develop. In their 2006 project *Journey Woman*, created specifically for female audiences, the audience is invited to reflect on a woman's downward spiral into a pattern of personal dysfunction and repeated imprisonment. This is further explored in role-play activities with the audience afterwards, enabling female offenders to examine their own roles and how these could lead them to act in certain ways that fit the role that they feel they should be playing (Preston, 2009, p.52).

These debates around role theory and role play feature in Moreno's (1984), approach to *psychodrama* in which he suggests that the role the individual assumes in the specific moment he or she reacts to a specific situation is created by past experiences and cultural patterns of society in which the individual lives. Psychodrama role theory asserts that the total roles in which a person interacts forms their *role repertoire* and it is from this that the personality develops (Jones, 2004). Advocates of this approach are concerned with the dysfunctional roles of the offender and his or her antisocial offending behaviour, asserting that offenders often have a limited role repertoire, which is focussed often around their antisocial offending behaviours.

Learning theory

Learning theory is a conceptual framework derived from Piaget's theory of children's development which describes how information is absorbed, processed and retained during learning (Piaget, 1962). It is a very large area of study so for the purpose of this review, I will outline a few relevant approaches that influence the development and practice of applied theatre, and highlight how it is used to encourage change.

Educational psychologists suggest that all learning can be subdivided into different elements or parts; of relevance to work with offenders is that of *behaviourism*. Behaviourism implies that change in knowledge is controlled through conditioned responses and, most importantly for this study, these behaviours (and changes to them following an intervention) can be measured. *Conditioning* is subdivided into two areas; firstly into *classical conditioning* where behaviour becomes a reflex response to a stimulus; and secondly, in *operant conditioning*, where behaviour is reinforced with a reward or punishment, the reward encouraging the behaviour to reoccur, punishment encouraging it to cease (Mallika, 2000).

Other learning theories include *cognitive learning theory* which grew out of Gestalt psychology in the early 1900s and proposed that individuals generate knowledge and meaning through

sequential development of their cognitive abilities (Kazantzis, Reinecke and Freeman, 2010, p.18). They are critical of behaviourists for being too dependent on overt behaviour to explain learning and indicate that patterns need to be examined rather than focussing on isolated events. Humanism, as a learning theory, is based on the generation of human knowledge, meaning, and ultimately expertise through interpersonal and intra-personal intelligence; also referred to as self-directed learning or adaptive learning, and is motivated by needs. Constructivism³³ as a learning theory explains how knowledge is constructed by human beings. It proposes that humans construct knowledge of meaning from their experiences, so when they come into contact with new information, in order to adapt to the world, they construct new knowledge based on existing knowledge that had been developed by previous experiences. The learning theories of David Kolb serve as the foundations of constructivist learning theory (Kolb and Allen, 1984).

Encapsulated within all learning theories is the ability of the individual to understand process and recall what is learnt in one context and then apply to another. This *transformative learning* explains how people revise and reinterpret meaning and is reflected by Silvis (2002) who argues that art forms have the ability to transform the environment for learning; through a creative approach they encourage critical thinking and the channelling of personal expression. However, how this effectiveness can be measured is not something that she comments upon extensively, other than proposing post intervention measurements.

Play theory is associated with developmental models proposed by Piaget, Maslow, Erikson, Klein and Winnicott, and provides a further dimension to a learning theory framework for the arts (Hughes, 2008). Play requires active engagement, and learning through play offers an opportunity for understanding between stages of personal development. The theory draws on the notion that young people develop the ability to role-take through play; firstly by taking on an imagined world, to be able to step in and out of role, experiment with, manipulate and test actions and interactions and secondly through organised games they can take into account the different perspectives of many different people. Pearson-Davies (1989) draws on the ideas of Klein³⁴ and Erikson³⁵ in describing arts practice with troubled young people. She states that when organised to meet young people's needs, theatre productions can provide emotional release, opportunities for social interaction and an opportunity to try out new roles in a safe environment. Play theory also has a part to play in applied theatre projects in prisons; Escape Artists uses play in their work with prisoners and has found that its use in their model of *the bridge*, they can engage prisoners in a non-threatening discussion about their development and therefore support clients along their journey over this *bridge* to transform their lives after prison (Escape Artists, 2006, p.22).

³³ Note the difference to *constructionism*; a distinction between the two terms was made earlier in this thesis, so that the theoretical approach of *constructionism* was not confused with the learning theory *constructivism*.

³⁴ Where children's play is a symbolic representation of unconscious fantasy.

³⁵ Where play is a way of achieving mastery over traumatic or difficult experiences.

The use of learning theories in applied theatre practice in prisons demonstrates how practitioners use these widely tested theoretical perspectives in their work. They are useful to this thesis in that they help to understand how practice is developed and enhanced through an adoption of theory and educational discourses that is encapsulated in policy.

Intelligence theories

Multiple intelligence theory offered by Gardner (1993) suggests that the arts are a unique opportunity to offer alternatives to the formal techniques used in the traditional educational system. Arguing that there are seven forms of intelligence: linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical intelligence, spatial intelligence, bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence and intrapersonal intelligence, he suggests that traditional educational approaches tend to operate in only a few intelligences and therefore do not cater for different learning styles, whereas the arts encompasses elements across each intelligence. In relationship to work with prisoners, the use of approaches within applied theatre projects can address some of the challenges these people have had within the traditional education system. This reflects Lochner's work (2004) who suggests that offenders have experienced poor education experiences which then lead to lower paid employment, which ultimately exacerbates and contributes to their criminal behaviour and that education may increase patience or risk aversion, and thus prevent aggression or violence against the person. However, critics such as Clark and Dugdale (2008) argue that whilst there appears to be a link between education and behaviour change, this cannot always be guaranteed or taken for granted.

Studies of offender behaviour have also identified that many offenders lack emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence emerged from the work of Goleman (1995) and refers to the ability to monitor, regulate and use feelings to guide thought and action and relates to basic emotional and social competencies such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation and empathy. Prison officers have also been encouraged to develop their emotional intelligence skills through participation in activities with prisoners (Arnold, 2008). This engagement and development of emotional intelligence between prisoners and prison staff is argued to contribute to an overall improvement in rehabilitation. It is for this and other reasons, that Geese theatre actively engage prison staff in their applied theatre prison projects and encourage others to do so (Baim, Brookes and Mountford, 2002).

Cultural Capital and Social Capital Theories

Cultural capital was a concept developed by Pierre Bourdieu, and as Karen Robson (2009, p.106) points out, defining it is tricky because Bourdieu modified the concept throughout his writing. For the purposes of this study, a hybrid definition is used in which he argues that skills, abilities and norms form a currency of the *social realm*, which partially explains less

immediately visible inequalities in society. Cultural capital is also characterised by an individual's ability to use language that those in dominant positions in society use, as well as being familiar with this culture. Bourdieu thus proposes that it has an effect on life outcomes, not by operating in isolation, but through a complex web of socialisation into behaviours over the life course (Winkle-Wagner, 2010). Cultural capital is related to social capital and is a concept that has attracted a great deal of focus from political and academic audiences over the last decade, not only in the use of the arts, but also more extensively in public health. Bourdieu conceptualised it as micro-based in networks and individual relationships; therefore, social capital refers to the personal and social skills, networks and relationships that help communities and individuals achieve success despite their exposure to risk (Halpern, 2005). It is a concept used to explain why some communities work better than others, with resulting health, social and economic benefits. Its proponents argue that social networks and implicit norms that facilitate coordination, social trust and local democracy, lead to healthier, more efficient communities and in doing so, a range of social problems can be more readily addressed.

Hughes (2008) suggests that social capital theory (and cultural capital) has relevance to an *explanatory framework* for the impact of the arts. Arts programmes that seek to engage individuals in participating in social processes enable them to develop a range of skills, capacities and new social networks. Arts programmes and services in the prevention of crime can therefore contribute to the critical mass of institutional structures that can act as an effective deterrent to crime (Sherman, *et al.*, 1997). Arnold (2008) indicates that engagement by both prisoners and staff in a programme can also have a number of personal and social effects, including improved relationships between inmates as well as between inmates and staff. Clean Break Theatre Company has extended its work to include support programmes upon release as a result of understanding that good social ties and links within communities will help prevent ex-offenders from reoffending (Perman, 2004).

Approaches to practice

The theoretical strands outlined so far assist in clarifying the arguments in this thesis by highlighting how the effects of practice have been conceptualised by practitioners, and are particularly useful to this thesis because they identify the interplay between levels of practice, participants and social structures, and how the outcomes can be accounted for, or understood in relationship to discourse. Whilst these may be able to explain the rationale behind applied theatre practice, they do not assist in an understanding of how this work can be evaluated, and the long term effects that are created. However, elements of them have influenced the development of specific approaches that help understand how the effects of applied theatre work can be understood.

Thompson's *Marking Theory* (2003) represents an extension of the CBT model, linking role and *Social Learning Theory* with Boal's (1985, 1992) *Forum Theatre*. To Thompson, marking theory is a reaction against the limitations imposed by the theoretical frameworks of role rehearsal when explaining the impact of participation in theatre. Thompson asserts that a theatre workshop exploring offending behaviour should not be described as an exercise in repeated or rehearsed *pro-social* actions that can be learned and reproduced in other contexts. For Thompson, participation in theatre and drama has a more complex relationship to behaviour or action in the future; therefore, applied theatre workshops involve the examination of interactions and the making of new connections, where behaviours and actions of an individual are an embodiment of past experiences and relationships (Thompson refers to these as "little dramatic performances"). This theory proposes that drama workshops create *social energy* which facilitates changes in interaction, thought and feeling processes which in turn can leave *marks* on participants that compete with or constrict rigid responses and conditioned behaviour. A theatre workshop can "gently or faintly, mark" individuals and therefore reveal and adjust these performances in the future (Thompson, 2003, p.57). Furthermore, theatre processes mirror the complex process of day-to-day interaction and communication and this means that a greater impression can be made. A participant can be left with a memory of different and more diverse possibilities of behaviour, ways of expressing feelings and new physical routines. This theory allows us to consider how the effects of theatre can be explained to others, rather than measured.

The *Transtheoretical Model* (also referred to as *The Stages of Change* model) can be considered not just as a model of change, but an approach to practice. This model has emerged from health research, primarily in smoking cessation, and suggests that there is a common process of change that can be identified across different therapies (Prochaska, *et al.*, 1994). The model states that the process of change is cyclical rather than linear, and relapse is the norm (Prochaska and Diclemente, 1983). The features of each dimension of change identified in the model represent areas of activity or behaviour that can be targeted to facilitate progress in individuals. Processes of change involve activities used by individuals to change their behaviour and include consciousness-raising, self-liberation, and, self-re-evaluation. Levels of change represent what needs to be changed, for example cognitive ability, interpersonal skills and family systems. The third area, stages of change, represent the temporal dimensions of change, i.e. when changes occur and includes the stages of precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action and maintenance.

Summary

The models of change presented in this section provide a theoretical basis for substantiating claims for the effectiveness of arts practice in the criminal justice sector. They also begin to highlight that there may be mechanisms within different art forms that lead to specific effects or impacts relating to offending behaviour and to personal and social development. However,

whilst useful, Hughes suggests that the sector needs to develop its own body of theory, a gap in the knowledge that the findings of this thesis aim to contribute to. Furthermore, whilst some theories such as learning theory provides stronger evidence for the longer term effectiveness of applied theatre practice, and highlight how practitioners have drawn on these theories to both support and account for the outcomes of their work, as pointed out earlier, the link between education and behaviour change is a tenuous one and therefore greater understanding of the contribution of applied theatre practice to change is required.

3.5 Applied theatre in Custodial Settings - Evaluation Discourses

In this section, I examine research and literature that specifically focuses on the evaluation of the applied theatre in prisons. Much of the literature makes claims for the effects of applied theatre and arts practice and as such it is presented as *evidence* from the field. In a critical appraisal of this literature I aim to reveal the extent to which the claims support the outcomes, and what contributions this study makes to these debates.

Hughes (2008) notes that many of the findings relating to the effectiveness of arts programmes in custodial and community sentencing can be located around five key themes: impact on society, institutions, individuals, delivery, and interventions. Utilising the first three areas in this framework, and drawing on the studies identified in her review whilst supplementing this debate with other literature, I examine the research evidence exploring the effectiveness of applied theatre to examine the existing debates around evaluation.

3.5.1 Impact on society

Reconviction rates

Policies that aim to reduce offending or improve offender health indicate that interventions should contribute to these aims by reducing reconviction rates of those participating in programmes. Outcomes, and measuring them, have become a key focus for many projects, and one that is increasingly being cited by practitioners when they seek funding. However, applied theatre workers have questioned whether participation in a project can have an impact on reoffending and draw on debates in criminology which suggest that the causes of crime are complex. It can therefore contribute to an overall programme of activities within prisons, but cannot be seen as an answer in and of itself. However, researchers have attempted to understand how these interventions can reduce recidivism, many of which at their core focus on breaking the cycle of offending.

Hughes notes that the most extensive reconviction study took place in connection with the Arts in Corrections (AIC) programme in California. AIC was initiated as a pilot programme in 1977 funded by arts and law enforcement agencies and grew to become a state-wide network of artist residencies across a number of facilities. A recidivism study was carried out in 1988, involving a study of parole outcomes for 1777 randomly selected inmates who had

participated in at least one AIC class for a minimum of six months: outcomes were studied at six months, one year and two years post-release and compared with parole outcomes of all California Department of Corrections parolees for the same time period (Williford, 1994). The study found that AIC participants had more favourable outcomes. AIC participants showed a 88% rate of favourable outcome (avoiding reconviction) compared to 72.25% for all parolees after six months, a 74.2% rate of favourable outcome compared to 49.6% for all parolees at one year and a 69.2% favourable outcome compared to 42% for all parolees at two years.

The research failed to show a causal link between participation in the programme and subsequent lower rates of offending. However, identifying and demonstrating a causal link would be difficult because there are so many other factors that impact on an individual that cannot be controlled upon release (for example, support networks outside and the influence of peers). Thus, the outcomes of this research are important for an understanding of evaluation discourses in this thesis as it supports the argument that proving effectiveness using techniques that measure and attempt to quantify outcomes are unsuitable, even if attempts are made to track changes over time.

Duguid and Pawson's (1998) major evaluation of the Canadian University of Victoria's liberal arts degree programme found 75% of inmates out of a sample of 654 who had participated in at least two courses over two semesters avoided re-incarceration for three years post-release (compared to a 40-50% re-incarceration rate in most North American jurisdictions). Those that had the most problematic histories and poor offending records (the *hard cases*), who took part in the theatre group running alongside the degree programme improved on predicted reconviction rate by 41%, which was 10% higher than the hard cases group as a whole. The authors concluded that theatre programmes can be particularly effective with more serious offenders. However, other than this study, much of the literature focuses on the impact of the arts in recidivism in general and not the impact of applied theatre or drama projects in particular. As I will go on to explore later, recent studies examining the impact of theatre or drama in prisons have tended to skirt around the issue of reconviction rates and make unsubstantiated claims in their conclusions, calling for more research to assist them in these activities.

Møller (2003) in a study detailing her personal experiences of a prison theatre project claims that the intervention had an impact on reconviction rates. She concludes that reduced offending would occur, but bases this belief on statements prisoners make, suggesting that their participation led them to gain confidence, learn the meaning of discipline and experience commitment. However, to what extent this actually leads to reduced offending, and how long term these changes would be, is missing from her study. Furthermore, Møller makes limited comment on the influence of other social and environmental factors on criminal behaviour. In another study where factors were considered, findings indicated that the drama based

programme had influenced individuals post-release, resulting in reduced recidivism (Snell, 1990). Snell's study examined a drama programme in a New Jersey prison with a group of 21 prisoners and followed them upon release, noting that the rates of reoffending for the group were lower than for others. However, what this study omits to discuss is whether those that engaged in the drama were already open for change, a stage in the transtheoretical model of change discussed earlier which would suggest these offenders were less likely to offend if they interacted in the programme or not. Furthermore, the study is small and the use of drama was part of a wider rehabilitation programme, so it is difficult to isolate the results to this one intervention. However, that said, the study attempts to work with an evaluation discourse that requires practitioners to measure and quantify impact, and exemplifies how practitioners can use short and longer term evaluations and monitoring practices in an attempt to prove (or at least describe or account for) the effects of their work.

Challenging this evidence is an evaluation of a prison and community-based thinking skills programme where no significant differences in two-year reconviction rates for treatment and control groups was identified (Falshaw, *et al.*, 2003). What is interesting to note here is that these findings contradicted those of an earlier study of the same programme that found a reduced reconviction rate of 14% for offenders taking part (Friendship, *et al.*, 2002). The more recent of the two evaluations presents a number of reasons for this inconsistency, suggesting that the initial positive findings were influenced by higher motivation due to the introduction of a new programme. The authors conclude that there are gaps in understanding what works in *practice* and what works *with whom*. They go on to suggest that programmes need to be exploratory as evidence improves in the field. This study supports the points raised earlier whereby other researchers and applied theatre practitioners have called for more research and sharing of evidence in the field. However, as I will go on to outline in the next chapter, evaluation practices are influenced and bound within discourse and power structures, so additional research and dissemination of the outcomes of practice will help challenge some of these restrictive discourses as well as develop discourses around evaluation that focuses on the contributions of practice to enhance understanding amongst those working in criminal justice settings.

Further evidence of the effects of applied theatre can be seen in Hughes' (2003) evaluation of *Blagg!*, In a reconviction study where 32 participants were monitored and matched to a control group, the research team found that 30% of participants were reconvicted within one year of participation, compared to 39% for the matched control group. Thus, although evidence was generated by qualitative evaluation and the findings are limited by the small size of the sample so are therefore not generalisable across the whole offender community, the study goes some way to support a link between offending and participation in a programme such as *Blagg!*. In other literature, such as Clinks' *Criminal Justice: An Artists Guide*, the authors do not assert that arts practice reduces reconviction rates; instead they

suggest that these interventions can make “contributions” to enable prison and probation staff meet their targets (Rideout, 2011b, p.3). However, how this impacts upon reconviction rates is unclear.

From this summary of the evidence in support of the use of applied theatre as a tool to reduce recidivism, it is clear that further research is required. In many cases, outcomes are taken for granted and alternative explanations are not examined in detail; furthermore, correlations are generally treated as *evidence* without consideration of other causes. The key issues that reduce the quality of the research in this area are the small sample sizes and the obvious difficulties in following prisoners upon release to track and account for any long term changes. In addition, the studies take place within different locations and justice frameworks and therefore they cannot be generalised to other areas.

Cost effectiveness

It is estimated that each new prison place costs £119k and that the annual average cost for each prisoner exceeds £40k (Marsh, 2008). In the ACE and MOJ document *Demonstrating the Value of Arts in Criminal Justice*, the authors indicate that if £20k is spent on a writer in residence and it prevents one person from reoffending and returning to prison, it presents *good value for money* (Ellis and Gregory, 2011). However, what these and other references to the costs of imprisonment do not tell us is how this has been measured, and as such the methods for assessing cost effectiveness are complex and can easily be contested.

Cost effectiveness (and analysis) is often used in the field of health services and is a relatively new term that grew in popularity in the 1980s (Brent, 2003). The use of the term has been applied to other settings since the 1980s as successive governments have focussed on a managerialist framework to assess the outcomes of public service funding. The approach has been beneficial where there are clear quantifiable outcomes that can be measured; however, as Marsh (2008) outlines it has also led to confusion and mistrust where the outcomes of a practice (such as the arts) are not so easily identifiable.

Matarasso's work assists our understanding of this move towards cost-effectiveness and measurement. He poses the question of whether social policy issues could be tackled more cost-effectively by other methods rather than the arts in his paper *Use or Ornament?*, maintaining that “participatory arts projects are effective and cost very little in the context of spending on social goals. They represent an insignificant financial risk to public services, but can produce impacts (social and economic) out of proportion to their cost” (Matarasso, 1997, p.81). However, it is not clear what data Matarasso draws upon to reach such a conclusion, since no comparative data on costs and results achieved with different methods accompany these considerations, a fact that undermines the validity of his claims. This point regarding the impacts of applied theatre interventions and quantifying them in terms of monetary return is a

challenge because, as McAviney (2011) indicates they are often delivered in conjunction or within wider programme of activities. Furthermore, cost effectiveness may not be an appropriate measure of success for participation, especially if it is attached to reconviction rates. The literature cited earlier in this thesis indicates that participation can have an effect on many other areas of an individual's life, so simply measuring reconviction rates may miss the many other benefits to an individual. However, the move to economic evaluation has resulted in a shift of focus on the social value that theatre and drama practitioners can offer, rather than the cost of the service alone and projects working with offenders are increasingly required to present an economic case for funding (Brent, 2003).

In the document *Unlocking Value: The Economic Benefit of The Arts in Criminal Justice* (Clinks, 2008) the authors explore whether the value of the arts in criminal justice could be expressed through economic analysis. To do this, they examined three arts charities and undertook economic analyses of their interventions. They found that *Clean Break*, *Only Connect* and *Unitas Summer Arts College* provide savings to the public purse as well as improve the life chances of the people helped. The results from these interventions indicate that the arts have the potential to play an important role in the rehabilitation of some offenders. However, reflecting points made in other studies cited earlier, as a result of this potential, they conclude that further investment in arts programmes, coupled with robust monitoring and evaluation to collect better evidence about what works, for whom, and why, could increase the value the sector provides.

One way of measuring cost effectiveness is through a cost-benefit analysis³⁶ (CBA). CBA is common practice within health services where a monetary value is often placed on the outcomes. In doing an evaluation or assessment through CBA, one can tell whether the benefits are greater than the cost and thus appreciate whether expenditure is worthwhile (Weimer and Aiden, 2009). However, as discussed earlier, trying to measure the outcomes of an applied theatre programme is difficult, leading some practitioners to use a *social return on investment methodology* (SROI). The SROI approach integrates costs and benefits from the economic, social and environmental spheres and results in a monetary value on the social and environmental benefit of an organisation relative to a given amount of investment (Nicholls, *et al.*, 2009). The methodology suggests that analysing input, output, outcomes and impacts enables the calculation of a monetary value for those impacts and finally a SROI rating or ratio. In a study of the *Through the Gates* project run by St Giles Trust, Frontier Economics applied a SROI approach to evaluating the work demonstrating a cost-benefit ratio of 10 to 1. The project aimed to substantially reduce reoffending rates, for example through temporary or permanent housing or benefit support. Through comparison of reoffending rates for participants on the programme, with national reoffending rates, they found that these were

³⁶ Cost utility analysis and cost minimisation are other related methods which are used within health services but do not feature in the applied theatre research literature so are not discussed here.

40 per cent lower than the national reoffending rate. They then estimated the cost savings associated with reducing reoffending and applied these to the benefits. Lawlor *et al.* (2008) in their examination of the impact of imprisonment and integrated support on women offenders, used a SROI approach concluding that for each pound invested in this sector, £14 of social value is generated for women offenders, their children, victims and wider society over 10 years. They identified that custodial settings were not appropriate for the majority of women imprisoned and the negative impact of imprisoning women included increased reoffending and worsened mental health, leading them to call for the use of more integrated approaches to improve these situations, one of them being the use of drama and the arts more generally. Studies such as these provide examples of how applied theatre organisations can identify and demonstrate value in economic and monetary terms to funders. However, Arvidson *et al.* (2012) sound a note of caution for policy makers in the funding environment and note that the way *judgements and discretion* are applied in such measurements skew the results, in particular when it is used for the purpose of competition (i.e. winning funding). Furthermore, whilst appearing more robust than other approaches, the SROI approach still involves an element of subjectivity in the calculation (e.g. the estimation of staff time and costs associated with it, and the measurement of reoffending³⁷) and therefore does not provide a non-contestable solution for measuring effectiveness or impact.

Public perceptions

Over the last decade researchers have also explored the impact of applied theatre on public perceptions. In particular, around prejudice towards prisoners and to raise awareness of the issues prisoners face in the community. This is being assisted by the growing demands on applied theatre workers to demonstrate the impact of their work, not only with offenders but with others such as their families, those who are at risk of offending and professionals who work with offenders (Hughes, 2008). In the literature, this is demonstrated in the use of audience feedback through the monitoring process.

In a study by McKean (2003), audience feedback from a performance of a Clean Break Theatre Company/King Alfred's College Winchester performance project with female prisoners demonstrated that the show had positively challenged preconceptions and stereotypes about female offenders and the prison system. However, comments made by evaluators of other projects, such as those delivered by Clean Break and Synergy, highlight the importance of engaging the audience to raise awareness of prisoner concerns; one of the challenges in discussing these here is that many are not formally evaluated.³⁸ However, Geese theatre, TiPP and Clean Break have made notable contributions to this area of work. TiPP's drama-based employment programme run in prisons and Young Offender Institutions

³⁷ Ex-offenders may reoffend but avoid being caught, in which case their offending may continue but go unrecorded.

³⁸ These include the Clean Break's *Women and Anger* project (2005); and Synergy Theatre through projects including *Jesus Hopped the 'A' Train* (2010), *Elmina's Kitchen* (2006) and *Dealer's Choice* (2000).

(YOIs) in the mid-1990s is one such example. The programme resulted in performances to local employers invited into the prison, exploring barriers faced by ex-offenders trying to access the job market (Thompson, 2003). Through Clean Break's *Access to the Creative Industries* project, women who developed skills through the drama programme were able to perform part of their work to invited audiences. The performance aimed to raise awareness of some of the factors that lead women into offending and also how these lives could be changed (Rideout, 2011b). In both of these examples the impact on the audience was not formally evaluated and practitioner anecdotal reports form the basis of what is referred to as *evidence*. However, this is not to say that the interventions did not achieve what they set out to; if we can consider these in relationship to Thompson's marking theory, we can see that engagement will leave *marks* that may contribute to future changes.

The research around perceptions of applied theatre in prisons is still at an early stage and there are many gaps in understanding. The discourses that this study aims to identify will be able to contribute to this debate, in particular, enabling an understanding of how current discourses could be used to demonstrate effectiveness and which new discourses may be required to assist practitioners to understand the benefits of practice.

3.5.2 Impact on the institution

Reducing rule-breaking in prisons

The literature reveals that a number of studies have examined the use of applied theatre practice to address disciplinary problems; in particular, to manage violence and aggression. TiPP's *Pump, Challenging Violence* programme focused on anger control, primarily around how offenders can better deal with their feelings on the outside. In his examination of this project, Balfour (2000) suggests that offenders with a violent background tended to have *rules* about their violent behaviour and as a result a construct around masculinity that exacerbated itself in some men in prison. Despite suggesting that there has been a move away from anger management programmes in prisons, in favour of programmes that examine belief systems and the need for power and control, Balfour says nothing about how this programme affected the behaviour of offenders in prisons towards other prisoners and prison staff.

In a more recent study of Geese's drama-based programme *Insult to Injury*, which was designed to explore the processes of anger, aggression and violence; prison staff were actively encouraged to participate in the course and be involved in the exercises and in group discussions (Blacker, Watson and Beech, 2008). 62 prisoners from 6 prisons, who had been convicted of violent and aggressive offences, were included in the activities. Participants were invited to consider potential future high-risk situations and identify methods of dealing with issues, through rehearsal and practising skills they had gained through the course. Using a pre-and post-design tool the results suggest that the programme was effective and participants showed significant reductions in anger. However, while the study does not

comment on the involvement of prison staff in the activities, the results attempt to show that involvement in the programme enhanced relationships between staff and prisoners. The authors also do not make comparisons with other interventions so it is not possible to judge whether engagement in a traditional anger management programme by staff and offenders would produce similar results.

Enhancing relationships between staff and participants

The literature also reveals evidence of how drama can reduce tension and violence and can enhance relationships between custodial staff and prisoners. This has been demonstrated in programmes where engagement has been encouraged between staff and prisoners. For example, in Geese's *Insult to Injury* programme, it was achieved through an understanding of why offenders committed their offences, and prisoners' gaining a better understanding the role of prison staff. Further evidence is provided by Hughes (2003) who found that YOT staff participating in TiPP's *Blagg!* project valued an opportunity to meet and work with offenders in an informal context, reporting that this had strengthened relationships between them. However, much of the evidence in this area is identified through indirect findings and an examination of other interventions or other research. For example, in her examination of art activities in prison, Mer (2011) provides a succinct outline of the variety of arts forms used in prisons, which include theatre, concluding that engaging both staff and prisoners in an intervention can enable challenging issues to be addressed as well as facilitating more open communication. In what she refers to as *lessons* for arts practitioners she suggests that a more inclusive approach would foster better relationships and increase effectiveness. However, despite extensive research with a number of arts organisations across the UK,³⁹ Mer does not show how the link between her findings and the recommendations are made.

In a recent evaluation of a three year project delivered by Geese Theatre in St Andrews Medium Secure Hospital in Birmingham, improved behaviour was noted in participants and this also resulted in improved relationships between staff and offender-patients (Fisher, 2013). Geese worked in six wards, providing 16 inputs on each ward over a three-year period delivering awareness raising and training events, examining the roles they play and the impact their behaviour has on themselves and others. The research team compared the impact on the different wards and explored the impact on the offender-patients, the staff and the general atmosphere on the ward. In particular they looked at the relationships between staff and found that engagement in the drama programmes resulted in better relationships between offender-patients and staff. They also noticed that as a result of improved relationships, offences back on the wing (either to other prisoners or to staff) had also reduced. However, as the programme used drama as well as other techniques to engage patients, the researchers do not explicitly identify whether it was the applied theatre practice

³⁹ Mer carried out desk research and semi structured interviews with 102 programme staff, arts practitioners and education managers.

that assisted in this success, or whether it was just engagement in an activity that had an effect.

Impact on education programmes

In response to policy discourse that encourages those who work with prisoners to incorporate basic skills and employability skills in to their interventions, theatre projects have incorporated skills accreditation into their programmes and developed specialised accredited courses. There has been some debate in the literature around the impact of these interventions on education and employment outcomes, in many cases it appears that this has been directed and controlled by links to policy discourses and funding.

The value and viability of using drama-based approaches to improving the literacy skills of prisoners was examined over a three-year pilot programme (1999-2002), in eight prisons by the Unit for the Arts and Offenders (DfES and HM Prison Service, 2003). The *Getting Our Act Together* programme incorporated drama-based projects leading to a performance, key skills or basic skills qualifications at level one or two, and recorded positive feedback about the programme from prisoners and staff. 93% of participants completed projects for Key Skills Communication and 95% of participants completed projects for Key Skills Communication at Level 2. This study demonstrates that the drama element of the programme encouraged engagement and completion. In a similar vein, Clean Break has accredited a number of its courses for young women, enabling opportunities for further employment and development post-release. In their evaluation of their *Access to Creative Industries Project* (delivered 2005-2008), they identify how the project enabled women to gain confidence and move on with their lives. The arts training courses were designed to address the needs of these women whilst also training them in the sector. They involved 223 participants; and report that 37 women gained qualifications, and 133 engaged in a 30 hour training course, leading 137 to progress to another *positive outcome* (such as progressing to employment or further education). Another example of this work is their new skills development programme *Miss Spent* delivered in 2010. Nine young female offenders took part in the programme over ten days; follow-up study revealed that participants felt that engagement in the project enhanced their employment opportunities, their role in society and desistance from reoffending after release from prison.

However, one of the key critiques of this move for applied theatre practice, and arts practice more generally, to focus on educational outcomes, and in some cases accreditation, is that whilst it satisfies funders and policymakers through the provision of quantifiable data and outputs, it cannot guarantee or clearly demonstrate that change took place, and that the knowledge and skills gained will make a difference in behaviour, either in the short or long term.

3.5.3 Impact on the individual

Coping with imprisonment and reducing anger and aggression

The literature demonstrates that a number of applied theatre projects are designed and delivered to directly address offenders' anger and aggression as well as how they cope in prison; the use of drama techniques have therefore been considered as an *adjunct approach* that has been applied in custodial, community, and secure hospital settings for offenders over a number of years (Jennings, McGinley and Orr, 1997).

Examining the effects of art therapy in a Florida prison Gussak (2004) found that art therapy decreased depression and improved socialisation skills. In the study, Gussak measured the effects of an art therapy programme on adult male prisoners. Using the Formal Elements Art Therapy Scale (FEATS) and the Beck Depression Inventory-Short Form (BDI-II) as pre and post-test assessments, Gussak found that the inmates who participated demonstrated a significant decrease in depressive symptoms and improvements in mood. Results also indicated that the participants' attitudes and acceptance of each other and the environment also improved, and interaction improved with peers and staff. Overall, those who participated demonstrated greater compliance with directives and showed an improvement in behaviour. However, since this initial study, in a later study where a control group was included and a larger sample was used, the evidence was not as conclusive (Gussak, 2005). In the follow up study they found that scores for those in the experimental group showed less significant change; so it did not demonstrate that it was effective in improving mood for prison inmates, but did identify that it helped with alleviating symptoms of depression.

Individuals participating in a theatre production in a New York prison benefited from lower anger rates post-participation, superior coping skills and higher levels of social responsibility when compared to the control group (Møller, 2003). Møller asserts that lower anger rates post-intervention in the participant group proves that participation helped release anger, possibly as a result of a *catharsis effect* where theatre makes it possible to express a wide range of emotions suppressed by the prison environment. Møller concludes that the research highlights an important role for theatre in prisons, especially as therapy and anger management programmes are often viewed with suspicion, going on to suggest that, "theatre is a uniquely appropriate, cost-effective, affirmative strategy for the management and rehabilitation of offenders" (Møller, 2003, p.26). However, as identified earlier, how these claims are substantiated is not made clear.

TiPP's *Pump!* and Geese Theatre's *Insult to Injury* project also demonstrate that applied theatre programmes in prisons can help to reduce anger and aggression among prisoners. In the more recent study by Geese, the authors of the study support the work of Jennings *et al.* (1997) and conclude that a drama-based approach may be a promising "adjunct to traditional anger management programmes for violent offenders" (Blacker, Watson and Beech, 2008).

This also reflects the feeling in some research that the arts are effective and efficient means of enhancing traditional interventions which aim to reduce or challenge offending behaviour; however, they also demonstrate the confusion around what constitutes evidence within this field.

Changing attitudes towards offending

Another area of research and debate that frequently occurs in the literature was the use of applied theatre to change attitudes to offending. The use of drama in this way is supported by those who argue that because drama involves people in a way more traditional approaches do not, it therefore allows individuals to work with a representation of an event or a possible event, enabling clarification of what took place and the ability to look at future possibilities (Liebmann, 1996). Poor thinking skills and lack of empathy have been shown to relate to offending behaviour and as a result, as with other rehabilitation programmes, the use of applied theatre has been used to address these issues, often as part of wider cognitive behavioural programmes and ongoing interventions with offenders (Baim, Brookes and Mountford, 2002). This notion of change is further supported by Hughes who suggests that participation in drama-based group work may increase self-confidence, self-esteem, problem solving ability and interest in further learning (Hughes, 2008).

By adopting a social learning model of change, Safe Ground's *Family Man* programme explores family relationships using drama and group work to enable participants to find new ways of thinking and behaving in prison and on release and has been used in a number of prisons since 1999. Through attitudinal and behavioural change approaches, offenders are encouraged to explore their behaviour and consider how their offending effects others in an attempt to encourage them to change their attitude to offending. In a recent longitudinal study aimed to assess the programme's longer-term impact, questionnaires and in-depth interviews were carried out with 50 participants from 2008 and 2010 as well as from 50 supporters (Boswell, Poland and Moseley, 2011). A further 48 interviews were conducted, both in custody and the community. The study concluded that "there could be little doubt of the enduring impact this programme had made on these men and their families or of its consequent potential to strengthen the social bonds which could contribute to subsequent desistance from crime." As one of very few longitudinal studies carried out, it does provide evidence of long-term impact, but again, the authors note that demonstrating the effects of the intervention are challenged because it is difficult to isolate what else influenced the behaviour change.

In an evaluation of a Geese Theatre programme with young offenders in HMP Maidstone, pre-and-post-participation tests were used to explore the changes in attitude towards offending (HMP Maidstone Education Team, 2001). The researchers found that the intervention resulted in a reduction in prisoners' views of crime being worthwhile, and an

improvement in attitudes towards desistance from offending and victim empathy post-participation. In addition to measuring the participants' views, they asked staff to keep a note of any changes they observed on the wing. Following the intervention they noted that young offenders had greater victim awareness, increased confidence and had improved their ability to work as a team. Young offenders also reported greater awareness of victim issues and of the consequences of offending.

Goodard (2013) reviews how black British plays resonate within applied theatre contexts, and specifically reflects on black male prisoners' participation in Synergy Theatre Project's productions of Kwame Kwei-Armah's *Elmina's Kitchen* and Roy Williams's *Fallout*. In a similar vein to this thesis, Goodard examines how the company's aims are borne out in practice, and to understand evaluation, albeit from the prisoners' perceptions of the impact of Synergy's work. The work summarises the positive engagement and the benefits of engagement for the prisoners, as well as those for prison and public audiences and draws on documents, reviews and interviews to support these conclusions. Whilst touching on some of the shortcomings of the work (e.g. the tensions in proving their practice), what the article fails to comment on is what facilitated these prisoners to engage in this project and what prevented, or discouraged, others to do so.

Facilitating reintegration upon release

The literature suggests that taking part in applied theatre programmes can prepare prisoners for release by providing a context for interaction, decision-making and problem-solving in a setting more like the *real* world (Hughes, 2008). In the case of Clean Break, much of their work now focuses on providing opportunities for women to gain confidence and move on with their lives post release (Clean Break, 2008). Through the body of work examined below researchers indicate that drama approaches can help prepare prisoners for release, and may make maintenance or transition easier than for programmes employing traditional approaches.

The Prison Reform Trust report *Out for Good: Taking Responsibility for Resettlement* examines the factors which make for effective resettlement (Edgar, Aresti and Cornish, 2012). The authors visited nine prisons, held discussion groups with around 40 prisoners and 30 staff, interviewed 34 individual prisoners, and a wide range of staff from the prison service and the voluntary sector. They summarise that a key factor to effective resettlement was a committed prison staff that worked closely with the prisoner and did not just to do things to, or for them. Although no specific comments were made for the use of applied theatre or drama, their support for the use of *interactive* and *engaging* educational methods indicate that applied theatre practice would be *effective*.

In Geese Theatre's *Reconnect* programme (Harkins, *et al.*, 2011), researchers found that participants' level of self-efficacy and motivation to change improved significantly but they also found that they felt better equipped to deal with issues post release. Prisoners also felt significantly more confident in their social and friendship skills, occupational skills, family and intimacy skills, dealing with authority, alternatives to aggression or offending, and self-management and self-control skills. They were also found to become more engaged in the programme over the three days and this resulted in noticeable improved behaviour and engagement. However, although they reported that they felt better equipped to deal with issues post release, the study does not follow them, so there is no evidence of whether this actually happened.

Personal and social development

The impact of participation in the arts on personal and social development may also reinforce or trigger personal awareness in a way that will link to an individual's future actions and prevent offending. The literature identified indicates that there is a widespread interest in evaluating the effect of applied theatre practice with prisoners but not specifically in how it can contribute to their wellbeing. For example, Møller's (2003) study of prisoner journals found that engagement in a prison programme helped to develop many personal and social developments ranging from gains in confidence, an opportunity to change others image of themselves, the establishment of friendships and the development of sensitivity and leadership skills, to name but a few.

In another study in which researchers undertook a health care needs analysis exploring health care professionals' perceptions of healthcare services at HMP Eastwood Park, South Gloucestershire; De Viggiani et al (2004) concluded that PCTs should prioritise resources if they are to provide an effective service to prisoners. In particular, they should focus on staff who provide prison health care; the systems and structures of prisons, which ultimately influence the health of inmates and staff; and the health and social inequalities across the prison population. The authors of the study identified that problems were exacerbated by the heavy reliance on temporary employees, particularly nurses and doctors, and that staff were often overstretched in their roles, performing beyond their ability or training, highlighting that most health professionals did not encounter the prison system during their training. Their study has parallels for applied theatre practitioners who go on to work in prisons, where many often have little or no engagement in prison settings and lack understanding of the complex needs and methods needed to work with these groups (Møller, 2003).

3.5.4 The affective turn...and the end of effect.

In what could be considered as a rejection of an evaluation discourse, the "affective turn" in critical thinking in the arts has increased attention on affect, emotion and feeling. The term "affective" has to do with feelings, which differs from "effective" which has to do with the

efficiency of something, or how well it works (Allain & Harvie, 2006, p.149). Patricia Clough (2007), adds to this understanding, indicating that “affect is the feeling of what is beyond conscious perception” (p.16).

Allain & Harvie argue that because affects are sensory bodily responses to external stimuli, they are usually beyond our conscious control; therefore, in the context of theatre and performance, a concern with affect can help better understand the cultural work of feelings. It has provoked collaboration between theatre scholars and scientists in exploring the ways that cognition happens and has turned attention to and validated audience responses which are “apparently irrational or initially unexplainable”; the affective turn has therefore “shifted credit for meaning-making *from* features and practices which focus on semiotic systems, representation, sense making and interpretation *onto* bodily experience, feelings and emotions” (p.149). This has been supported by Hurley (2010) who argues that theatre is an apparatus designed to imitate feelings through a variety of triggers - a “feeling machine” (p.42), and Read (2008) who suggests that “theatre operates as an affect machine” (p.13), and that “without this affective charge, theatre would be consigned to a potentially entertaining, yet impotent, world of representation, repetition and... reproduction” (p.70). However, understanding the *unexplainable* is not only a challenge for applied theatre workers when demonstrating the positive health *effects* of their practice with prisoners, but also one for public health workers when using health promotion and educational approaches within these contexts, and as such the affective turn is useful within an examination of the concept of effectiveness in this thesis.

In his book *Performance Affects: Applied Theatre and the End of Effect*, Thompson (2009) examines his experience of developing and implementing performance projects in disaster and war zones and argues that joy, beauty and celebration should be the inspiration for the politics of the community based or participatory performance practice. Indicating that *affect* “refers to emotional, often automatic, embodied responses that occur in relation to something else – be it object or observation, recall of a memory or practical activity” (p.119), he argues that in the theatrical context affect is an embodied response provoked by aesthetic experience - dramatic performance is designed to elicit affective responses in audiences and applied theatre “is limited if it concentrates solely on effects - identifiable social outcomes, messages or impacts - and forgets the radical potential of the freedom to enjoy beautiful radiant things” (p.6). He goes on to argue that “by working solely in the realm of *effect*, where performers communicate messages or concentrate on identifiable social or educational impact, a practice becomes restricted or weakened”. By failing to recognise affect, much of the power of performance can be overlooked and he therefore calls for an “attention to affects”, and in adopting this emphasis his aim is “to encourage a shift from a sole focus on cognitive/representational issues to ensure the vitality of the arts process is not lost” (p.120).

In doing so, he rejects and challenges the pressure imposed by policy discourse on applied theatre performers to account for their practice through impact and outcome measures.

Nicola Shaughnessy, in her book *Applying Performance* (2012) also deals with the affective turn as a means of challenging received ideas about the purpose, impact and evaluation of applied and socially engaged performance. Using the term *affect* to describe the “physical, visceral sensations experienced within the body as a consequence of our emotional engagement with objects, people and experiences” (p.253) Shaughnessy also argues that what is important throughout applied theatre research is an approach that is empathetic; “to *effect* change through *affect*”.

Thus the affective turn in theatre scholarship has been fuelled by a rejection of policy demands on applied theatre practice to evaluate and demonstrate what works⁴⁰, but has also been bolstered by the dominance of approaches such as CBT in applied theatre practice which has been criticised for neglecting to mention or recognise affect (Le Doux, 2002. P24). So, whilst considering the questions about what criteria and values are appropriate for judging the merits of applied theatre practice in prisons, the affective turn invites practitioners to measure effectiveness in terms of the success of the intervention by its aesthetic merits. This drive for practice, to distance itself from discourses that ultimately restrict, restrain, and at times, bar practice, is a debate that this study seeks to contribute to. By highlighting these discourses, those working in this field may be better able to respond to, contribute to, and where necessary, challenge evaluation policy and practice. However, as I will go on to discuss in the following chapter, this philosophy has come into conflict with dominant policy discourse that has focussed on an approach to evaluation which often requires practitioners to measure the effects of work, particularly when that work contributes to improved health outcomes for prisoners.

3.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has attempted to examine some key debates within the fields of criminology, public health, and applied theatre. Starting with an examination of the changes in prison policy and the role of prisons to punish, deter crime and reform criminals, the emphasis on each of these can be seen to vary over the years. Having decided to focus this study within policy and practice under the New Labour government (1997-2010) I go on to explain how the rise in prison populations prompted policymakers to encourage inter-professional and inter-disciplinary approaches to addressing health, education and the wider impact of criminality on society. The practices of public health workers, prison staff and applied theatre practitioners have contributed to addressing the complex and diverse healthcare needs of prisoners which include physical, mental, social and wellbeing issues. The literature demonstrates that health promotion workers have tended to focus on a mechanistic approach to addressing health

⁴⁰ This point is examined further in Chapter 4

issues, such as self-harm, drug use and the prevention of suicide, whereas those using the arts have tended to focus on issues that include coping with the prison culture, anger management issues, and the development of education and employability skills.

The literature indicates that the use of the arts (including applied theatre) in the criminal justice sector is not bound together by a coherent set of practices or consistent thinking. Following an examination of studies which have explored the use and effectiveness of applied theatre, we can see that a number of developments have been made within the theoretical strands of *cognitive behaviour theory*, *role theory* and *learning theories*. Drawing on these theories, Thompson's *marking theory* and specific approaches such as Prochaska and Diclemente's *Transtheoretical Model of Change* have assisted those who are working in the field to plan and better understand how their practice engages participants and also how they can describe and communicate the immediate and long-term effects of this work to others. However, with a growing emphasis on rehabilitation within this period, and significant changes in the delivery of prison healthcare and arts funding under the New Labour government, the literature also demonstrates how both applied theatre and public health practitioners struggle to demonstrate the impacts of their practice and how effective it is at reducing reoffending.

Several studies support claims for the effectiveness of applied theatre practice, and although the body of evidence supporting the case for the arts has grown substantially over the last ten years, questions remain about the quality of research methods and the findings. Therefore, to help develop understanding, the sector must be able to explain how and why applied theatre practice can have a positive effect on the factors influencing reoffending; however, how this can be achieved using techniques that quantify outcomes is one that is receiving much debate.

The development of methodologies to *measure* and *quantify* the effects, but also account for these impacts on the individual, have contributed to a growing body of literature that supports applied theatre practice with prisoners and offenders. However, many researchers, practitioners and writers in this field have expressed frustration over how they can effectively demonstrate how their interventions create transformations: showing how it results in lower recidivism, and improved health and wellbeing. The literature appears to highlight conflicting discourses in what is considered *effective*; these revolve around debates between the use of qualitative and quantitative methods and the value placed on the evidence produced. Applied theatre practitioners can be seen to utilise a discourse that indicates that they are both conforming with, and at times rejecting, a managerialist policy and funding discourse that increasingly requires them to adopt quantitative measurements in their evaluations; however, the argument presented later through the discourses identified in this thesis suggest that the struggle is unnecessary and that applied theatre practitioners can use qualitative approaches to highlight the impact of work. To do this they will need to either adopt and transpose a

discourse into their language which will enable others to appreciate the different outcomes and the impact of their work, or challenge these dominant discourses. This thesis suggests that they can do this through by recognising and reporting the affects in addition to the effects. Therefore, through an understanding of the discourses that influence and control practice, and those that are used, replicated and challenged by practitioners, greater understanding in this field can be achieved.

Chapter 4 Macro Level Discourses

Applied drama is intimately tied to the contemporary questions about the politics of context, place and space, and this means that working in drama often brings into focus questions of allegiance, identity and belonging. (Nicholson, 2005, p.13)

“To be put behind bars” definition: to lock up, constrain, restrict liberty and freedom, excluded. (Oxford English Dictionary)

In this chapter, I address the research aim to understand and examine how applied theatre is planned and implemented in prisons when it contributes to improved health outcomes for prisoners. I do this by identifying and examining the macro level discourses in policy. By examining the discursive formations, shifts and policy language, it is possible to gain a deeper understanding of how these policies influence evaluation at the level of discursive practice and at the level of social practice. Therefore, the chapter will explain the larger discursive structures that shape the interpretation of texts (i.e. how policy influences practice). In further support of this approach, Codd (1988) argues that policy and government texts produce certain ideological effects, a point elaborated upon by Eagleton (1991, p.93) who indicates that “we have shifted from thinking of words in terms of concepts to thinking of concepts in terms of words”. To them language is much more than a medium for transmitting ideas or an instrument for unveiling consciousness; it is a form of social practice. Therefore, texts (such as evaluation documents) provide several assumptions about the issue under examination and the impact they have on practice. It is therefore necessary to interpret them within a wider framework that takes account of the social contexts in which these texts are located. The literature review forms part of this macro level analysis and I therefore draw on relevant literature to explore the claims I make throughout this and the remaining chapters. Of particular relevance are the works of François Matarasso, Felicity Woolf, Eleonora Belfiore and Oliver Bennett, who have written extensively on the social impact of the arts and evaluation (Belfiore, 2002; Belfiore, 2006; Belfiore and Bennett, 2007b; Belfiore and Bennett, 2007a; Belfiore and Bennett, 2008; Matarasso, 1996; Matarasso, 2002; Woolf, 2004).

As this study examines the work of five applied theatre companies and their projects that took place during the New Labour government 1997-2010, arts, health and criminal justice policies that impacted on the work of health promotion and applied theatre practitioners in prisons during this time will be examined; these policies ultimately frame, guide and direct the applied theatre work that takes place within prisons. I present this analysis from the standpoint that policy, whilst having honourable intentions to develop practice, encourage collaborative working and improve quality through evaluation, also contributes to dominant discourses that construct evaluation in such a way as to bar, restrain and hinder the potential of work in these spaces. Therefore, it firstly limits the collaborative work that can take place; secondly, the overall effectiveness of interventions in prison; and thirdly, the evaluation methods used. In this chapter I will explore key policies identifying the discourses that shape practice, as well

as critically exploring what they omit. It is anticipated that through this broad level discussion and identification of discourses, a deeper understanding will be developed around the influences on practitioners' work, and in particular around the anticipated outcomes, which in turn will explain and have a further influence on policy and evaluation. This chapter is structured in three core sections:

- Part one identifies the policy level discourses that direct the work of applied theatre companies and health workers in prisons and attempts to shed light on the wider political context in which these are made,
- Part two examines the influence of policy discourse on the evaluation of applied theatre programmes in prisons and,
- Part three summarises the response to policy; specifically looking at the use (or rejection) of evaluation discourses by applied theatre practitioners.

Helen Nicholson's quote is a useful starting point to introduce this debate because it highlights the complex relationship between applied theatre practice in prisons and the considerations that they have to make before entering that space. However, the political impact does not simply lie in the actual work itself, or how it is created and what systems and structures it may challenge, but as I will go on to highlight in this chapter, practice has another relationship with policy in that it not only *directs how* the work takes place as a result of funding, but in how it is evaluated. Policy documents examined in this study contain discourses that create barriers, or *bars*, that restrain and constrain the work that takes place in these spaces; Nicholson's quote therefore reflects a Foucauldian view in that those entering prison are engaging in a political act by entering that space: because in doing so they have to, to some degree, agree and accept to work within the boundaries and constraints of these policies. This reflects Foucault's notion of *interpellation*: by working within these systems they not only become *part* of this system, but *maintain* and *replicate* it; upholding these power relationships. This also conflicts with the philosophy and goals of applied theatre practitioners and health promotion workers, who base much of their work on the emancipatory and empowerment approaches: if they are not free to carry out their work without these restrictions, it leads us to question how this influences issues at the practice level (an issue that will be addressed in the next chapter). Writers and researchers reflect this point, commenting on the complex relationship between challenging oppressive politics and colluding with these practices and beliefs when entering such a space (Boal, 1979; Foucault, 1995; Kershaw, 1992; Thompson, 2000). To them, and others who work in these contexts, questions around allegiance, identity and belonging are ones that have to be answered and considered within the wider socio-political context of the criminal justice system. These areas of focus, and the theories proposed by these writers, are useful points to explore and frame a discussion around the political context, and the policies, that workers adhere to.

4.1 Foucault, Fairclough and policy discourse analysis

According to William Dunn (2003, p.15), policy analysis aims “to define a problem and the goals to overcome it; more specifically, it aims to examine the arguments, and analyses the implementation of policy”. Implementation of policy is subject to interpretation and this often leads to wide variations in how these are applied, so a key area of analysis is to understand the *variations* and explore the *reasons* for these. One of the many difficulties in examining policy is highlighted by Colebatch (2002, p.5), who suggests that the meaning of the concept of policy tends to be “assumed rather than explained”. Colebatch suggests that one of the key meanings people attach to policy is that it communicates government decisions, actions and activities. So, through a system of representation, the government are given the *authority*, the right to influence others and this tends to lead to policy that is argued to be legitimate (Buse *et al.*, 2005). However, policies are not often labelled as *policies*, and therefore discussion papers, localised plans and strategic directions are often confused with government policy. Furthermore, what actually gets onto the agenda for policy development and/or what is necessary for policy to be implemented on the ground is often not a clear process (Peck, 2005). Summarising a policy also presents a considerable challenge because as Lindblom (1979) indicates, policy-making is a “messy process of muddling through” which results in decisions being made in a reactive, incremental way, which lacks any overall direction. Klein (2005, p.65) offers an example from his analysis of the *Choosing Health* white paper, which he says “gives the impression of being a trawl through Whitehall in which departments were asked to put any policies with a possible bearing on health into the pot.”

Larsen *et al.* (2006) evaluated New Labour's approach to policy making and identified four categories of policy: service orientated, the extension of government authority, ideological driven and cost intensive reforms. These categories would suggest that policy created during this time was well balanced and founded on well researched evidence to obtain the best outcomes in priority areas. However, Greener (2004) is more critical and suggests that New Labour government policies were characterised as consisting of three *moments*: a term used to signify how the policies come and go in a short space of time, and that because of this quick succession of policy, it appears that many lacked coherence and reacted to events and media pressure rather than consisting of an overarching strategy. This point is supported by the Chief Inspector of Prisons between 1995 and 2001, who argues that this “knee jerk approach” to policy making in the prison and probation service left “services fragmented and riddled with problems” (McVeigh, 2010). This has influenced the way arts workers carry out their work, and as indicated earlier, is a point raised by Balfour and Poole (1998, p.17) who refer to prison theatre as a “fragmented picture of a longer contested history”; it also makes policy difficult to evaluate.

It is beyond the remit of this thesis to provide a detailed analysis of the many policies created by the New Labour government in the areas of health, arts and criminal justice, because there

are so many policies that directly or indirectly influence and frame these practices. Policies that are included for analysis in this study were selected for their scope, popularity amongst prison, health and/or applied theatre practitioners and because in some cases, they have been referred to by the companies examined, either during the interview stage of data collection or within their evaluation reports. In the main these policies consist of government white papers issued as statements of policy, which often set out proposals for legislative changes before a Bill is introduced. In other cases policy is issued on a regional level by those responsible for the delivery of services. In many cases these consist of strategic plans and directives with little or no clear direction for action; a point that will be returned to at various points throughout this chapter.

Drawing on Foucault's writings and Fairclough's CDA approach, this chapter aims to describe the *discursive artefacts*⁴¹ that reflect some of the key policy discourses that were expressed by government policy during this time; these will then be examined in the next chapter to understand to what extent these *constructs* around evaluation are in circulation. This reflects Foucault's view that policy discourses should not be considered in isolation; they act upon and influence one another *intertextually* (Fairclough, 2005). These discourse strands become worked into or against everyday practices and become set over and against, or integrated into existing discourses. In Foucauldian terms, the *discursive formations* expressed within policies (i.e. the larger discourses) can be regarded as representations of knowledge and power, discourses that construct a topic; so, policies about evaluation and evidence (evidence dominant discourses) carry within them notions of what is to be *effective*, and in relation to the dominant discourses, what is to be of *value* and *use* to progress government aims and objectives. Policies also influence the wider processes, identification and construction of evaluation, which in turn influence the creation of discursive formations such as those of *accountability*, *effectiveness*, *proof*, and what *counts* as *evidence* (Foucault, 1984, p.38). Foucault (1984, p.48 & p.118) goes on to argue that these discourses contribute to a heteroglossia of *tangled plurality*, put simply, the larger discursive formations are made up of smaller contributing discourses that may work in collaboration or present conflict. However, his work also reminds us that discursive formations also contain "gaps, voids, absences, limits and divisions," leading Fairclough (2005), in his incorporation of Foucault's philosophy in CDA, to indicate that a key task is to untangle the discourse knots and identify the different strands. Whilst I aim to uncover many of these, it is outside of the scope of this thesis to fully explore every knot and tangle expressed in policy because these discursive formations appear in varying ways throughout policy in this period: they can be seen alone or in combination with others, which presents another difficulty when summarising an examination of them in this discussion. Therefore, at times this discussion will triangulate discourses across different policy fields in an attempt to explore and unpick some of the complexities

⁴¹ In Foucauldian terms, these are the tools created (e.g. by policy) that influence the action of individuals.

within these discourses and highlight these issues in greater depth. The purpose of this is to make sense of this complex matrix of discourses and ensure a deeper analysis takes place.

4.2 Foucault and power

The discourse around power is complex and strands will be explored in increasing complexity both here and in the meso and micro level discussions. In these Foucault's (1972) notion of power is drawn upon which suggests that power is dispersed throughout social relations, and one that produces possible forms of behaviour as well as restricting behaviour. This contrasts with the notion of power suggested by liberal humanists which suggests that power is a possession (i.e. someone takes power from someone else), or that power is a violation of someone's rights (i.e. power simply prevents someone from doing what they want to do). Foucault (1998) is critical of these other notions of power which he suggests represent a "repressive hypothesis" (p.104). For Foucault, power radiates through a society rather than being owned by any one group and is more a relation between people which is negotiated in each interaction and is never fixed and stable. Foucault does not minimise the importance of the power of the state, but he suggests that power operates around and through the networks which are generated around the institutions of that state. A discourse theory analysis is concerned with the structures through which the power relation is manifested (Foucault 1979). Although Foucault suggests Marxist thought around power reflects a repressive hypothesis, in which power is simply a negative infringement on someone else's rights (i.e. power is taken or seized from others, and it is viewed as something which one can possess or hold), I felt it necessary to also draw on a Marxist approach to power because government bodies issue policy and they therefore have an economic and social power and influence to guide and direct what happens, as well as how work they fund is evaluated.

Therefore, when examining power from a Foucauldian perspective, the concept of power is moved away from the negative model towards a framework which stresses its productive nature, where it produces as well as represses (Foucault, 1998). Foucault also argues that power is always linked with knowledge, so that all of the knowledge we have is the result of the effect of power struggles (Foucault, 1980). So, in this examination of discourses, what is considered *evidence* can be understood a result of the struggles over whose version of what is considered true is accepted. Policy can therefore be seen to meet the needs of both the government and practitioners; and in the implementation of the policy, a Foucauldian understanding of evaluation is less concerned about governments and funders imposing this requirement on workers, but more about how practitioners are encouraged to speak of it which in turn leads to a "multiplication of discourse" (Foucault, 1978, p.32). Evaluation methods can become legitimised through a negotiation of this power/knowledge interaction; they can then get diffused through replication. This multiplication, or replication of this discourse, perpetuates the government's power and control over practice and evaluation and

I argue that this can lead to confusion about evaluation rather than making it any clearer. This is further reflected in Foucault's concern with the ways in which people negotiate power relations. He argues that people, through their use of language, manage to negotiate fairly powerful positions in the hierarchy, people may not passively obey policy and guidelines but challenge these, since they have a different agenda; for applied theatre practitioners, this may involve the notion of empowering prisoners. Thus, through the use of a seemingly powerful style of language, those in positions of power have to employ seemingly different forms of language in order to get people to do things for them. This naturally leads to resistance, which Foucault argues is contained within the notion of power: where there is power there is resistance. Therefore in an analysis of the wider impact of policy on practice, a discourse theory perspective and examination of power discourses, enables us to question whether evaluation is the imposition of a set of beliefs on practice.

4.3 New Labour 1997-2010: theatre, health and prison policy discourse.

When New Labour came to power in April 1997 they promised change across the arts, as well as public sector areas such as the health service and the prison service, and this was reflected in the party's campaign theme tune "*things can only get better*". For many, following years of underfunding and a focus on an individualistic ideology that had characterised the enterprise culture of the previous government, things *could* only get better, and as PCTs took control of health care in prisons, there was a notable rise in the commissioning of drama to engage prisoners with health and wellbeing messages (Rideout, 2011a). However, many healthcare staff had not been trained to work in prisons, and some were frightened to do so, leading some to suggest that this led to a reliance on utilising arts workers to engage with this population (Fraser, Gatherer and Hayton, 2009).

In the UK, the government's *Ministry of Justice* (MOJ) and *Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons* (HMIP) provides guidance and codes of conduct for prisons and those working within them; the *Department of Health* (DH) through the *National Health Service* (NHS) and *Public Health England* (PHE), guide how health and public health workers work with prisoners; and applied theatre practitioners, when funded by the government, are required to adhere to policy directives issued by the *Department for Culture, Media and Sport* (DCMS) and the funding arm of this governmental department, the *Arts Council of England* (ACE).⁴² To ensure that work is being delivered efficiently practitioners across the arts, health and in criminal justice were increasingly being required to work collaboratively and draw on policies from across different areas. However, despite the enticement of funding presented to those working in the arts, health and in prisons, this was also the beginning of a struggle played out through policy, between the government and those working in these areas: funding was to come with conditions (Turnbull, 2008). Others suggested that opportunities for rehabilitation

⁴² A full list of policies that were examined in this chapter can be found in appendix three.

could be enhanced by reorienting structures, systems, services and social arrangements in prisons (De Viggiani, et al., 2004). One way of doing this was through stronger partnerships with organisations outside of prisons, and in the use of drama; observations that support this thesis's aim for improved partnerships and collaborations between applied theatre and health practitioners within prisons.

From a policy-making point of view New Labour claimed to approach issues "without ideological preconceptions" (Newman 2001) and believed in searching for practical solutions "through honest well-constructed and pragmatic policies (Shaw, 2007). What became known as the "what matters is what works" approach to policy making, led to the development of "what works and why" (Sanderson, 2003, p.344). In line with their *what works* philosophy the government called for reviews into services to examine the effectiveness of their policy changes and policy makers made decisions on the feasibility of all policy options grounded in an investigation of their likely consequences (Temple, 2000, p.320). Thus, the party's focus on what was termed a *third way*: a synthesis of left and right politics, heralded the beginning of a move to deliver measurable results through evidence based policy (Raynor and Robinson, 2005). However, some argued that this led to policy being made in an unfocussed manner (Lister, 2001). That said, researchers have identified key themes and developments and Julian Le Grand (1998) described policy making during this time using the acronym CORA: *community, opportunity, affordability, and accountability*. It is the final element of this framework that could be argued to have forced theatre companies to engage in monitoring and evaluation practices to secure future funding, rather than to use it to help demonstrate the effects (or affect) of their practice and ultimately help develop their practice.

Lister (2001) notes that by suggesting that there was no ideology, New Labour left funded organisations with a desire to apply a common sense approach, "which was about doing what works rather than trying to create a utopia based on a preconceived political programme" (p.108). To put this common-sense approach in practice New Labour emphasised the importance of basing policy-making on evidence (Solesbury, 2001), but this created contradictions and led to confusion; on the one hand applied theatre practitioners were told to do *what works* for them and do what is going to be helpful (a focus on the affective realm), and then on the other hand they were told that there are certain approaches to practice and evaluation that were considered *more favourable*. This is supported by Barton (2008) who indicates that under New Labour there was an emphasis on review techniques, including systematic reviews and rapid evidence assessments. Where evidence was not already available, research was commissioned; Barton and Johns (2012) summarise this in the following quote: "the Labour policy-making agenda ignores ideological influences, the impact of policy ghosts (i.e. what went before) and the many hurdles that are thrown up in a shift from design to implementation, including the role of actors at the coalface of policy (street level bureaucrats)" (p.91)

In line with CDA methodology, in this section I examine relevant shifts in policy within the period, and explore the dominant discourses that influence practice and evaluation. However, it is not within the scope of the study to provide a comprehensive review and analysis of policy discourse at the textual or linguistic level although a degree of textual level analysis will be employed to show how changes in language use reflected a changing ideology and discourse. In addition to policy documents, I also examine relevant guidance documents that were developed alongside key policies. These documents also instruct, guide, and, as I will go on to argue, at times restrict and create a bar to the work that applied theatre practitioners do in prisons.

As a result of the frequency of terms and concepts noted within theatre, health and criminal justice policy texts, four dominant discourses that relate to this study's aims were identified; these were discourses that *encourage development and creativity*; evaluation discourses that call for *evidence, accountability and a focus on what works*; *power and control discourses*; and *discourses that promote and encourage partnerships and collaboration*.

4.3.1 Development and creativity discourse

During the early years of the New Labour government, funding for the arts remained at previous levels set by the Conservatives, which reflected a drop in real terms. Whereas, funding for health and the criminal justice sector saw increases; for example, spending more than doubled on the NHS from £33 billion in 1996-7 to £67 billion in 2004-5 (Kings Fund, 2006). This reflected a desire to develop social cohesion and a more inclusive society, which were crucial factors in the success of New Labour's *National Renewal* strategy (Fairclough, 2000, p.22). The support for creativity filtered down across all departments and in the areas of health care, education and criminal justice, it was felt that creativity through the arts could be used to combat issues of inequality and social exclusion and were valued in terms of the possibilities they offered for boosting people's self-esteem, raising morale and empowering individuals. In December 1997, the Prime Minister set up the *Social Exclusion Unit* (SEU) whose aim was to help improve government action to reduce social exclusion across all departments by producing "joined up solutions to joined up problems." The directions in health policies such as the NHS Plan (DH, 2000) and Choosing Health (2004a), and the NOMS Reducing Re-offending Action Plan (2002) made clear directions as to what workers would need to focus on. However, most of the funding that was made available to support this discourse was spent on areas that could be immediately seen by the public - i.e. the visual arts and on buildings.⁴³

⁴³ Any mention or discussion about the involvement of the arts for rehabilitative and/or educational purposes is largely absent from prison policy around this time, despite being central to prison arts policy.

The view that the arts have a positive contribution to make to the cause of social inclusion was endorsed by the government via the DCMS, and most notably by the SEU's Policy Action Team 10 (PAT 10). The PAT 10 report indicated that participation in the arts was felt to help address neighbourhood renewal by improving communities' *performance* in the four key indicators identified by the government: health, crime, employment, and education (PAT 10, 1999, pp.21-22). The report noted that their contribution to tackling social problems was a justification for public "investment" in the arts; however, it also noted that relatively little *hard* evidence existed about the cost and benefit of arts in community development, and about what sorts of projects provided *value for money*. Although it did not comment on the specific issues for offenders, it was an influential report because it examined issues from a holistic perspective: exploring the benefits of approaches in the wider community as well as those with offenders.

Key policies that influenced the development and evaluation of applied theatre during the New Labour government were issued by the DCMS through ACE (see ACE, 1999; ACE, 2010; ACE, 2003a; ACE, 2003b). These policies did not directly guide applied theatre practice in prisons, but in collaboration with criminal justice and health policies, applied theatre workers were provided with guidance and direction to carry out their work. It is here, in early New Labour arts policy, that development and creativity discourses are noticeable and this point is supported in Turnbull's (2008) book *Bringing the House Down*, in which she examines the creation of this discourse in policy. She indicates that for New Labour, culture was a key approach to mend some of the damaging effects of Thatcherism and this brought about a new way of "using the arts as a possible route to forge community identity, draw people together and overcome isolation and rejection" (p.199). This was in part contributed to by the DCMS which had a new focus on the arts and encouraged a discourse that led to a new set of objectives that focused on wider access, excellence and innovation, educational opportunities and the fostering of creative industries. In line with this new development, New Labour promised increased financial support for the arts; however, their commitments to reduce public expenditure meant that during the first year of administration there was a reduction in the annual grant aid. In 2000, on behalf of the DCMS, ACE undertook a theatre review that resulted in the publication of the *Boyden Report* (Boyden, 1999) and ACE's own document *The Next Stage* (ACE, 2000b). Both confirmed that many organisations had been inadequately funded since the early 1980s. This marked a turnaround by the government who pledged in their 2000 comprehensive spending review to increase ACE funding from £252 million to £337 million over the subsequent three years, but this did not result in a rise in real terms. This thesis argues that this cut in funding encouraged the development of a discourse around evidence and the accountability of public funds, which also contributed to a corresponding discourse around power and control, supporting Turnbull's notion that funding came with *strings attached*. At this time the government began to emphasise that cultural policy should be used to develop their key political objectives; a point also reflected in

McAvinchey's work (2011) where she notes that political concerns led to theatre in prison being framed and funded to contribute to future crime reduction by tackling offenders' behaviour, particularly the rates of recidivism.

The *discourse of development* (and for applied theatre practitioners, I would suggest could also be referred to as a *discourse of hope*) can also be identified within the ACE *National Policy for Theatre* (2000a), in which the language used focuses mainly on development, investment, change and creation. In the introduction the authors talk about how "substantial change will be required to create an environment in which theatre will flourish in this new century" (p.1). The report only makes a minor reference to the need to ensure quality, but when a need for evaluation is made, it suggests that "the roles and functions of some theatre buildings and organisations may need to change to enable them to take on new partnerships and reach new audiences." (p.3). This discourse, although supportive of theatre, refers mainly to physical environments and buildings, and serves to encourage an increase in audiences in the commercial sector. In its focus on a developmental discourse, through a rhetoric that focuses on investment, this policy fails to address fully the need for quality, and within that, where projects utilise theatre for educational purposes, the need for evaluation to demonstrate effectiveness (and the accountability of public funds). Without a focus on quality, investment could lead to the creation of short term projects and interventions that have little impact on the people they work with. This point is reflected in the report which goes on to express the government's interest in funding more diverse work and encourages those working in the sector to develop their practice. Again, it is this direction and support, and the funding that followed, that as Nicholson (2005) states, spurred the "development and interest in applied theatre practice in both traditional and non-traditional settings, such as prisons." (p.41).

When outlining the role of ACE, this report includes phrases such as "instil a new confidence and excitement in theatre" and "transform and sustain theatre," using terms which speak of the impact on the audience (the *participant* or *consumer*), which are familiar in health discourse (ACE 2000a, p.2). The authors further uphold a developmental discourse suggesting that one of the key requirements of funding is that those they fund must show that both the funding system and those working in theatre have a willingness to change and engage with live theatre in its diverse forms. This, as I will go on to discuss, becomes less important as the need to evaluate and demonstrate effectiveness takes precedence.

The first substantive public health policy produced by New Labour was the *Independent Inquiry into Inequalities in Health* also known as the *Acheson Report* (DH, 1998a). This reviewed the causes of health inequalities and set out 39 recommendations for tackling them, with only three directly concerning the NHS. This confirmed the view that improving the public's health, and tackling inequalities, had to be a key action across government

departments. In line with arts policy, this rhetoric is couched in a development discourse, arguing for the use of different approaches to help tackle issues. Other health policies in this early period continued to support and promote a development and creativity discourse. The *Our Healthier Nation: a Contract for Health* (DH, 1998b) green paper pledged to increase the length of people's lives and the number of years people spent free from illness. Targets for specific health issues were to be met through a *contract* between individuals, local communities and national governments, working in three settings: *healthy workplaces*, *healthy schools* and *healthy neighbourhoods* (Lewis and Dixon, 2005). Although the policy explicitly called for synergy across departments, there is no mention of the prisoner community or engagement with the wider criminal justice sector. However, the use of the arts "to engage people in a dialogue around health" is cited as a strategy to help meet the targets (p.27).

Prison policy was embedded within wider criminal justice policy, and the sector was not subject to similar demands for change. Barton (2008) notes that prison policy during this time largely remained the same as it was under the Conservatives, and the desire for departments to link with each other was essentially only applied to those parts of criminal justice that dealt with crime outside of prisons (i.e. the courts and the probation service). For example, the 1998 Crime and Disorder act contains little reference to engagement from external agencies with prisoners. Instead it refers to programmes of support to prisoners within prison to enable safe release. Whilst slow to place demands on those working within this sector, this did begin to reflect wider discourses such as those around evaluation. Community development policies such as PAT 10 did focus on preventing crime and reducing crime – but this cannot be seen to have much impact within prisons that operated as largely separate and independent from the wider society. However, the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) *Reducing Re-Offending Action Plan* (Home Office, 2005) was a criminal justice policy which appeared towards the end of this period and although focused on issues outside of prison, the plan is worthy of mention because it played an important part in the social care of offenders whilst in custody and on resettlement at the time and encouraged workers from a variety of disciplines to focus on those factors which lead ex-offenders to reoffend. Whilst the plan talks about addressing health issues, it does so only in relationship to issues such as drug taking because by reducing drug dependency, it was anticipated that crime would also reduce, but mention of other wellbeing issues is brief. However, it does indicate that the use of the arts is useful to address these issues, in particular with young people to encourage desistance in crime, and can therefore be seen to reflect similar discourses around development that were evident in arts and health policy at the time.

4.3.2 Evaluation discourse: evidence, public accountability and what works

Foucault's concept of discourse and truth is useful to advance an understanding of an evaluation policy discourse. To Foucault (1979) each society has its regime of truth, "its

general politics of truth: that is, the types of discourse it harbours and causes to function as true: the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true from the false statements, the way in which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures which are valorised for obtaining truth: the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as a true.” (p.46). Truth therefore is something that is produced, created and constructed. For Foucault, discourse does not exist in a vacuum but is in constant conflict with other discourses and other social practices, to establish truth and authority. The debate around evaluation between the practices of arts workers and health workers in prison demonstrates that the *effects* or *outcomes* made by each are not given the same status. From the analysis of policy, it can be seen that a great deal of discursive effort is put in place to ensure that the work of applied theatre is considered *inferior*, to maintain *authority* for more traditional practices of those in health, and the criminal justice sector: both disciplines with a strong history dominated by strong discourses of control and power. However, I am also aware that control and power discourses can mask other discourses, such as a discourse of evidence and evaluation that in turn, mask the power that they wield. The issue of which discourse is true or as Foucault would suggest, “accurate representation of the real”, is not of concern, what is more important is how one becomes the *dominant discourse* (in this case, through the support of institutional funding) and the other is either treated with caution.

When New Labour came to power, the new Home Secretary Jack Straw continued with the “prison works” strategy initiated by Michael Howard in the early 1990s (Larsen, Taylor-Gooby and Kananen, 2006); however, New Labour did consider itself as different which is noticeable through an evaluation discourse within policy at this time. Early New Labour policy discourse which focussed on the need to enhance creativity in people’s lives, led to increased funding across health, the arts and the prison sector, but government ministers, and the public, lacked an understanding of the benefits of this work which fuelled an evaluation discourse that focussed on the accountability of public funding and an increased obsession on *what works*, *value for money*, and the *return* on investment (Blunt, 2010). Policy documents across theatre, health and criminal justice were couched in a discourse around accountability, which further supported the view that contribution to the arts was an investment on which they expected to see a return. This also led to an increased administrative burden for arts workers and resulted in them having to include specific aims; for example, around education outcomes, and report on the developments made in these areas. This exchange and *quid pro quo* feature of policy and funding is also neatly referred to by McAviney (2011, p.57) as a “discourse of investment and return”.

The discourse and practice of accountability in the public sector developed to ensure that the philosophy of *what matters is what works* was successful. Andreas Schedler’s definition of political accountability includes “answerability, the obligation of public officials to inform about and to explain what they are doing; and enforcement, the capacity of accounting agencies to

impose sanctions on power holders who have violated their public duties.” (1999, p.14) and reinforces the notion that the organisations that received funding were not only accountable to the government agencies that funded them, but that the government was accountable to the public. Thus, public accountability not only relates to financial accountability but the accountability of organisations to the public to demonstrate how publicly funded practice achieves what it sets out to achieve (Pollit, 2003, p.89). Young (2001) notes that these constraints within policy and the increased focus on accountability led those working in the arts to justify the practice and the development of the discipline, and indicates that it is of paramount importance that evaluation of drama practice ceases to operate from a “self-induced position of inferiority” (p.104). Howell (2010) supports this view, arguing that accountability tests merely served to encourage practitioners to “defend [their] very existence as drama practitioners” (p.580).

This discourse also reflects a shift in thinking towards a form of managerialism in the arts which suggested that problems can be solved through administrative means (Belfiore and Bennett, 2010). This managerialism focus on evidence is also evident in the HMIP (1998) report on the “*what works*” project and reinforces this concern with the three w’s of: *what works for whom and in what circumstances*. In an attempt to tackle differences in care between prisoners and the general population, a report by the Joint Prison Service (JPS) and the NHS executive working group entitled *The Future Organisation of Prison Health Care* was issued (DH, 1999a). The group examined ways of improving prisoners’ health care, and considered the recommendations made by Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Prisons, in an earlier discussion paper entitled *Patient or Prisoner?*, to transfer the responsibility for providing health care to prisoners from the prison service to the NHS⁴⁴ (Ramsbotham, 1996). Giving prisoners access to the same quality and range of healthcare services the general public receives from the NHS, reflected New Labour policy around equalities and social exclusion. Within this policy all four dominant discourses around development, evaluation, collaboration and power/control are evident; however, a problem with this discourse lay in the lack of corresponding policy discourse to direct those who were working in these fields. This did not become clearer until later in the period.

Within *The Acheson Report* (DH, 1998a) discourses around evaluation and accountability were reflected in directives requiring all areas of health to indicate how their interventions were showing success, some of which were previously unmonitored at a national level (such as the health promotion function of public health). All policies likely to have a direct or indirect effect on health should, it stated, “be evaluated for their impact on health inequalities and should be formulated to save the less well-off people” (DH, 1998a, p.48). Similar discourses

⁴⁴ This was followed by the policy *Shifting the Balance of Power* (DH, 2001) which instigated a transfer of responsibilities and is discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

were noticeable in arts policy where the lack of evidence and the call for *better*⁴⁵ evaluation, led to ACE identifying five ways in which work on the arts and social exclusion would be taken forward: these included advocacy, examining the role of regularly funded organisations, research and evaluation, multi-agency working and targeting resources (ACE, 2000c). These points are developed a few years later in their *Corporate Plan* which included a commitment to developing strategies on arts and health, and arts in criminal justice to underpin its strategic priority to “place cultural diversity at the heart of our work” (ACE, 2003b p.12; ACE, 2003a).

The discourse around evaluation, what works, or effectiveness is not as clear within the ACE *National Policy for Theatre* policy (2000a); funding was provided to promote the creation of work, and as such the requirement for evaluation appears less important. This lack of need is reflected in ACE’s over-arching strategic priorities which do not include any mention of evaluation or the need to understand effectiveness. Moreover, within the eight key priorities, none of these refer to a need to assess effectiveness or to prove what works, when using theatre in education contexts. In its place, the policy authors look to create a “*culture of excitement, enterprise and innovation*”; the motivation to develop and explore theatre practice is therefore key to this policy (ACE, 2000a, p.2). Therefore, through a discourse of development, this policy seeks to encourage the development of theatre practice in traditional and non-traditional settings but this is also controlled and restricted by those funding this work.

Despite the recommendations for an increased focus on collaborative work with the arts and criminal justice, put forward by practitioners working to address health needs, following the release of *Our Healthier Nation: a Contract for Health* (DH, 1998b) green paper, these points were not reflected in the subsequent white paper: *Saving Lives, Our Healthier Nation* (DH, 1999b). Instead, this paper presented a narrowly focused strategy of NHS related measures intended to meet the four targets set out in the earlier green paper. It reflected on some of the weaknesses outlined in the Conservative *Health of the Nation* policy of the early 1990s which perpetuated inequalities rather than addressing them, and the contested notion that education would lead to behaviour change. However, the target driven approach led a number of health services to develop specific evaluation programmes to evidence what works (Pawson, 2006).

Corresponding to the public accountability tests in the arts, and a focus on what works in prisons health, the Health Development Agency (HDA) was set in 2000 up to strengthen the evidence base of public health. This replaced the Health Education Authority (HEA) which previously carried out much of the health promotion work within the community. The HDA championed the need for collaborative work and the use of the creative industries in health care settings and in prisons, mainly supported by the *NHS Plan: a Plan for Investment, a Plan*

⁴⁵ By “better”, the discourse focuses on quantifiable evidence and attributes authority to it, compared to quantitative methods of evaluation, a term that is questioned by researchers such as Belfiore and Matarasso, and one that is examined in further detail later in this thesis.

for *Reform* which was issued around the same time. This is typically exemplified in the document where the authors indicate that “the NHS cannot tackle health inequalities alone” (DH, 2000, p111), and call for new partnerships at a local level. However, exactly how this should be done was left to workers to plan, implement and eventually argue over themselves.

The health policy *Tackling Health Inequalities: a Programme of Action* (DH, 2003b) continued with an evaluation discourse and set out plans to achieve targets to reduce inequalities in health outcomes by 10% by 2010. It claimed to be “the most comprehensive programme of work to tackle health inequalities ever undertaken in this country” (DH, 2003b, p.32), with a range of initiatives on education, welfare, work, housing, neighbourhoods, transport and the environment that would help *improve* health. In 2004, the Health Secretary John Reid requested a major consultation which led to the *Choosing Health* white paper which reflected a significant shift in government health policy (DH, 2004a). *Securing Good Health for the Whole Population* was the second of these two reviews commissioned by the Treasury from former banker Derek Wanless (and therefore often referred to as the *Wanless Inquiry*) which explored evidence-based ways of realising a “fully engaged scenario” in which priority is given “to preventing illness and individuals who are committed to safeguarding their own health” (DH, 2004b, p.52). This reflected cross government emphasis on the *personalisation* of public services and a strong commitment in health care policy to “patient centred care” and “patient choice”. However, accompanying this was an increased emphasis on examining what can be done to evaluate the *cost effectiveness* of a range of health promoting interventions. The report indicates that evaluation of such complex and often multifaceted interventions is difficult, but in the short term it would be critical to examine the impact specifically on the use of health care, to test the assumption that better health reduces use as asserted in the first Wanless Inquiry. This evaluation centred focus was also reflected in theatre practice where participant centred practice was increasing which accompanied a need to understand how effective practice was.

The drive towards a target culture across all policy areas was considered neither useful nor effective (Turnbull, 2008); however, a discourse around evaluation through language that is focused on cost effectiveness became a key driver within them. With a larger workforce, and drawing on a longer history of evidence and factors that were easily quantifiable, health workers were able to identify and develop complex health evaluation models; however, demonstrating the effectiveness of public health promotion in prisons to reduce recidivism and applied theatre practice where the impact of change was difficult to quantify, was far from easy. Amongst practitioners, this can be seen to lead to an increase in the interest and appreciation of the affective realm which enables an understanding of the impact of practice to be better understood (Thompson, 2009; Hurley, 2010; Read, 2008; Shaughnessy, 2012). However, this has not managed to gain an appreciation across other policy areas such as

health and the criminal justice sector who remain focussed on monitoring, outcomes and targets (Thompson, 2009).

In 2005 the HDA was wound up and its activities were transferred to the *National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence* (NICE). This coincided with the publishing of the *Commissioning a Patient Led NHS* report, which set in motion the third major reorganisation within the NHS and sought to reintroduce market style competition that the government had promised to end. The development of public-private partnerships during this time added further weight to the need for public accountability, and this was yet another strengthening of an evidence based discourse, a discourse which could also be seen to influence practice in the arts and criminal justice sector. The government's desire to ensure that practices were effective and linked across various areas meant that requirements in one area were imposed on another; however, through the examination of policy in this study, although collaboration between practitioners is mentioned, none of the policies actually refer to the other, leaving the decision for what to focus on to be made by the practitioners themselves.

An updated *National Policy for Theatre* covered the period 2007-11 and was issued shortly before the last one was due to end (ACE, 2006). The language in this renewed ACE theatre policy is noticeably different to the earlier one, although once again the introduction firmly set out the desire to strengthen and develop the infrastructure for the arts, there is an increase in the use of terms that reflect an evaluation discourse. The policy explicitly indicates that what it will fund will be of *high quality* and will be *valued* by the communities it serves. Accompanied by a statement that indicates that "the quality of work and morale in the sector has improved" (ACE, 2006, p.3) an effectiveness discourse is further supported (albeit despite any indication in the previous policy that improvement to practice was a goal, or that this would be an outcome of that policy). A development discourse is also present but is now accompanied by a stronger evaluation discourse which is evident through phrases that express the need "to encourage a better range of high quality work" and a need to "strengthen the data and evidence relating to audiences and those who participate in theatre" (ACE, 2006, p.4). The priorities for 2007-11 now included requirements to ensure that work has "greater impact and reach". This is also a marker of a time when statements made within policy increasingly focus on the need to prove effectiveness. Whilst the document makes no direct mention of the word *evaluation*, it is a text constructed around the language of evidence and effectiveness: the words *evidence*, *management*, and *measure*, which do not appear in earlier ACE theatre policy, now appear frequently. This therefore is a policy that is strongly imbued with the ideology of managerialism that reflects the drive to measure success; the need to justify spending becomes more important when the new coalition government comes into power and the global economic downturn forces cuts across all public and private spending (ACE, 2014).

The ACE policy *Achieving Great Art for Everyone*, took a very different approach which ultimately led to radical changes for all theatre practitioners and companies who relied on their funding from them (ACE, 2010). Although this was a policy that was issued in 2010, towards the end of the New Labour period, the comments included in this policy led to the earlier theatre policy becoming redundant. What is immediately noticeable is the absence of any discourse promoting development, replaced with statements about *what works* which reflect discourses around evaluation and increased power and control by the government. Although referred to as a *statement of intent*, the language used challenges the dominant evaluation discourse, by attempting to justify and defend the value of arts; which I suggest is an attempt by the authors to *push at the bars* that restrain their practices and the general development of the arts. For example, the introduction from the Chair of ACE provides a defensive account of how ACE defines the word *excellence* through an explanation that relates to sentiments in earlier policy discourse which promote the development of work that is “innovative and original”; however, the focus is now clearly on effectiveness and what counts as effective practice. The conflict of discourses reflected in this introduction reflects what Foucault suggests is representative of a *challenge in ideology*. In the quote below, the many possibilities for the *effects* of theatre are stated, which, rather than assisting practitioners, support the difficulty in assessing work for its effectiveness, and the government’s own confusion over how to measure the impact of funding:

It can be costly or cheap to achieve, last half an hour or a hundred years...work on a global scale or speak to a small community. It ticks no boxes but it is to be measured in its effect on both those who make it and those who experience it. (ACE, 2010, p.3)

The difficult relationship between supporting creativity and the need for measuring effectiveness and impact is pertinent in many of the quotes that feature in this document; the sharpest contrast between the two discourses can be seen in the differing statements made throughout the document, shown here are just a couple:

Excellence, in its most creative sense, is at the heart of our vision for the arts that we support...Supporting creativity and innovation; we are not in the business of “anything goes”. (ACE, 2010, p.3)

The first line reflects an evaluation discourse and firmly places this within the core of ACE practice, and by implication, at the core of those who receive funding from them; making it clear that the quality of the work must be assessed, and its impact and value measured. The second statement refers to a development discourse, and challenges the notion that development was for developments sake; through inclusion of an attribute quote (“anything goes”) a suggestion is made that earlier policies may have given arts workers an incorrect impression about how funding will be provided. This clash between the discourses of development and evaluation is also reflected in the overview of ACE’s theatre policy achievements provided by the Chief Executive Officer, Alan Davey, who initially reflects on

the successes of funding in arts forms such as theatre but goes on to indicate that reduced funding will have an impact on what is funded in the future. Referring to traditional and non-traditional settings for art, he goes on to make a contradictory statement indicating that this cut should “not detract from the creative and innovative work” that was encouraged through previous policies (p.5).

An evaluation discourse here reflects the dominant discourse within health and the criminal justice sector at the time and, as outlined earlier in this chapter, uses similar language that was previously absent from arts policy. In the following section, a reference to practice being demonstrated *scientifically*, and the *duty to account for public money* are terms that were evident in criminal justice and health policies well before this policy was issued:

As we and others have constantly sought to demonstrate as scientifically as it is possible to do. As people responsible for spending substantial amounts of public money, we are duty bound to account for the public value of art with all the data we can muster. (ACE, 2010, p4)

Again this outline relies on evaluation and development discourses, within a control discourse. In a statement which, rather than being consistent with these discourses, appears to address policymakers rather than practitioners, Davey suggests that although there is a need to prove what happens; there is also a need to acknowledge just how difficult proving and measuring art practices are:

We must be as clear as we can, and then acknowledge that it simply has mysterious aspects that are immensely powerful and can never be anticipated or accounted for. As Benjamin Constant said, “Art achieves a purpose which is not its own”. (ACE, 2010, p4)

Supporting this statement, and reaffirming the notion about the impact of arts and how difficult it is to *measure* outcomes, Valery Gergiev, Principal Conductor, London Symphony Orchestra, is cited:

Great art helps to develop thinking, imagination and understanding. Artists translate nature, our environment and our lives into what we see in our galleries, theatres and concert halls, adding depth and helping us to appreciate the value of our existence. But unlike with medicine, you cannot see the immediate result. (ACE, 2010, p4)

It is clearly difficult to compare theatre with health because each has very different ways of working and therefore effectiveness can only be measured in different ways, but Gergiev’s reference to medicine could be argued to reflect arts rejection of a discourse that is pressing for measurements that are popular within health disciplines, further supporting the move to focus on affect in the arts. By including the quote it invites the reader to question how the impact of the arts can be measured, but again, the authors of this report do not include any indication as to just how this could be done.

Although discourses around evaluation feature throughout this policy, this is the first time that a specific section focussing on *evaluating success* is included in a theatre policy. Through less than 200 words the authors suggest that their strategic framework “will enable success to be evaluated.” (p.8) However, how this will happen, and whether there will be a link between funding based on successful evaluation or outcomes, is absent from the outline. Through comments made elsewhere in the document it is clear that this *outcomes-funding* link is stronger than the language contained in this short section would suggest. For example, when outlining each goal in detail the authors elaborate upon statements made in the overview by indicating why this goal is important, what they will do to achieve it and what success will look like. It is in the link between *what* they will do and *how* they picture success where the detail is missing; and is also where the challenge lies for applied theatre workers working in prisons. This is reflected in the aims and goals for ACE, which indicates that “informed decisions about how best to allocate public money to ensure that the arts thrive, can only be informed by the research that is carried out” (ACE, 2010, p.21).

4.3.3 Power and control discourses

During this period government intervention increasingly controlled and directed work that took place in prisons, the health sector and the arts through the many policies that were created and disseminated. In an attempt to progress their development and creativity discourse, control was necessary in order to unlock some of the previous practices that were dominant under the Conservative government and therefore a power and control discourse can be seen to cut across different areas of policy. This can be seen in an overarching discourse which reflects the government’s desire, through the power it held, to control what work is funded and how it is carried out; this could also be seen to influence the creation of top-down approaches where policy appeared to be created whilst ignoring practice (Gray, 2002).

The emerging discourse around power and control was also influenced by the UK’s move from a manufacturing economy to an “economy of the imagination”, where the arts were seen as a central tool to progress policy (Reeves, 2002). The role of the artist was seen to help the government deliver ministers’ policies; and those working in the state funded arts sector were expected to fit their work around the government’s agenda and the arts were seen as a way to foster the necessary skills in entrepreneurial innovation. This influence of the government to direct and control work is outlined by Mitchell (2001) who indicates how New Labour became increasingly complacent about its perception of the arts as tools for the implementation of social policy and creative enterprise. This discourse is reflected in a speech by Tony Blair (cited in Mitchell, 2001) in which Blair indicates that “in the twenty-first century, we are going to see the world increasingly influenced by innovation and creative minds. Our future depends on our creativity.”

As a result of policy creation, funding was increased in specific areas which led to a growth in work within the health and prison sector, and those using applied theatre were increasingly influenced by government policy which required them to support policy objectives within the areas of health and criminal justice.⁴⁶ However, power and control discourses led to the strengthening of an evaluation and accountability discourse: creativity was encouraged, but only within the boundaries and frameworks sanctioned by the government. Light claims that public accountability has always been about control (1993, p12) and Chambers' (2005) work supports this power and control discourse noting that the *arm's length* principle that ACE had previously adopted quickly waned and it soon became a *tool of government*. A rise in arts bureaucracy could also be seen as practitioners and theatre groups fought for the same pot of funding; managers, accountants and consultants had to be hired to satisfy funders that their money was being used efficiently and effectively (Belfiore, 2010). Therefore, through the use of a managerialist discourse, government could be seen to attempt to control the use of the arts in social practice, and accompanying this was a need for quantifiable evidence of effectiveness. Government interference and pressure on the arts sector came to the fore in 2005 when the Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell explicitly instructed ACE to concentrate grants on schemes in line with key New Labour policies.

However, there are occasions when discourses appear to be in conflict. This is exemplified in the ACE *National Policy for Theatre* (2000a) where the authors hint at the need to ensure that they, and those it funds, are clear about the reasons why they are receiving funding, but they then fail to state *why* and *how* this should happen. Thus, a power discourse that accompanies the developmental discourse appears to be in conflict as a result of this link with funding. Colebatch (2002) reminds us that policy is not meant to tell people *how* to do their work, it sets out the broad direction, but it seems clear that the steer within these policies is not concerned with ensuring that money is well spent or that work is evaluated to demonstrate its effectiveness, which is exemplified in the following quote from the report: "The funding system must encourage that creative thinking support the needs of those artists who are committed to delivering it. It must trust those it funds and be clear about why it funds them" (ACE, 2000a, p.3). This *unrestricted approach to funding* creates a confusing rhetoric and typifies the clash between discourses: on the one hand ACE want to fund and encourage creative endeavour, but on the other they want accountability and control over what work is done; it is also evident in other statements such as this one: "national policy is not just about doing more, better, it is also about doing things differently. It is not just about investing more money in theatre. Money alone never produced great art. It is about spending whatever investment we have in new ways" (ACE, 2000a, p.4).

⁴⁶ In the meso/micro discussion chapter that follows I aim to demonstrate how dominant discourses around evaluation and the power and control discourses are replicated in the evaluation practices that theatre companies engaged in and how they speak about this work.

This issue of power and the influence of the state is also evident in other policies that reduced autonomy and direction and replaced these with political targets. The government's criminal justice and health policy *Shifting the Balance of Power* (DH, 2001) began a process to devolve responsibility for health care in prisons to frontline NHS organisations. In September 2002, the Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Health agreed that the funding responsibility for prison health services in England was to be transferred from the Home Office to the Department of Health. This responsibility began to take effect from April 2003 (DH, 2003a) and was the first step in a five year process which would see prison health become part of the NHS, and PCTs would then become responsible for the commissioning and provision of health services to prisoners in their areas. In support of this move, and supporting the need to address the health of prisoners, the then Prison Minister, Hilary Benn, indicated that improving health services for prisoners was important for their rehabilitation and to reduce their chances of reoffending. He also acknowledged that poorer health was more common among prisoners than in the general population and more was needed to be done to meet their needs. The directive to improve prison healthcare to meet NHS standards and providing more effective ways to manage care both in custody and on release were seen as useful ways to do this. This move enabled greater partnerships and collaborations with applied theatre, criminal justice and health workers which will be examined further in the next chapter.

In the preamble to the updated *National Policy for Theatre* the authors include statements which reflect the dominant discourses highlighted in wider arts policy; these include discourses around *evaluation, collaborative working, development, and power*. In the following statement, a development discourse is evident in the statement that focuses on the contribution theatre makes to the economy; this is also reflected in the second statement around the investment ACE makes to the 230 organisations and individuals it funds.

[arts] contribute over £2.5 billion a year to the UK's economy. ACE plays an influential role and regularly invests over £100 million in over 230 theatre organisations and individuals, providing the backbone for theatre in England. The influence of this public funding is far reaching, and theatre has been seen to have a positive effect on bringing communities together, addressing social issues and enhancing society's wellbeing as whole. (ACE, 2006, p.3)

This statement also exemplifies a power discourse, as ACE attempt to assert their control over the developments in these areas. In the third statement, the organisation comment upon the *positive effect* of theatre which signifies an evaluation discourse, and finally a collaboration discourse is demonstrated through comments about collective approaches to addressing social issues.

Much of the document focuses on how reduced funding from the public sector will be enhanced through private and commercial sector funding. The desire to create a mixed

economy of private and public funding reflects the discourses around collaboration and evaluation, and aims to provide support to the arts through this difficult and challenging time. The discourse around collaboration is therefore given much more consideration, especially when the authors talk about how their vision will be realised. This discourse is also supported through an encouragement of partnership between other public bodies such as health and community organisations, which was viewed as a positive move for applied theatre practitioners working in prisons and reflects Clive Gray's (2002) point that *policy attachment* can assist a weaker policy area to advance its practice or claims. The policy also makes reference to the way arts can change lives and communities, in particular the contribution to the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities; a discourse which refers to the utility of health and further suggests that the arts should replicate this approach.

4.3.4 Partnership and Collaboration discourses

Partnership working was a central feature of New Labour's approach to the delivery of health and social policy since 1997. To embrace public health issues, the NHS was required to work with other agencies in order to achieve the government's wider policy objectives. Glasby and Dickinson (2008) note that the word "partnership" was recorded 11,319 times in 2006 in official parliamentary records, compared to just 38 times in 1989 (this is after removing references to *civil partnerships*, which were being debated in 2006). As Dowling et al (2004) state: "The message is clear.... Partnership is no longer simply an option; it is a requirement" (p.309).

New Labour encouraged partnerships between workers in health, arts and criminal justice in the hope that this would lead to a more efficient use of resources and prevent silo working, and meet some of the needs for development outlined earlier. However, despite many arguing that collaboration was already happening, and organisations were already working with each other (Jackson, 2007; Etherton and Prentki, 2006; Nicholson, 2005), this led to the formal beginning of a wider understanding around, for example, the use and value of arts in health, prisons and in education. In fact, it was the last of these, *education* that became one of the cornerstones to many of New Labour's policies and led to the popular mantra "education, education, education". The focus on education policy is clearly visible within arts, health and prison education discourse; something that not only brought workers together, but in doing so, also highlighted their different practices and approaches, especially when it came to evaluation.

Arts organisations were expected to contribute to the government's political, social and economic objectives; a positive move to encourage cross collaboration and interdisciplinary working, however one that also led to conflict. The collaborative working ethos recognised that improving health and narrowing the widening health gap between social groups were policy changes that were beyond any single departments' responsibilities. There were issues

that cut across different policy areas and therefore a key feature of government discourse was to foster interdisciplinary working; the focus led to the growth of a discourse around partnerships and collaboration which encouraged the use and spread of terms such as *joined up solutions to joined up social problems* which could be seen across the health, the arts and prison sector policies reviewed in this thesis. Policies were therefore produced with the needs and demands of other departments in mind, which marked a fundamental change to policies produced by the previous government. For example, the DCMS made its link to other governmental departments very clear: its links with the DH on ways that the arts can help improve the wellbeing of populations, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on using the arts to regenerate local communities and showed how it was an active member of the MOJ's *Arts Forum* which promoted the use of the arts to break cycles of offending behaviour. Therefore difficulties in government policy which were previously unique to different areas of practice were now replicated within different policy strands. During this time there was also a growing acceptance that prison presented an opportunity to promote health and wellbeing through rehabilitative approaches (Caraher *et al.*, 2002; Caraher *et al.*, 2000; Smith 2000); and this growth in understanding was also argued to support the use of applied theatre practice (Balfour, 2003).

In the first of New Labour's health policies, *The New NHS: Modern and Dependable* (DH, 1997), an emphasis on achieving change and collaboration with others is reflected in a discourse that calls for the reorganisation and redirection of resources within the NHS. However, despite indicating that change was required (e.g. a focus on health improvement and also targeting specific sections of the community with the most challenging health needs), this policy did not result in much change (Baggott, 2000). As with other policies created at this time, the need for development through collaborative working was expressed through rhetoric that indicated that "the NHS needs to foster better relationships and create strong partnerships with all stakeholders" (DH, 1997, p.4) and required other policy makers to consider how "businesses and institutions" (DH, 1997, p.5) such as prisons could "help achieve good health for everyone" (DH, 1997, p.7).

The last significant health policy within this period was *Our Health, Our Care, Our Say* (DH, 2006) which emphasised the need to shift the focus of care away from acute care hospitals to primary and community care settings. In its fourth chapter, this white paper clearly set out the requirement for PCTs and LAs to work with other partners to ensure the social care needs of offenders are addressed. The transfer of health from prisons to the NHS reflected collaboration discourses in policy which called for multi-agency working to assist in prisoner rehabilitation and prevent recidivism. Although prison health was still the responsibility of the Home Office, through a drive to encourage cross departmental work, more links with the DH, the NHS and the DMCS were encouraged, which also supported the work of applied theatre practitioners in these contexts. However, rapid changes within the NHS meant that despite

this collaboration discourse, the distance between the NHS and prisons widened, and resulted in increasing health differences between prisoners and the wider population. In addition, through the explicit use of the term *effective* the dominant discourses of *development*, *evidence-based practice* through *evaluation*, and the issue of power and control (which are referred to more explicitly in health policy) reflects how the language in health and policy has been reflected in criminal justice policy.⁴⁷ However, despite the discourses of development and the promotion of creativity, what this period also signified was an absence of a cohesive national strategic framework for implementing change. The lack of a national strategy led to an ad hoc development of local services dependent on the enthusiasm and skills of prison staff and practitioners within individual prisons and on the priorities set by each Governor. The discourse around development was clearly effective, perhaps fuelled by an over controlling government that increasingly imposed requirements and caveats to funding, which could be argued to stifle creativity at the expense of growth (countering the effects of the dominant discourse around the need to develop creative approaches to tackle social issues).

The NOMS *Reducing Re-Offending Action Plan* (Home Office, 2005) plan explicitly reflected the discourses around collaborative working, and identified the partnership arrangements that were required at all levels to ensure a multi-agency approach and accountability, for what the authors refer to as the seven pathways out of re-offending. These pathways were focused on public protection and reducing re-offending rather than on personal social need. Again, the report authors acknowledge the need for a collaborative approach with other organisations and refer to the use of creative approaches to assist them in achieving their goals.

In a critique of this partnership and collaboration discourse Glasby and Dickinson (2008) argue that partnerships do not necessarily lead to improved outcomes, indicating that it is often consuming, diverts human and financial resources and can be counterproductive. This is a conclusion supported by the Healthcare Commission and Audit Commission (2008) in their review of the NHS reforms and by the Department of Health's assessments of the impact of public health policies since 1997 (DH, 2008a, 2008b). Glasby and Dickinson's (2008, p.67) work led them to conclude that the benefits of partnerships were largely unproven and much of the partnership working remained faith-based – people had to believe in the benefits of this work, which they say is ironic given New Labour's approach to policy making which emphasised the need for evidence of "what works" (Labour Party, 1997; Cabinet Office, 1999).

⁴⁷ As a result of this transfer, arts workers working in prisons were also influenced by this shift and, as I will go on show in the next chapter, discourses around evidence and a need to focus on health and wellbeing objectives, began to be both replicated and challenged in their work.

Summary of New Labour 1997-2010: theatre, health and prison policy discourse.

This section has examined key shifts in New Labour government policy, and the policy discourses that guided and influenced the practice of applied theatre, health and criminal justice workers. From this broad level policy analysis it is evident that policy directions led to many changes across the arts, health and prison sector. The need to use techniques to address wider social issues and an increase in funding can be seen to fuel a discourse around development and creativity, but practice was ultimately restricted through a power and control discourse, which meant that funding came with its conditions: those receiving it had to show that their work was effective and that it provided value for money. Prison policy during this period can also be seen to reflect the four dominant discourses that I suggest are significant features within New Labour government policies. However, the transfer of prison health care to the NHS resulted in a significant shift in how practice was carried out and the partnerships between health, prison and applied theatre workers. These discourses also have ideological implications, in particular around how they generate forms of power and knowledge and how workers adopt and replicate them; by identifying and reporting on the discourses here, the influence that they had on applied theatre practice will be examined in the meso and micro level of analysis that follows.

4.4 The response to policy discourses

As funding bodies and government departments demanded more evidence, a growing body of research and guidance documentation began to emerge. The most comprehensive review of arts participation projects in the UK was undertaken by François Matarasso (1997) in his study *Use or Ornament?: The Social Impact of the Participation in the Arts*. This was the first large scale attempt to understand the social impact of the arts, and contrasted with previous research that largely focused on economic benefits (Myerscough, 1988). Matarasso's review concluded that participation can have a positive impact on how people feel, can be an effective means of health education, can contribute to a more relaxed atmosphere in health centres, and can help improve the quality of life of people with poor health; but none of the existing studies seemed to include formal outcome evaluations. Supporting this point is the HDAs *Art for Health* report which summarised that while there were many examples of good practice, actual evaluation was rare (Clift, 2011).

In later work, Matarasso (2002) notes that applied theatre workers struggled with the questions raised around the effectiveness of their work and the pressure placed on them to be creative and unrestrained in their work and direction. Furthermore, Belfiore (2007) also questioned the differing discourses within policy. However, was this, in Foucauldian terms simply a discourse that was being replicated by these researchers through a process of interpellation within a power and control discourse, or was it as a result of a real need for evaluation? In answering this question, the discussion that follows demonstrates how applied theatre workers have engaged with evaluation discourses that have been upheld by power

and control discourses; but theatre workers can also be seen to challenge these. This thesis suggests that quantifiable measurement of such practice can never be fully achieved, and therefore a better understanding of the work and the discourses that surround evaluation will help understand what leads people to adopt these constructions. Ultimately, this will help inform practitioners to both demonstrate the outcomes of their work to others and help demonstrate an understanding of the contributions of this work.

In this section I examine three key documents. The first of these is the ACE (2004) guidance document *A Guide to Evaluating Arts Education Projects* by Felicity Woolf which became very influential in directing how theatre companies and applied theatre practitioners should evaluate their work but it was predominantly used to support the call for evidence reflected in other policy documents. This also led to many researchers and practitioners expressing the need for an evaluation model or approach that can accommodate for the different practices in the field (Hughes 2008). One organisation that contributed to these debates was the *National Network for Arts in Health* (NNAH); a national organisation that aimed to bring together what it suggested were “disparate groups and individuals who share a common mission” (nnah.org). Woolf’s was the only official guidance document for practitioners during this period, however, under the current Conservative-Liberal Coalition government, the evaluation discourse has led to the creation of two further documents that aimed to support the work of artists in prisons: *A new focus on measuring outcomes: where do we start?*, published by Clinks in November 2010 (which includes discussion of the document *Demonstrating Effectiveness* which was produced earlier in that year); and the Arts Alliance report *Demonstrating the Value of Arts in Criminal Justice* (Gregory and Ellis, 2011). These are produced outside of the period under examination in this thesis; however, they are worthy of examination here because they provide some of the missing detail within earlier policy, in particular, around *how* evaluation should take place and *why* there is a *need* for it.

Woolf’s document aims to provide practitioners with practical approaches; to enable practitioners to feel *confident* with the process of evaluation and to *appreciate* the *value* of different techniques and then understand what that information can be used for. The guidance provides clear frameworks for mostly qualitative approaches to evaluation, through techniques such as interviews, observations and case studies, and encourages arts workers to think about their use of quantitative methods; however, these mainly focus on the monitoring function of evaluation. There is a clear drive to encourage arts workers to utilise more quantitative methods which is incongruent with other statements in the document which encourage people to examine what Woolf refers to as the “subtle effects of their practice on people and communities” (Woolf, 2004, p.11). Again this exemplifies the impact of other policy areas and the power discourses within them, on applied theatre, and arts practice in general. With regards to the use of quantitative methods, I suggest that this pressure arises from policy discourse where the use of these techniques is afforded more authority. However,

this discourse is only touched upon and it is the dominant discourses of evaluation and collaboration that feature strongly.

Woolf's document was not the first to talk about evaluation and provide guidance for arts workers, there was much debate and discussion by others prior to this document being issued, in *Geese Theatre's Handbook* (Baim, Brookes and Mountford, 2002) for example; however, this was the first document that brought many of these ideas together. Issued by ACE the guidance aims to assist all arts practitioners, but in particular those funded by them so that workers could develop robust evaluations which it felt many projects lacked. However, in the introduction to the guide, Woolf avoids asserting that this requirement for evidence is linked to funding; instead she refers in general terms to raising "the standard of arts education projects" (Woolf, 2004, p.7). The guide therefore appears to gently encourage those who had not previously put evaluation measures in place to consider the value of them, and encourages them to think of the guidelines as a way of helping them "get the most out of the time they invest" in a project; requesting them primarily to think of it as a way of developing their own practice. However, many practitioners picked up on the subtext and they ensured that funding applications made reference to this guidance so that they could demonstrate how they were using public money awarded to them (Belfiore and Bennett, 2010).

This push for practitioners to prove their practice and be accountable to funders reflects the discourse around development and evaluation which sits in harmony within other ACE policy documents at that time. In the theatre policies examined earlier, there was a clear need to strengthen the evidence base, and this attempts to address the weaknesses in those policies that fail to make a strong link between this and funding. Although aimed at those who it funded, the discourse clearly influenced other funders, such as charitable trusts, who were conscious of the way their funds were being used alongside those of the government.

Although Woolf's report aims to provide practitioners with a guide, the language used also suggests that evaluation is fraught with problems and challenges, and as such it runs the risk of alienating arts workers who may internalising this anxiety and become paralysed by a need to evaluate whilst not having appropriate tools to do so. This can be seen in the second paragraph of the introduction which starts with the line "Arts-based projects are difficult to evaluate", and this assertion is then reinforced in the third paragraph which opens with the statement that "evaluating the quality of the creative process is open to argument and interpretation". Through these statements Woolf indicates to the reader that even policy makers feel that evaluation is difficult to do and when they do this and it is shared, it will be open to interpretation and argument. This further supports a move away from, and challenges an evaluation discourse, in favour of an approach that focuses on the practice and the contributions it makes to individuals through its *affects* on them.

The 2010 Clinks document on *Measuring Outcomes* provides the most thorough discussion around policy evaluation discourses at the time by referring to the discourses and some of the changes that arts organisations were to face later that year. This document was issued as a discussion document following earlier guidance in their *Demonstrating Effectiveness* publication (Clinks, 2010). The authors recognise that the need for a robust evidence base for work with offenders is not new, but acknowledge that under the new administration, “evaluation is becoming more important to statutory agencies commissioning services, organisations themselves and other funders” (p.8). Citing an evaluation/accountability discourse, the authors anticipate that reduced government funding will increase the emphasis on contestability, and that an introduction of *payment by results* will mean that funders will want to see more than just a “process based account of an organisation's activities”. Therefore, using a power and control discourse, documents by Clinks and the Arts Alliance reflect other discourses that require practitioners to provide evidence that their practice leads to changes.

Whereas Woolf's document focuses on the difference between monitoring and evaluation, and encourages arts organisations to ensure that some form of monitoring is carried out, documents issued later on move away from simply requesting practitioners to evaluate their work, and invites them to use this to enhance their practice. As thinking and skills around evaluation develop, the Arts Alliance document in 2011 now refers to the need for “good” evidence and getting *better evidence* – making a qualifying difference between different types of evidence, this extends and develops an evaluation discourse into one that takes a specific stance in a positivist paradigm. It does this by suggesting that arts workers should feel more confident about the tools that they use, citing case studies and examples of what they consider is *good evaluation*; again with an emphasis on quantitative tools. This document also refers to methods that can assess a social return on investment, further emphasising the points made in policy at that time which demanded clear evidence and *value for money*.

Similar references are made in the Clinks document which, having accepted that arts workers are evaluating their work, attempts to develop this thinking around a “new focus on measuring outcomes”. By encouraging a move away from simple monitoring and feedback forms, promoted predominantly in Woolf's document, they advance a collaborative discourse when they propose that arts workers should work with others such as University departments to assist them in carrying out their evaluations, and talk about ensuring better collaboration with other workers in prisons so that “good baseline data” can be obtained. When talking about gathering this *good evidence*, the Arts Alliance guidance refers to research that suggests that funders and commissioners frequently find self-evaluation reports lacking in *adequate evidence*. This drive for *adequate* evidence leads them to direct practitioners to consider quantitative methods in their evaluations. They cite the work of TiPP and their theatre project *Blagg!*, indicating how this is a good example of how more *scientific quantitative* approaches,

such as the use of a control group, can effectively be used in the evaluation of an arts project. However, as outlined in the review of literature, the use of a control group is unsuitable as other factors cannot be isolated, and therefore adopting these practices does not solve the problem of evaluation, but creates confusion and further tension in the field.

With the public spending reviews initiated during the New Labour government Belfiore (2006) indicates that it may be easy to think of the creative arts as some kind of “optional extra, and a luxury that cannot be afforded”(p.24). In response to views such as this, the report entitled *Restoring the Balance: The Effect of Arts Participation on Wellbeing and Health* was produced and examined the evidence around effectiveness, attempting to show the worth and value of the arts to individuals and organisations (Voluntary Arts England, 2010). In addition to messages of support in the foreword from the Minister for Culture and Tourism, Margaret Hodge, the publication includes contributions from former Minister for the Arts, Lord Howarth; Minister for Further Education, Skills, Apprenticeships and Consumer Affairs, Kevin Brennan and the Department of Health's joint lead on arts and health, Professor Louis Appleby. It also includes support from a wide range of people from differing backgrounds explaining how their wellbeing, health, and in some cases, their lives have been transformed as a direct result of arts participation. However, yet again this report relies predominantly on anecdotal evidence from participants and health workers and therefore the evidence for its effectiveness is weak and easily challenged.

These guidance documents demonstrate growing discursive policy pressure on applied theatre practitioners who address the health of prisoners to demonstrate their effectiveness through evaluation and demonstrating the impact of their work. However, despite attempts to increase efficiency and reduce bureaucracy, a widespread managerial obsession with social inclusion, and an equally onerous government obsession with what political commentators referred to as *targetology*, meant the excessive administration that companies had to adopt under the Conservatives was now replaced with an equally onerous burden of collecting data and constantly proving how far artistic programmes were driven by advocacy (Turnbull, 2008). During New Labour's first two terms, theatre companies can be seen to experience a period where the intrinsic value of the arts was increasingly side-lined as the government demanded *value for money* that could be measured in terms of the benefits of stakeholders. Through the discourses identified it is clear that policies have had to dramatically change to respond to the recent international economic downturn which has led to adjustments in the priority given to applied theatre work within prisons, and in particular the move to a greater evidence and outcomes based approach to funding. In response to government policy, ACE increasingly demanded that projects be evaluated in terms of *measurable success factors* to determine the accomplishments of organisations in which they had made an investment – i.e. a tick-box culture. However, this was an inefficient way of looking at what works, it merely involved the recording of statistics, so companies became used to this approach and continue it in their

work today. This shift in the approach to funding is something that some argue is having a devastating effect on organisations and is something that some argue will be better understood over the next few years (Belfiore and Bennett, 2010).

4.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has explored a number of policy texts from criminal justice, the arts, and health to substantiate the claim that under New Labour government there was a significant development in the dominant discourses of development, evaluation, power and control, and collaborative working. My analysis at this macro level seeks to examine dominant ideologies and in particular examine how power has “influenced the characterisation of the identities of the social actors and their respective organisations.” (Fairclough, 2003). An analysis of policy shows that policy development is unclear and this could be attributed to the quick succession of policy and the lack of continuity in thought expressed from one to the next. This point is reflected by Richard Sennett (2006, p.176) who argues that governments issue policy “abandoning them as though they have no value once they exist”. Sennett goes on to indicate that it does not matter if these policies fail to get implemented, what matters is that policymakers are seen to be at the cutting edge of what is “fashionable and in vogue”. With this in mind, could the discourses around evaluation be considered fashionable and in vogue because of the discussions carried out by researchers and practitioners well before these are made explicit in policy? This analysis, through a Foucauldian perspective, demonstrates how it is linked to an exercise of power/knowledge that encouraged collaboration in a desire to promote an evaluation discourse that would help join up policies. However, as Orme (2011) points out, during the New Labour government an endless stream of “bewildering strategies and reports” damaged the ideology that there should be a “joining up” of policy (p.32). As a result, the management of this became more difficult because each initiative tended to operate in isolation and received its own dedicated funding and its success was judged according to criteria specific to that particular initiative.

I have attempted to show that policy from the different fields can be seen to frame and direct work through a managerialist discourse that promotes development and collaboration but at the same time it can be seen to bar the freedom and creativity of applied theatre practice by strengthening an evaluation discourse. This has been structured in response to government economic and strategic development policies, and at the same time, in reaction to a scientific approach to measurement. It could be argued therefore that the way evaluation philosophies have developed has depended largely on events and discursive frameworks external to it, i.e. that government policy is framed in reaction to discussions in applied theatre practice and their demand for funding. Thus, applied theatre practitioners have begun to present their work in a style that is demanded by government agencies and have moved away from their former informal style; in contrast, the government has adopted a more creative and informal approach to policy and guidance, a language which is borrowed from theatre companies to

position itself more favourably with them. Therefore, each group appears to have its discursive parameters defined in part by the other. An argument that can be seen in discourses presented in the next chapter.

In addition to an effectiveness debate, the demands on practitioners to demonstrate how they measure the influence of their practice is confusing and frequently changes. The pressure to evaluate can be seen to increase as policies evolve and other pressures, such as limited funding, lead policy makers to consider how best to spend finite resources. When directions to evaluate are made within policies, these are made in short sections, and despite guidance documents and discussion amongst practitioners around this issue, guidance remains unclear, as is an understanding of what is considered *good* evidence and what is not. However, I argue that direction to utilise quantitative methodologies has resulted in many theatre companies working in prisons to adopt evaluation practices that may not accurately help demonstrate the effects of their work; a point that will be examined further in the next chapter.

Therefore, through an examination of policy produced within the arts, the health service and the prison service, an analysis is made of historical, political and social constructions that impact on the choice and approach to measuring the effectiveness of applied theatre initiatives in prisons. As a result, current evaluation discourses that focus on quantifiable measures do not appear to offer a useful way to understand the impact and outcomes of practice, and lead to the question about whether the outcomes of applied theatre can be *measured* at all? If, as the discourse suggests they struggle to do so within these frameworks, an examination of the outcomes of practice, and the contributions it can make in collaboration with other practitioners, is perhaps a more useful way to look at effectiveness. In the final analysis and discussion chapter that follows, this argument is developed as the discourses and observations identified here are linked to the language used within evaluation reports disseminated by applied theatre projects (i.e. the textual level) and the interviews with project staff as well as research literature and other grey literature (i.e. the language level).

Chapter 5 Meso and Micro Level Discourses

“It can be difficult to decide on measures of success for an arts project. The results of arts projects are unpredictable, and people’s views on the quality of creative activity vary enormously... The most common weakness of project reports is that they include too much description and not enough analysis, conclusions and action points.” (Woolf, 2004, p.16 & p.45)

“We can push at the bars that hold us in, push at the policy that dictates what we have to do.” (Interview, Simon Ruding, TiPP.)

The meso (or documentary) level of CDA research focuses on an analysis of texts at the level of discourse practice. This entails “analysis of orders of discourse, production of discourses, and the dialectic of practice and discourse” (Fairclough, 2003, p.32) and they are only meaningful in the context of the first level; i.e. the macro (policy) level discourses examined in the previous chapter. In addition the micro (interview) level of analysis focuses on an examination of data at the language level, and is only meaningful in the context of the other two levels Fairclough (1995). In this chapter I examine how those interviewed in this study describe their theatre practice in prisons and their views on evaluation, to understand what influences them in their choice of evaluation methods and how the outcomes are reported. By combining the meso and micro levels of analysis in this chapter, and referring back to policy level discourses, I provide a triangulated examination of these discourses. Fairclough (2005) suggests that this process enables the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of an issue and examine the link between the “why and the how” (p.42), and as such this chapter shows a link between the “opaque relationships of causality and determination between: (a) discursive practices, event and texts; and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes” (Fairclough, 1995, p.132).

Unlike other approaches to discourse analysis where the focus would solely be on a linguistic level, i.e. an analysis of words and phrases, how and when these are used, their frequency and the weighting that can therefore be placed on the intended meaning; in CDA, although some analysis of language is necessary, what is of more importance is the link between levels of analysis which allow for a deeper understanding of the issue. So, of relevance here is what and how work was carried out and what influences these decisions, what influenced the choice of evaluation methods, and how companies share details relating to the impact of their practice. This discussion makes links to the macro level discourses identified in the preceding chapter and will be organised around the discourses identified at that level to show how these discourses are replicated or challenged by practitioners in response to wider political discourse and how these discursive attempts work to construct evaluation, through calling up a particular version of it. In this chapter I therefore aim to address the overall research aims which are to understand how and to what extent theatre companies are, in

their use and evaluation of applied theatre in prisons, influenced by discourses in health, arts and criminal justice policy; and to understand the approaches and methods theatre companies use to evaluate their practice, why they consider these to be important, how they account for the methods evaluation they use, and how they communicate the health outcomes to others.

In the previous chapter I suggest that practitioners are restricted by the metaphorical bars created by government policy and the demands by those funding this work, and through an analysis of their evaluation reports and interviews with company staff in this chapter, I aim to demonstrate that they work within these requirements as well as push against the bars that challenge the construct of evaluation. In Foucauldian terms, practitioners may be creating their own bars and barriers by interpolating with dominant discourse: accepting, engaging and replicating them through the approaches and methods they use to evaluate their work and in how they report this to others. Therefore, these bars may restrict and cause a barrier, but as well as overcoming these through collaboration and partnerships, applied theatre practitioners in prisons can also be seen to push at these bars, challenging evaluation discourses that constrain, restrict and at times bar their artistic freedom and ability to work in these places and with these people. I also demonstrate how micro level discourses suggest they have considered their practice and relationship to policy level discourses, and in doing so *are setting the bar* in terms of how they can account for their practice. By engaging in discussions around evaluation techniques and its purpose, they demonstrate a desire to influence policy development, and identify practices to help better understand the outcomes of their work and demonstrate this to others.

5.1 Foucault, Fairclough and documentary analysis

In his work on *discipline and power*, Foucault (1995) draws attention to *artefacts* as carriers of discourse, which range from the organisation of practice, to the production of records. In theatre practice, discourses are *represented* and *translated* in a variety of ways including the production of a wide range of *artefacts*. In this research I use *artefacts* to refer to the production of a range of evaluation documents that comprise some of the key discourses that are in circulation. At the micro level, discourse represents reality through the words, acts, values, beliefs and attitudes that are expressed by individuals (Fairclough, 2005). Discourses are based on epistemological stances that are not fixed entities but constructed by language; therefore, like all language constructs, discourses are open to the possibility of being restructured and consequentially able to describe or re-describe a different type of reality by providing a set of different words, acts, values, beliefs and attitudes. Thus for Fairclough (2005, p.49), through an adoption of Foucault's approach to an analysis of the different discourses at this level, it is possible to demonstrate how they have been *engineered* or used to describe a specific reality that makes evaluation or effectiveness possible.

Foucault (2002, p.54) describes discourse as “ways of being in the world” and therefore, identifying the discourses individuals use can enable an understanding of how those working in theatre companies recognise discourses that influence their practice, and how these are incorporated into theatre practice within prisons. When analysing discourse, which Foucault (1995) also referred to as the “mouthpiece of ideology”, it is necessary to appreciate that language is a reflection of discourse and how it is used to create knowledge and relationships, it also allows things to be said but also contains what can be said; Foucault suggests that discourse can also *bar* what kind of meaning can be made about the world. This would indicate that individuals are constrained by the need for consensus within the ideology. Therefore, when respondents in this study expressed an attitude or an opinion about evaluation, they are both indicating something about themselves (their construct of evaluation), but at the same time are locating themselves within a wider opinion or view, for example, around the need or the value of evaluation or having to prove what works. Thus, discourse at this level allows an examination of the influence of other discourses, and examine these in relationship to issues of power and control.

The meso, or documentary, stage of analysis requires discourses to be linked with those made at the policy level. As such, Foucault indicates that “policy becomes an ongoing inter-textual process, bringing into view the social relations in which ‘texts’ are embedded” (Moss, 2008, p.70). Therefore, through an application of Foucault's work we can also see that discourses reflected in individual policies contain within them sets of practices that construct and produce *evaluation* within a company's evaluation reports (Foucault, 1979, p.235). For Foucault, discourses construct the object of which they speak, so the practice and reporting of evaluation is productive in that “they have power outcomes or effects. They define and establish what is ‘truth’ at particular moments” and these truths work to displace other constructions and versions of it (Foucault in Carabine, 2001, p.268).

Rather than simply assuming that discourses force individuals and theatre companies to behave in certain ways, I aim to show how theatre companies operate *within* and *through* these and other *discursive structures*. This reflects Fairclough's adoption of Foucault's view that texts are not somehow divorced from the social context and individual participants, simply because we analyse them in terms of their discursive structures. Discourse structures are discontinuous; that is they change over time because of resistance to them and because of changes in social structures. This causes something that you do (rather than something to which you are subjected) suggesting that engaging with discourses of evaluation and evidence constitutes an *interactional relation* of power rather than an *imposition* of power. In this analysis I posit that evaluation does not have a single meaning, but depends on a wide range of contextual features, such as perceived power relations for its interpretation and effect. Furthermore, discourses should not be interpreted at face value, individuals actively engage with discourses in order to forge particular positions of identity. Thus, applied theatre

practitioners may identify with the evaluation debate because it engages them in a policy discussions around public accountability and *what works*, not only because of an interest in satisfying those discourses imposed from the macro/policy level, but also because it enables them to engage with discourses, and ultimately challenge or transform them.

There are a number of others issues and assumptions that I take into account when examining these reports and the way evaluation is spoken about by practitioners. The following four points are made in light of the review of literature carried out earlier in this thesis, and in line with a critical realist perspective and CDA methodology, it is important to be open about these at the outset before they are explored further.

Firstly, I am mindful that evaluation reports are often selective in what they report; therefore, they may not provide a full picture of what took place and the outcomes for participants. Foucault suggests that larger discursive structures shape the production of texts and our interpretation of them, so, policy discourses influence text production and these reports may be political framed to suit the funder's needs. An interpretation from somebody outside of a field can also produce different interpretations; therefore, my health perspective may assist the field of applied theatre to appreciate different perspectives on the evaluation process. I am also mindful that reports are written with an audience in mind, so issues that may cause negative attention, may be omitted or hidden within the text. Foucault suggests that discourses are therefore composed of *signs*; and one must reveal and describe these *signs* (Foucault, 1986, p.49); for this reason, in this analysis, the subtext will be examined and, the inferences and signs highlighted. Furthermore, when examining definitions around evaluation, it was clear that much of the focus was on assessing the effects of an intervention and whether goals have been achieved. However, there is much debate as to whether evaluation should focus on these "predetermined goals" or be open to report "unanticipated outcomes" (Green and South, 2006, p.7). Discourses are therefore social processes formed within and by wider events; so, how policy dictates what and how practitioners should carry out their work, should be identifiable in the discourses within the documents. For example, in many ways theatre companies are engaged in a discussion around *proving worth* that is contained in the dominant discourse of evaluation and effectiveness, and perpetuated through the public accountability tests and what works debates. So in the documentary evidence, these official positions will contain assumptions to discourse about supporting the practice, and proving its impact on what this practice should be. These discourses shape the ways in which theatre companies select, interpret and translate specific aspects of policy within their practice.

Secondly, evaluation reports are often written with future funding needs in mind; so, as indicated in Matarasso's (2002) work, companies are influenced by policy and those who support their work financially, and they may structure their evaluation reports accordingly. Moreover, what is written in evaluation documents may differ from what is actually said by

companies and practitioners and these subtle differences in language used can highlight the impact of policy discourses on applied theatre practice (Belfiore and Bennett, 2010). In the same way that some discourses at the macro level appear to be in conflict with each other; at the meso level, an analysis explores how these may be in conflict with other discourses at this level and those at the micro level. Foucault (1981) supports this position, indicating that discourse is always in dialogue and in conflict with other positions; ideological struggle is therefore a part of discourse. He also suggests that access to discourse differs between different groups of people, and as such exclusions occur; for example, when evaluations are only accepted by others if they follow the formal rules of the discourse governing structures contained within high-level evaluative research papers. Therefore, short evaluations for internal consumption may not be considered as useful or as valuable, and may not therefore be distributed to others. But there are other unspoken rules which govern whether the evaluation report is considered acceptable or not, and these are related to who writes the work, how it is funded, and the size of the project. As such, a number of discursive and institutional barriers exist, but those who are aware of the discursive rules for the production of evaluation reports, what is considered worthy, and who are able to manipulate their own concerns in line with those discursive structures, can gain a platform for their work. Thus, it is also important to assess who makes the statement and how it is made.

Thirdly, as a result of the first two points, evaluations conducted for internal use are, as Datta (2006) indicates, generally more open and honest than those for wider dissemination. Internal evaluations may be carried out to assist in the development of practice, rather than to satisfy a funding requirement. However, discourses adopted from policy may still be expressed in these, but by highlighting where and when this happens the different discourses reflected in documents created for different audiences may be appreciated.

Finally, theatre companies often rely on qualitative evaluation methods and, because they differ from the methods used by public health promotion practitioners, they can easily be dismissed or challenged by them (Woolf, 2004). The approaches will need to be examined and this discussion will assist in a deeper understanding of the tools that can assist in the evaluation of this work and encourage collaborations between health and applied theatre practitioners. In doing so I also outline how there are limits to the challenge that can be made to the dominant discourse; in particular the influence of a power discourse which impacts on the free-choice of individuals to challenge policy demands, and a growing desire to focus on the *affective realm* rather than just the *effects* of this prison theatre practice.

Witkin (2010), in his examination of evaluation practices, provides a few other issues that are useful to a social constructionist analysis and understanding of evaluation. Applying Karl Weick's (2001, 1995, 1979) concept of *enactment*, which refers to processes through which actors interact with and generate their environments, he indicates that "evaluations enact the

environments they evaluate” (p.210). By this he asserts that in the process of evaluation understanding is produced and, “how enactment is done is what an organization will know” (p.187). The *how* and *what* are not independent; in the process of acting, some things are noticed or positioned in the foreground, while others become less distinguishable and part of the background.

In sum, evaluations and their environments may be thought of as “constitutively entangled”, in a way that one cannot be separated from the other (Orlikowski, 2007, p.1440). The analyst therefore has to untangle the relationships between the evaluation and the environment: in how applied theatre practitioners respond to their clients’ needs as well as the policy makers’. Analysis can help illuminate the communication and interplay of discourse between evaluators and stakeholders and how collectively these interactions contribute to the overall evaluation. As indicated in the methodology section of this thesis, the CDA approach allows for flexibility in how the approach is used, and I therefore employ a thematic analysis of discourse, as opposed to textual or a linguistic one. However, at times I felt it was necessary to highlight particular language that was used by respondents because it was representative of, and supported, a specific discourse.

5.2 The companies, the documents and the analysis

Theatre companies examined in this study were asked to share evaluation reports that met three criteria: ones where health outcomes were identified for participants, which provided examples of their approach to evaluation, and ones that demonstrated how they shared these outcomes with others. Initially, many were reluctant to share their documents for this analysis, mainly because they did not feel they demonstrated health outcomes; however, this was overcome through discussions with them about the wider health outcomes that this thesis considers, which include emotional wellbeing, reduction in drug use, relationships, empowerment and positive behaviour change. Only Geese and Clean Break indicated that their companies carried out work that aimed to directly address the health of prisoners. Companies shared between 2-6 reports each and from this a total of 14 project evaluation reports were selected for analysis. These ranged from short documents that summarised the activity of a small scale project, to more detailed reports conducted by external evaluators.

The evaluation documents are examined in successive detail within the themes identified in this chapter. Full titles have been used in the introduction to each one here, but in the remaining discussion a reference code is used for easier reference to them. A detailed description of each project evaluation report and the list of reference codes can be found in appendix four.

Miss Spent and *Missing Out* were projects delivered by Clean Break. These consisted of plays that were developed in partnership with prisoners through theatre workshops. These

were then performed within the prison to other prisoners, staff, and invited guests, and were toured around other prisons. Their *Barriers to Mental Health* and *Women and Anger* projects involved female prisoners in educational settings where applied theatre approaches were used to engage prisoners in discussions about their offending behaviour.

Inside Talk, *Insult to Injury*, and *Reconnect* were projects delivered by Geese Theatre Company. Again, their work also focused on educational work with prisoners using a variety of techniques: theatre performance, experiential exercises, skills practice role plays and the exploration of metaphor through mask work.

Synergy shared six evaluations for this research: *Tales of the Unexpected*, *Write Now*, *Fallout*, *Tagged to a Number*, *Elmina's Kitchen* and a playwriting project through their *New Writing Scheme*. They were developed through prisoner education courses where drama workshops were used as a way of engaging them in discussions about key issues that affected them. Prisoners were then invited to write plays and those selected were performed both within and outside the prison.

TiPP contributed two pieces of work to this study: *Blagg!*, and *What's the Point*. Both examples were of work that was carried out with a number of prisoners, over a longer period of time and focused on the use of workshops as well as performance. The evaluations were conducted by external evaluators.

Interviews were carried out with a key member of staff from each of the theatre companies. Most companies are relatively small, and for those working in the industry it would be easy to identify the respondent, so with their permission I name them within this study:

- **Clean Break:** Anna Hermann, Head of Education
- **Escape Artists:** Matthew Taylor, Company Director
- **Geese Theatre Company:** Andy Watson, Artistic Director
- **Synergy Theatre Project:** Esther Baker, Artistic Director
- **TiPP:** Simon Ruding, Director

In the remainder of this chapter I refer to them by first name only, and when citing sections of their interview have changed any client names that may have been mentioned. Ellipsis points are used in the extracts to represent pauses in speech, when accompanied with a line break this indicates that these comments are made at a later point in their interview, and any contextual information or changes made to the quote are included in square brackets. A list of the questions that were asked can be found in appendix five.

Discourses identified in this analysis reflected many of those identified in policy in the previous chapter; however, what is of interest is how these are interpreted by practitioners. The discourses identified in this analysis are named as follows:

- **Evaluation discourses:** a discourse that helps understand how these companies *construct* evaluations. This is expressed within and through the approaches and methods used, and how the health and other outcomes are reported.
- **Health discourse:** this highlights how companies utilise a health discourse to explain the effects of their practice on prisoners' health and wellbeing, and their awareness of evaluation techniques to demonstrate these outcomes.
- **Partnerships and collaboration:** the extent to which partnership and collaboration occurs between theatre, health and other practitioners and what facilitates or challenges this from happening.
- **Power and control discourse:** an understanding of the influence of government policy and funding discourses on theatre and evaluation practice and how this is being challenged by the field.

5.3 Meso and Micro level discourses and their relationship to the macro level.

The quote cited at the start of this chapter is from Felicity Woolf's ACE funded document that provided a guide for arts companies evaluating their work. Originally produced in 1999 and then revised in 2004, this document was produced as a direct result of some of the difficulties workers experienced in translating policy into practice. In the previous chapter I noted an evaluation discourse gained prominence since the late 1990s as New Labour increasingly expect a return on investment. Evaluation and the requirement to prove the effects of applied theatre practice was not new, but Woolf's report reflected a strategic move by government which aimed to direct and exert greater power and control over the work of the arts companies they funded. This led to companies engaging in complex evaluations of their work, not only because they wanted to understand what was effective, but because they had to prove to funders that their work was effective. Woolf's quote exemplifies both the difficulties and the opportunities for carrying out evaluations, but also demonstrates how there was an expectation that theatre companies expressed this effectiveness to others in ways that can be understood by them. It encapsulates many arts workers' feelings around the unpredictability of their outcomes, the varying quality of work and the difficulty in deciding on measures of success. She also highlights the limitations in the current approaches used and weaknesses in how successes are reported. This unpredictability, varying quality, indecision on measures of success, and weaknesses in the use of approaches and the reporting of these are themes that are returned to throughout her document and my discussion here.

5.4 Evaluation discourses

Of particular interest here is how this discourse is influenced by those identified at the macro level; for example, are the evaluation methods used by practitioners influenced by policy, and did this have an impact on how health outcomes were reported. This will help understand what factors influence the practice of evaluation and how it can be developed in the future.

5.4.1 Construction of evaluation

Constructionism focuses on “the collective generation and transmission of meaning” (Michael, 1998, p.58), and emphasises the way that culture, the environment, and other external factors shape the way in which we see things and the view we have of the world. In line with the social constructionist underpinnings of CDA, discourses identified at this level suggest that the notion of *evaluation*, *evidence* and *what works* was generally constructed by theatre companies, in response to their engagement with policy level discourses. They appear to both create a language around evaluation, and adopt a discourse around evaluation, which reflects those identified in policy and guidance documents. They do this to communicate their practice, as well as the outcomes of their work to funders, participants and others.

I'm sure you are aware that providing people with qualifications to help them get work is a good thing because work has been shown to assist people with reintegration, it helps with a sense of wellbeing and purpose...so we would argue that simply providing accredited programmes of work is good because it contributes to their employment prospects and employment is a key indicator of health to mental health. (Andy, Geese)

In the quote above, Andy's understanding and perspective of evaluation reflects policy evaluation discourse; namely that practice is influenced by macro level discourses which required arts organisations to examine the effects of their work in relationship to how it addressed other policy areas such as those expressed in the ACE theatre policies (ACE, 2000a; ACE, 2006). This is evident through a replication of a discourse in which education and employment is noted as being a contributory factor to good health and wellbeing which is a view that gained prominence through the government's NHS Plan (DH, 2000) Andy is also clear about the influence of partnership working in policy discourse when he indicates that I, as someone with a background in health, would be aware of the impact of adult education on health outcomes, which is a specific discursive feature of the health policies examined earlier in this thesis (see DH, 2006, and DH, 2004a)

This view is also echoed by Esther from Synergy Theatre when she talks about how funders “guide and direct” their practice; acutely aware of the wider influence of policy discourses on their work indicating that “we have to demonstrate what we do like anyone else would – health workers do, and we're no different.” This is further supported in Synergy project evaluations which are very clear in demonstrating the employment opportunities for participants and, in the case of *Fallout* for example, how the project enabled offenders to

develop “practical, psychological and life skills which are essential on the path to social re-integration” (SYN/FO/09). In this project the evaluators also demonstrate their frustration over the bars and restrictions that are created by policy makers; referring to the Ministry of Justice who issue directives for prisons to share improvements for prisoners, they indicate how they prevented the wider dissemination of these findings (although this was also as a result of the negative press surrounding the Comedy School’s project at HMP Whitemoor at the end of 2008).

Further examples suggest that Esther and Andy adopt a constructionist discourse when they speak about evaluation, in which evaluation is constructed around understandings which are contextually embedded, and interpersonally created. This is demonstrated in the following two examples:

We would want to assess the success of an individual project for the participants, we would also want to see how we can improve our practice...and we want to let others know so they can see how good we are at it. (Esther, Synergy)

It’s less about trying to prove it...it’s about trying to evidence what it is that’s happening...for ourselves and to others. (Andy, Geese)

In the first example, Esther describes how her view of evaluation is constructed from different perspectives: individuals taking part in a programme *construct* an understanding of what the outcomes are for them; the company evaluate and construct their outcomes so they can improve their practice, and they then “let others know” so others can appreciate and understand the work they are doing, and how “good” they are at it (later she talks about how this enables them to secure further funding). The use of “good” and “success” refer to *positive* outcomes and practices around evaluation; however, the use of *improve* also suggests that she believes more could be done to demonstrate what they do. I suggest that this anxiety may be perpetuated by an onus on companies to demonstrate their *effects* in quantifiable terms, which are not always possible, and as such supports the argument for a focus on the *affective realm* (a point which is explored in further details throughout this chapter). In Andy’s statement reference to “others” implies that perspectives and constructions of evaluation differ between individuals. This point is built upon in other parts of his interview where he indicates that “participants and different stakeholders involved in the programmes have different experiences and perceptions of the work”. Thus, through these responses we can see that there are multiple perceptions, realities and discourses. Drawing on performance theory to explore this further, evaluation could be interpreted as a replication of government performance expressed through policy. McKenzie (2001) suggests that multiple definitions of these evaluation performances of performance become entwined in a way in which continues a construction of evaluation in the way they direct, or it encourages people to perform to the construction. Therefore, in relationship to funding, it could be argued that these practitioners’ discourses are used in a *performative way to secure funding*; with the evaluation requirement

seen as a construction of policy and discursive constraint placed on those creating evaluations. However, as I will go on to demonstrate, respondents challenged the need to prove themselves to others; in this context, this related to prison and health workers.

Esther's point about how "good" they are can also be examined alongside Foucault's notion of *truth*. Foucault suggests that truth is a matter of consensus among those who are conformed, and not of correspondence with any objective reality (Joseph, 2004). Therefore, it is not only the company's view of quality that matters, but that of others in the industry; and as such, these views may reflect how this work is reported. Another example can be seen in the following statement made by Simon from TiPP who, when talking about how they commission evaluations, also indicates that what is viewed as "great" practice can vary depending on who undertakes the evaluation and what it is they are looking to identify through the evaluation:

We think it's a great programme, we know it's a great programme, the evaluation said it was a great programme...but when we went and revisited the evidence we said that there are other conclusions you could draw from this too. (Simon, TiPP)

The "other conclusions" I suggest point to the many people, and policy agendas driving their practice, who are interested in the outcomes of this work. Educationalists and prison authorities, directed by criminal justice policy (DfES, 2003), will be looking for the employability and skills "conclusions", and health outcomes will be of interest to health workers directed by health policy (DH, 2002; DH, 2012). Because theatre companies enter the prison environment with a number of issues that they wish to explore through a project (or relatively few, and are guided by the prisoners themselves), it is therefore clear that they need to be aware of their own construction of an evaluation discourse and those of others. Simon's quote demonstrates an understanding of this difference in construction between professionals, which is also reflected by Anna, from Clean Break through her outline of "using evaluation in different ways for different audiences", and Matthew, from Escape Artists, who indicates that their practices focus on "drama skills, [and] the skills to work in difficult and challenging environments to improve literacy and employment prospects" because he is aware of other professionals' interest in the outcomes of their work. When it came to the evaluation reports, all focussed on the rehabilitative benefits of this practice, but the requirement to reflect different constructions of what works can be seen in the way educational outcomes (GE/REC/08, SYN/WN/09, and CB/MO/09), the employable skills (CB/B2L/03 and TP/WTP/05) and the health and wellbeing effects of the work are presented (GE/REC/08 and SYN/NWP/06).

Thus when exploring what evaluation meant to them and their organisations, despite attempts to reject constructions of evaluation reflected within wider government policy discourse and from funders, many comments suggested that evaluation was self-constructed and they adapted and changed these constructions as and when necessary. However, it was also clear

that they were conscious of the need to understand their practice and the impact it had on the people they work with. So, in addition to a discourse around the construction of evaluation that is perpetuated from wider policy discourse, companies also appeared to reject this discourse and adopted a construction of evaluation that assists them to develop and enhance their practice. This is demonstrated in the following statement:

I always think evaluation is partly about looking at your own working practices and thinking about ways in which you can develop, move forward. (Andy, Geese)

In addition, through the use of terms such as “identifying effectiveness”, “the evidence” and “what works”, which were associated with the construction of the *effects* of their practice, an evaluation discourse could also be argued to reflect a self-discipline discourse. By this I mean that the impact of policy level evaluation discourses which required companies to account for their practice may have become internalised to such a degree that individuals begin to lose sight of the value and benefit of evaluation to enhance practice, or the extent to which they are embedded in everyday discourse, as a result of *interpellation*. This discourse could therefore be further explored through an interpretation of Foucault's (1995) work around discipline and power/knowledge. In this work he examines the changes which have taken place in the way that punishment for rule breaking is administered. He indicates that until the 18th century, in order to encourage citizens to obey the law, punishment was dispensed publicly as a warning to others through, for example, public hanging, drawing and quartering. In present day Western cultures, moves are made to reform those who are categorised as criminals, and force them to internalise a disciplinary regime which will regulate their future behaviour. In this way, discipline is internalised by individuals and begins to be seen as *self-discipline*. Although this is an example that relates to criminal activity, Foucault indicates that power, through self-discipline, manifests itself in other areas of people's lives; power is diffused and discourse becomes the way that people internalise that power. This could therefore help to explain some of the differing and multifaceted discourses that circulate among applied theatre companies around the need for evaluation; if theatre companies do not show that their work has a *positive impact*, they are threatened with their funding being withdrawn (a public display of *punishment* as a result of not following the rules). This leads applied theatre practitioners to internalise the need to prove their worth and accept the policy level discourses (which often demand quantifiable outcomes), even if these do not advance or effectively demonstrate the goals of their practice. The expression of these discourses can be seen within company evaluation reports where replication and application of this discourse leads evaluators to quantify the number of people who engaged in the project (SYN/EK/06, TP/BLG/03) or viewed the performance (SYN/FO/09); and throughout interviews where respondents can be seen to talk about quantifying their outcomes through the “audience numbers and how many people did the project and lasted on the project” (Esther), as well as “how many people engaged” in their programmes (Matthew)

Thus a social constructionist understanding of an evaluation discourse begins to highlight how companies and individuals within them, *replicate*, *challenge*, and whilst playing with these, *struggle* with some of the discourses that influence and frame views of evaluation. This discourse and the construction of effectiveness reflect macro level discourses which were seen to request theatre companies to provide evidence of the impact of their practice (ACE, 2006; Woolf, 2004) and also reflect the discourses that these companies expressed in their interviews and evaluations. These constructions, and related discourses, are also evident in other themes and will be discussed in further detail in other areas of this chapter.

5.4.2 Approaches to evaluation

Eight of the company projects examined in this study were evaluated by external evaluators who were either working independently on a freelance basis, or on behalf of another organisation; examples of these include *Reclaim* (CB/WAA/05), *Karin Van Maanen* (CB/MS/10) and the *Anne Peaker Centre* (SYN/EK/06 and SYN/T2N/07). The other projects were evaluated by the theatre company themselves. In the context of this thesis, the issue of who conducts the evaluation is important as it can reveal how discourses influence practice and how findings are reported. Datta (2006), in his view of evaluation, adopts a construction that aligns with the dominant discourse in policy which suggests that various forms of practice are *better* or *worse*. In his work he suggests that external evaluators are independent to the project and are therefore seen as objective and impartial, they often bring specific evaluation methodology expertise and can view and assess situations (and construct their understanding of them) in different ways to those who have worked in the project. However, as they are external to the project, participants may be intimidated by them because they (participants) may question their involvement and it may cause anxiety to project staff who may be defensive or anxious about the outcomes. Internal evaluators, on the other hand, are seen as less objective because they might struggle to stand back from the data and interpret it from a variety of stand points and questions may arise over their vested interests in the project. As Lewis (2001) indicates, they may have less experience in evaluation and as a result their reports may carry “less authority” than an external evaluator’s (p.390).

In addition, the notion of *authority* is an important discursive marker in an analysis that explores these issues from a social constructionist perspective, as it reflects a wider discourse that is reflected in a terrain where *truth claims* are constantly challenged resulting in the use of phrases about experience and *vested interests*, often to discursively discredit different evaluations and the knowledge they create (i.e. those that do not adopt a positivist methodology). The points made by Datta and Lewis are also reflected by Gray and Jenkins (2011) who indicate that the use of external evaluators is useful as it enables evaluators to adopt impartial views of the work being examined; however, a social constructionist view argues that this is unattainable, a point that they also support when they note that external

evaluators can never fully understand the work and may miss some of the subtle issues that only those who carry out the work can understand, leading them to argue that “what counts as knowledge and truth is shaped by one's relationship to it” (p.40). Critics such as Belfiore and Bennett (2007a) have also challenged the use of expert led evaluation in particular when working with close-knit communities such as prisoners, suggesting that when this occurs, participants are not engaged and have little to say about what the evaluation focuses on and also any decisions taken on the basis of the findings. Their view therefore is that these external evaluations may not provide a true picture of what has been achieved because participants may not be fully engaged in the process.

Project evaluations for Geese and TiPP were carried out by Birmingham University and the University of Manchester respectively (see TP/BLG/03, GE/IT/09 and GE/I2I/07). TiPP, whilst being an independent charity, are located within a university, and the use of internal evaluators from this institution could therefore influence the approach and the outcomes. However, Simon was openly aware of their “close relationship” but argued that it had its benefits as well as its drawbacks (drawing on the skills and expertise of others being one of the main ones). As a result of this awareness TiPP have used external evaluators; exemplified in their work with a health worker from Warrington PCT and her involvement with the evaluation process. This engagement with other practitioners outside of their own discipline, in both the work and evaluation approach also reflects the collaboration discourse that has been encouraged through arts and health policy (ACE, 2010; ACE, 2003a; DH, 2006). The value of working with academic partners, and with people from outside of their own discipline, was also mentioned by Andy, as exemplified by the following statement:

So with our Reach and Outreach Resettlement project we sorted out the external evaluation and commissioned Birmingham University forensic psych department to do that, for the Journey Woman project we got some funding so we could independently pay the prison service psychology team... (Andy, Geese)

It was important for Andy that an external evaluation of this work took place, but this was not because Geese did not have the skills to do this (although time was cited as a challenge), what was important was the fact that it was “independent” and divorced from the practitioners, and because it served to “provide an evidence base for the work that [they] are doing.” Andy also indicated that not all of their projects were evaluated, taking a more pragmatic view to defend this he stated that they “would evaluate differently depending on the project...for some projects where there is very simple input; we would use a very simple evaluation.” Anna also indicated that they “do not evaluate everything” because some projects were short term and did not require evaluation, and Esther reflected this view citing time as a factor that prevented them from doing so, and also because they were “more interested in doing good work with offenders that evaluating everything we do”. In these cases, monitoring and output data was gathered which influenced the outcomes in other reports; an example includes the Anne

Peaker evaluation of *Elmina's Kitchen* which draws "research and evaluation undertaken during and shortly after the project [to] provide an insight into the immediate workings of the project and its short term outcomes" (SYN/EK/06, p.8). This was combined with outcomes data from the company's wider portfolio of work to add weight to the longer term outcomes of the work (e.g. other educational work streams, and engagement on writing programmes with the playwright).

Respondents were generally aware of, and understood the need for, and purpose of evaluation. For example, Matthew indicated that their evaluations were for their own benefit and to help them progress their work, stating that they "carry out evaluations to find out how [they] have done, and how much the participants have gained from their engagement". To him and others, such as Esther (see earlier quote where she talks about the multiple perspectives), evaluation was not conducted to appease a funder or meet a policy requirement, but carried out for them to assess their practice and improve their future interventions. In alignment with a discourse that frames evaluation in terms that suggests it is self-driven and not influenced by others, Andy denied any influence from funders or from policy directions, indicating that his "take on evaluations is what [does he] want it to do, rather than what the funder wants it to do".

McAvinchey (2011) in her examination of prison theatre observed that policy level discourses influenced funding and practice, encouraging companies to consider evaluation along predetermined outcomes in a way that would make the outcomes favourable for future funding. However, on the whole the views from respondents interviewed in this thesis suggested that applied theatre practitioners working in prisons are aware of the relationship between favourable outcomes and funding, and although policy level discourses did not overtly influence their decision to evaluate, they can be seen to have some impact on what they did and how they evaluated this work – mainly through the relationship they had with their funders. This can be seen in Simon's interview in which he aligns with different discourses, and I suggest this demonstrates a need to satisfy the discursive pressure exerted via funders and policy directives. His comments in the following extract reflect his understanding and awareness of the changing political environment and that evaluation outcomes may influence future funding:

... the main reasons we evaluate is to prove to...in the language of the feeder, the people that feed us...so they can understand the impact in their language, so that often means that we have to be quite fleet of foot and the master of several languages....

....when I am commissioning someone to do an external evaluation, there is a kind of an implicit agreement within that in that I don't want to hear anything back which is really really massively going to damn the project because if it does that's going to cause me problems with me and my funder and that's going to cause problems between me and the relationship between me and my evaluator and then the evaluator isn't going to get any more work...

...but there is still philosophical tension within that, not philosophical, ethical, because one has to be very careful about how one feeds back to a funder if the evaluation comes back and says these were the major failings of this project and implicitly the evaluators often know that and are aware of that. (Simon, TiPP)

In the first section of this quote Simon is clear about his relationship to the funder and refers to them as the “feeder” which implies he is aware of the role that they have to their *survival*. He also talks about the need to “understand the language” used and how they have been able to “master” this. This use of language reflects McAvinchey’s point about the policy influence on practice, and when considered alongside the second statement, suggests that Simon is working within and through policy requirements (and the ambiguity contained within them) to satisfy the company’s, the policy maker’s and the funder’s needs. He is therefore very clear about the way funding can influence future funding as well as the need to ensure that evaluations meet the needs and interests of a variety of parties. When these comments are examined in the wider context, I suggest that they do not indicate that evaluators are expected to make things up to secure future funding, but that they reflect the argument that a specific type of language needs to be used so others can understand the outcomes of the work. So, policy, guidance documents and funders may request outcomes that are quantifiable, and this can be provided, but the theatre company is also able speak of effectiveness in other ways – that may also include a focus on the less quantifiable outcomes that focus on the affective realm of experience in an applied theatre project. This point is emphasised by Simon when he highlights the demands placed on TiPP to provide outcomes that would be acceptable to health workers and the YOTs, further reflecting the pressures that those funding applied theatre practice place on theatre companies to prove the effects of their work. In an evaluation of *Blagg!* which was funded by the Manchester YOT and the Bury YOT, Simon reports how the evaluation was influenced by those involved in the evaluation, (an evaluator from Bury supported by a criminologist from Lancaster University):

The two YOTs had commissioned it because they had a new manager come in and they wanted to carry on using the Blagg! programme, so they wanted something which says that this was a great programme. (Simon, TiPP)

By considering this statement juxtaposed next to the others made earlier in this interview, this further supports the argument that applied theatre workers working in prison contexts are influenced by funders and government policy, even if they may not overtly state this to be so. Through a power discourse, policy informs funding which ultimately influences how the work is carried out, how it is evaluated and how the outcomes are communicated. This ability to work through the needs of the funder is also exemplified by Andy who indicated that he would be happy to evaluate according to how the funder wanted them to, only if it met with both their needs:

If a PCT came to me and said they want to commission a year-long project in one of the local prisons around mental wellbeing for guys serving four years plus sentences I would be really interested in a project like that, and I would be completely happy to evaluate that in whatever way they wanted...
(Andy, Geese).

Other respondents were also aware of the relationship between evaluations, them and their funder, Matthew referred to it as “a close and mutually benefitting” one, Esther indicated that “evaluation is linked to funding, so [they] do what is required” of them, and Anna stated that they “comply with requirements” as long as it suited their needs. Again, none of the respondents indicated that they would choose an approach to evaluation that was in conflict with their ethics or the purpose of the project.

5.4.3 Evaluation Methods

Evaluation documents examined predominantly utilised qualitative methodologies to assess the outcomes of the project. Appendix four summarises the methods used in each report and shows that evaluations were mainly carried out using questionnaires, interviews, feedback from those taking part and feedback from professionals who were working with them, and their own observations notes. Researcher interpretations and the experiences of practitioners and participants can yield rich and complex understandings of practice in context; however, as Rossi (2004) notes, interview and observation data are often used without rigorous analysis and all too often participants’ statements can be uncritically taken to correspond to reality; evaluation reports can therefore blur the boundary between research and advocacy. Quantitative measures, which mainly focused on recording the number of participants who engaged with the intervention, were rarely used other than for monitoring purposes. In addition to qualitative and quantitative approaches, Butterfoss and Bernard (2000, 1998), indicate that evaluation methods should also be considered in the categories of *obtrusive* and *unobtrusive* measures. Obtrusive measures are those that are completed in the open with direct knowledge of participants (e.g. interviews); unobtrusive measures are those that are done without the direct awareness of participants but this does not mean that the participants do not have prior knowledge of them or have not given their consent (e.g. direct observation of change to behaviour). Again, reflecting policy evaluation discourse, evaluations that took place later in the period of examination can be seen to be influenced by policy directives which required applied theatre companies to increasingly utilise quantitative approaches, compared to those evaluations earlier in the period under examination (Woolf, 2004; ACE 2006). The notions of qualitative and quantitative evidence can also be seen to be used discursively in these evaluation reports in a way which reflects a polemic of *good* and *bad* and one that is *given authority* and one that is *apologised for*. By comparing these, with the discourses at the macro level, the authority given to quantitative measures can be argued to have arisen out of the discourse in policy which favours *cost effective* measures, and even *measurement* itself. Engagement with dominant discourses was expressed through a belief in a hierarchy of evidence, where interviewees such as Esther indicated that she felt that

quantitative methods were “better at identifying what works” because funders and policy makers requested them.

For the purpose of this analysis and discussion, the methods will not be grouped according to qualitative or quantitative methods, or into obtrusive (interactive) and unobtrusive (non-interactive) ones because many evaluations adopted a mixed method approach. Moreover, an analysis of the *strengths* and *weaknesses* of the different methodologies would simply serve to engage in a discursive practice that undermines one approach and play up others; however, the use of different methods will be explored alongside their relationship to macro level discourses.

In response to macro level discourses that increasingly favoured *measurement* and notions of evidence that was quantifiable (i.e. PAT 10, 1999; ACE, 2000a; ACE, 2006; DH 2004a) all projects adopted post-event evaluation measures, mainly consisting of questionnaires and interviews, to gain both an understanding, and seek to prove, the impact of their work. This can be seen in Clean Break’s, *Miss Spent* project evaluation (CB/MS/10), which invited the women that took part to engage in self-assessment questionnaires; these were followed with individual interviews. Interviews were also conducted with education and prison staff so the impact of the project could be assessed from different perspectives. Synergy’s playwriting course evaluation also invited feedback from prisoners through questionnaires and interviews, as well as feedback from audience members via questionnaires (SYN/NWP/06, SYN/FO/09, and SYN/TOU/09). TiPP and Geese used questionnaires and interviews in their projects, but went further by creating case studies through key informant interviews. An example of this is Geese’s *Reconnect* evaluation (GE/REC/08) which includes quotes to illustrate the participants’ perception of the programme. However, Rossi (2004) is critical of these approaches to evaluation indicating that such approaches can often be better described as “satisfaction reports rather than evaluations”, because they “capture little more than participants’ immediate reactions to the experience” (p.87).

The use of more detailed evaluation tools can be seen in evaluations of work that took place towards the end of the period under examination. These include case study approaches used by TiPP (TP/WTP/05) and Clean Break (CB/MS/10), and pre and post programme psychometric testing by Geese (GE/IT/09). This demand for deeper and more detailed evaluations was evident in discourse developments identified in ACE policy, which became increasingly focused on evaluation encouraging companies to move away from the simple monitoring approaches that they had previously engaged in (Woolf, 2004; ACE, 2006). Moreover, the references to impact discourses in these evaluation documents is highlighted through the citing of “longitudinal studies”, “in-depth case studies” and psychometric testing and marks an understanding on behalf of the evaluators that they are responding to these demands for quantifiable evidence. This also appeared to have a detrimental effect in some

cases where the evaluators gave more attention to the quantifiable outcomes at the expense of the qualitative ones. This was particularly noticeable in Clean Break's *Missing Out* project report (CB/MO/09). One of the aims of the project was to encourage behaviour change and the report appendices include a list of comments gained from prisoners via a feedback questionnaire which indicate that change had occurred for them. These included comments such as, "it was really good and helped me to be confident", "today I see what my mother went through" and "today has been an eye opener for me. I now know what I'm going to do when I leave prison". However, the evaluation document focuses on the measurable outcomes gained through the quantitative data (i.e. the number of prisoners who saw the play, the number who participated in a workshop, and the professionals and prison staff who saw the play). Therefore, the desire to demonstrate the effects of this project in this evaluation can be seen to reflect an evaluation discourse that focuses on public accountability and a desire to demonstrate that this works.

In other examples, contradictions appeared between how respondents talked about their effectiveness. Some indicated that case studies provided clear evidence of their practice and they were confident that these provided clear evidence of the effects of their work, but at other times they were unsure about the quality of this and expressed a lack of confidence in that evidence. This can be seen in the following example where Esther's comments move from a focus on the demands placed on theatre companies for quantifiable evidence (and the difficulty they experience in obtaining that evidence), to a rejection of the discourse that requires them to evaluate using quantifiable measures, before returning to a view that indicates their desire to record their outcomes:

yes, they ask for more [evaluation] if you haven't given them enough obviously it's quite hard to asses to evaluate... it's hard to do in-depth evaluation, it's easy to evaluate a project on one level but in-depth and long term evaluation is kind of more interesting...obviously statistics can be manipulated, I heard a ridiculous guy say that 70/80% of the people they work with don't reoffend ...I'm thinking that's complete shit, they probably didn't if you did your evaluation three weeks after the project. (Esther, Synergy)

...loads of people go back to prison because it's so hard to change, it's hard for me to change....so many people I work with have got such terrible trauma....we are trying to rebuild things that should have been in place in childhood. (Esther, Synergy)

*... to our funders we do reports, sometimes I write articles about our work not very often,... not really to tell you the truth....
...an academic said they would get all our work so it won't disappear...because you get these new companies coming up acting like they know everything....sometimes I can't be bothered, I just want to be doing the work... (Esther, Synergy)*

This is an example that also shows how the views around evaluation are far from cohesive and disjunctions can be identified within the various discourses identified at the meso and

micro level. Several discourses work in the construction of evaluation, and at times these discourses are in conflict with one another resulting in both challenge and confusion; however, they also provide us with an understanding of the interaction with those discourses identified at the macro level. Fairclough suggests that a lack of cohesiveness generally occurs where there is some discontinuity and change taking place; the clash of discourses is not one which all individuals will notice since it has become naturalised, but it becomes very marked in discourses which are in the process of change. This change could be attributed to the rhetoric of policy impacting on discourses around the need for evaluation, a point which is explored further below.

In what could be viewed as a rejection of a policy evaluation discourse that demands quantifiable outcomes, companies were also seen to challenge what constitutes an evaluation and how they can account for the impact of their work in other ways, which were more meaningful to them. Written questionnaires were used by many of these companies (examples include CB/WAA/05, GE/121/07, and CB/BL/03) and, as Butterfoss *et al.* (2000) suggest are useful to an evaluation because questions can be answered anonymously, allowing the respondent time to think before answering and they are relatively easy to complete. However, the author of Clean Break's *Women and Anger* evaluation (CB/WAA/05) notes some limitations of these when used with prisoners, indicating that some "questions may not be answered", and participants may not always be able to express themselves on paper "due to higher rates of low literacy in prisons" (p.5). This issue was identified within the feedback when "over 50% indicated that they wanted less homework, paperwork and questions." (p.6) This point is supported by the wider evidence on literacy levels amongst prisoners which indicate that up to 50% of prisoners have difficulties writing, and 33% are unable to read (Anne Peaker Centre, 2007). However, the evaluators of *Women and Anger* demonstrated that it was possible to overcome some of the difficulties associated with low literacy by providing participants with additional support that enabled them to complete activities such as workbooks and self-assessment evaluations. These reports can therefore be seen to reflect a wider policy discourse that gives greater authority and status on evaluation findings that are more measurable. However, by indicating that interviews are far more useful with these groups because "they overcome issues of low literacy, difficulty in expression and possible confusion over questions" (p.4), they also engage in a debate that challenges this demand in policy to quantify outcomes. This is also reflected in comments made by respondents in the interviews carried out for this study; Andy exemplifies this by arguing that:

"The challenge is trying to show your worth using figures – the best evidence is what the participants tell us, but funders aren't really interested in those aspects" (Andy, Geese)

I'm reminded about working with a medium secure forensic hospital...we were working alongside health partners but we were like, 'what sort of

evaluation should we be doing' and they were like 'what would you like to do?' ... they wanted more quantitative methods, even if they aren't the best approach. It's what we're encouraged to do. (Andy, Geese)

Therefore, an evaluation discourse that requires practitioners to measure and quantify the impact of their practice can be seen to be both replicated and challenged by practitioners both within the interviews carried out for this study, and within these companies evaluation documents, further demonstrating how this approach to understanding *what works* needs attention and a more useful way of understanding the effects or outcomes of practice.

Evaluations carried out by Geese and TiPP included examples of their questionnaires or interview schedules used to gather data and were useful to this chapter's analysis (GE/RE/08, GE/IT/09, and TP/WTP/05). The questionnaires asked participants what they found *most useful* and *least useful* about the programme, but in a manner that reflects a move in the field to focus on the *affective realm* of practice, they also include questions that aim to understand what participants "felt had the biggest impact" upon them, their "feelings about the future", how they feel they can "better cope with their new skills" and questions that related to their reintegration into the community (GE/RE/08). In Geese's *Reconnect* report the post-programme interview also asks participants to report what their expectations were on the programme before they started; a question which reflects the project's use of the trans-theoretical model of change (Prochaska and Diclemente, 1983) and enables the participant to consider the changes they have made. However, other than a few sentences which discuss some the changes that took place, the evaluators do not discuss these changes in much detail, which further supports the argument that the evaluators appear to be influenced by the policy evaluation discourse that favours quantifiable outputs.

Before and after evaluation designs, where the evaluator collects data before and shortly after engagement, were utilised in all of the evaluations examined. Using a combination of qualitative and quantitative measures, they were showed the immediate changes that took place. However, a focus on reporting the quantifiable outcomes, rather than discussing the non-measurable outcomes of the work on individuals, further supports the influence of a power discourse that is perpetuated through policy and funders that privileges one approach over others and encourages practitioners to adopt quantifiable approaches, even if they do not adequately demonstrate the benefits of this work for participants. In the evaluation of TiPP's *Blagg!* (TP/BLG/03), the evaluators used questionnaires and qualitative interviews with young people and the youth offending team before, during and after each programme to gather feedback and assess impact of the programme on offending behaviour. In an attempt to demonstrate the transformations for participants, the data was paired so a participant's response prior to engagement was linked to their post engagement response. This is a useful approach that does not feature in other evaluations, such as those by Synergy and Clean Break, where it is unclear where improvements were made (examples include SYN/FO/09

and CB/MO/09). In addition, an interesting feature of the approach taken by the evaluators of *Blagg!* was the way in which they linked engagement on the programme to reoffending; commenting on other external factors that may have had an impact on the success of the project. McAvinchey (2011) indicates that identifying a link between practice and a corresponding reduction in crime is difficult and as such theatre in prison practice is often referred to in terms of the predetermined outcomes. It could therefore be argued that in using this approach the evaluators of *Blagg!* may have attempted to *fit* their outcomes to what was expected from them in the what works and accountability discourse embedded in policy.

Geese also employed before and after evaluation designs in the forms of psychometric testing and other change measurement tools (GE/REC/08, GE/I2I/07 and GE/IT/09). The use of these are supported by the literature which indicate that the use of psychological measurement tools for example, provide the *most objective* means of gathering evaluation information (Lewis, 2001). Once again, the notion of which methods are given authority by the dominant discourse can be seen in their evaluation of *Reconnect* (GE/REC/08), where psychometric tests were used resulting in “significant changes observed from pre-treatment to post-treatment in terms of self-efficacy, motivation to change and improved confidence in their skills, most notably around social skills, dealing with authority, alternatives to aggression and self-control” (p.2). The use of the term *significant* is a discursive marker that could be argued to signify the evaluator’s adoption of an evaluation discourse that favours and upholds *quantifiable* and *sustainable* outcomes. This evaluation was carried out by the University of Birmingham; by adopting techniques that correspond to a wider discourse around evaluation, and using language and techniques that reflect those discourses and interventions that are used by health workers,⁴⁸ the employment of them here suggests that the evaluators are aware of health and arts policy discourse that encourages those using applied theatre to collaborate with other professional disciplines and adopt evaluation practices in an attempt to demonstrate *what works*.

A chronological examination of the evaluations suggests that controlled before and after studies gained a prominent position in the evaluation of applied theatre interventions (examples include CB/MS/10, GE/I2I/07, SYN/WN/09, and TP/WTP/05) and align with the corresponding increase in policy discourse that required practitioners within the arts, health and criminal justice to consider quantitative approaches to evaluation (ACE, 2003b; DH, 2004a; Home office, 2005). As a result, applied theatre practitioners may have been influenced by the needs expressed by funders to replicate these discourses in their evaluation practice because it helps to demonstrate the effects of the work and account for the use of public funds to those working in health or criminal justice system.

48 Other popular scales include the Beck Depression Anxiety and Hopelessness Inventory (Beck and Fernandez, 1998), but others tools are generally designed and used according to the needs of the health project.

Therefore, in what can be seen as an attempt to challenge the authority of quantitative evaluation techniques, and a discourse that favours the use of methods associated with them, evaluators have also recorded and reported on the observations made by drama workers, education staff and prison officers. Geese did this through wing reports and the checking of behaviour following the intervention (GE/I2I/07), Clean Break project staff kept diaries during the implementation of *Missing Out*, recording details of changes they had observed (CB/MO/09), in Synergy's projects, prison staff were asked to comment and keep track of prisoners' behaviour before and after the intervention (see SYN/NWP/06 and SYN/EK/06), and during the *Miss Spent* project evaluators asked prison officers to make a note of behaviour change following the intervention (CB/MS/10). However, in the examples where prison officers were asked to assist by recording their observations, the level of engagement was low; for example, *Miss Spent* evaluators note that the prison officers did not return their post intervention questionnaires. This difficulty in engaging other professionals in their work is reflected by research with prison staff who viewed these activities as an additional burden and "outside of their contracted professional remit" (De Viggiani, 2006, p.310). Furthermore, Gillham (2008) suggests that without clear measures, these observations can become highly subjective; so in a terrain where the macro level discourse favour objective and measureable outputs to demonstrate what works, less value may be placed on the use of this data and they may subsequently be considered of less importance amongst other practitioners who work with the same group.

A key concern with New Labour policy, identified in the examination of policy level discourses in the previous chapter, was that it was often produced without the needs or outcomes of practice in mind, often because policy makers lacked evidence to inform policy (Greener, 2004). The examination of evaluations in this thesis indicate that applied theatre work in prisons had an impact on prisoners' health and wellbeing; however, as Thompson (1999a) points out, many "significant moments" (p.6) in prison theatre have not been documented, and because evaluators may not evaluate all areas of their work, or utilise approaches that do not measure effectiveness in quantifiable terms (resulting in outcomes not being reported in terms that reflect the dominant discourse), the benefits of applied theatre practice to prisoners' health and wellbeing may be ignored or discounted by policy makers. This presents a *Catch-22* situation: if practitioners are not recording and sharing their practice, how are policymakers able to develop policy based on evidence? These concerns have prompted researchers such as McAvinchey (2011) to call for applied theatre practitioners in prisons to routinely evaluate their work and share this with others. Suggesting that the field needs to consider alternative approaches to what is considered *successful*, and that this focus on the *business* of arts encourages people to adopt measurement tools that detract from the impact of the work on individuals. However, others such as Belfiore and Bennett (2010) argue for a move away from the use of "reflective practitioner and interpretive social science approaches" because of the difficulty in generalising from findings that relate to specific contexts and their "subsequent

lack of credibility for policy making audiences” (p.126). For applied theatre practitioners, allocating resources to evaluation that has cross disciplinary relevance can also mean time away from artistic development. Reflective practitioner methods may be preferred by practitioners because they can be embedded in creative practice, but their non-discursive outcomes make them less useful for contributing to discussions of use or value across the different audiences that have a vested interest in practice. However, in support of dissemination and sharing the *effects* of work, Taylor (2003) indicates that evaluation reports have a *pragmatic benefit*: they can solicit knowledge about what was successful in their planning, and what was not, and can assist in future design and implementation.

The drive in policy for a better understanding of the longer term effects of practice and how these could be *effectively measured* is reflected within reports and in respondent interviews. A key issue of concern in many evaluations was the degree to which evaluators could be confident that the changes identified were sustainable and not short lived. Some reports were open and accepted that the weakness in their evaluation lay in not understanding the long-term effects (examples include TP/BLG/03 and GE/REC/08). Furthermore, longitudinal approaches were not used in any of the reports examined in this study. Supporting the need for long term evaluations and methods that can measure changes and transformations, Etherton and Prentki (2006) argue that, “the immediate impact of a applied theatre project may be measurable... But are there also alterations in attitude and behaviour that are registered in the long term, sometimes over years and generations? Assessing this longer term impact of applied theatre differs from concepts of monitoring and evaluation, which are an immediate assessment of achievement; [with] the need for more sophisticated tools of measurement at different stages in a prolonged intervention into human development.” (p.140). Practitioners such as Paul Heritage and People’s Palace Theatre working with the State Prison Administration in Sao Paulo, Brazil, has been able to work with those in a position to make a change, leading the theatre process to become instrumental in achieving an impact in terms of altered behaviour and changed social conditions (Heritage, 2004). In a similar way, practitioners interviewed in this study were able to demonstrate long term associations with particular prisoners and prisons. Esther indicated how Synergy Theatre kept in touch with people after release, and recalls how she bumped into a former project participant who she noticed had put weight on, demonstrating that the intervention had a longer term effect on his reduced drug use. Etherton and Prentki (2006) also note how TiPP has developed successful long-term relations with prisons in its region that “transcend the temporary ‘highs’ of one-off student projects”, referring to the successful long-term relationship between David Bromley (at Bretton Hall) and the West Yorkshire Police and other Prisons (p.145). However, Balfour (2009) indicates that in general, longitudinal studies are rarely done with prisoners because they are a transient population that are difficult to track. Other reasons for not carrying out longer term evaluations included project funding that did not include a budget for evaluation, applied theatre practitioners were often restricted in the

amount of time they had with prisoners so more engaging methods of evaluation could not be considered, and in many cases prisoners were subject to short-term sentences and maintaining contact with them upon release was difficult. Almost all of the evaluation reports examined in this thesis make a recommendation to track prisoners' progress post-intervention (e.g. SYN/NWP/06, GE/IT/09, and CB/B2L/03). This need for long-term evaluation for arts interventions is supported by Belfiore and Bennett (2007a) who argue that knowing what continues to have an effect is one of the ways that true impact can be effectively measured; this also enables an understanding of the other issues that impact on a participant's development and wellbeing. The use of longer-term evaluation also satisfies policy level evaluation discourse which calls for, and favours, evidence that demonstrates lasting change. However, Balfour (2009) is cautious of this demand for longitudinal studies, and although suggesting they are useful, indicates that they are also time-consuming and feel intrusive to participants. Moreover, if the goal of prison rehabilitation is to prevent recidivism, it is natural that if this were to be truly *effective*, a former prisoner would want to break free of the *prisoner* or *offender* label which would be difficult to do if they are maintaining contact with organisations through a longitudinal study. Clean Break in their use of self-completed diaries (CB/MS/10), argue that this approach "helps maintain contact in a nonintrusive manner"; however, the report authors openly suggest that despite trying to maintain contact with participants, one of the limitations of the evaluation was "not having the ability to track the women on a longer term basis". Whether this is something that they genuinely feel demonstrates *success* for participants is not discussed, and again reflects a policy discourse which calls for arts workers to demonstrate the longer term effects of their work (Woolf, 2004).

5.5 Health discourses

In this analysis, theatre companies could be seen to actively engage with education and health policy discourse to construct an understanding of the health outcomes of their work; however, it was clear that rather than being consistent, as policy discourse altered, so did their adoption and rejection of them. All projects used applied theatre practice as a tool to engage with prisoners in discussions about offending behaviour, and as a result, the primary objectives focussed around education and general skills development. Evaluations reported on positive behaviour change for participants and these were framed around an education discourse that connects personal change for the prisoner with increased education and employability skills. Examples include Synergy's playwriting course which resulted in the plays *Tales of the Unexpected* and *Fallout* (SYN/TOU/09 and SYN/FO/09). These projects were delivered with prisoners providing skills in writing, understanding situations and how they can develop themselves outside of prison, and reflected the skills development aspect of criminal justice policy, so prisoners could gain employment upon release (Exworthy, Wilson and Forrester, 2011). The outcomes are referred to predominantly in terms of the "employment opportunities afforded to prisoners" (SYN/TOU/09, p.2), which reflects the macro level discourses around public accountability, investment and return. By addressing

those issues that motivate offenders to commit crime, the projects enabled former offenders to make a positive contribution in society through employment, which ultimately may reduce their potential to reoffend. Reducing reoffending saves public resources through a reduction in prison care costs and as such many reports focused on an evaluation discourse around behaviour change which is linked to both an educational and a health discourse.

Through discursive frameworks that reflected the rhetoric of change in policy, many were able to identify how their practice resulted in health outcomes for prisoners. Anna indicated that the greatest benefit to participants in Clean Break projects was “increased wellbeing”, a point reflected in similar terms by Matthew and Esther; however, Andy and Simon were able to extend this understanding in more complex ways:

Health is more than just the physical, and we know that. So, we look at improved behaviour change around issues such as drug use, violence and other relationships. (Andy, Geese)

We are very aware of the health benefits. We have worked with people with personality disorders in the community; identify issues around health communication and positive message around health to the inmate population. (Simon, TiPP)

Although none of the projects were commissioned by health organisations or included a primary aim to address health issues, many of the project outcomes can be viewed as health ones; these include the impact on prisoners’ drug taking that may contribute to their offending behaviour (SYN/FO/09, SYN/T2N/07, and TP/WTP/05) and work that examines relationships, self-esteem and confidence (CB/WAA/05, GE/IT/09 and SYN/TOU/09). The interaction and contact point between health and evaluation discourses represented a strengthening influence of health policy on their practice. In keeping with cognitive behavioural approaches that are frequently used in prison theatre, all theatre companies could be seen to use practice as a way of reinforcing ‘pro-social’ behaviours (Goldstein *et al.*, 2004). All of the evaluations examined in this study contained evidence of health and wellbeing outcomes for participants; however, only two reported these as *health outcomes*: Clean Break’s *Barriers to Learning* (CB/B2L/03) and Geese’s *Inside Talk* programme (GE/IT/09). The Geese programme used theatre performance, experiential exercises, skills practice role-plays and metaphors through mask to improve listening and speaking skills for offenders, and particularly *hard to reach* offenders who the report authors suggest “find formal courses difficult”. However, despite these clear health outcomes which reflected a health discourse, at no point in their report do they refer to this as a *health outcome*, and at no point are the terms *health* or *wellbeing* used when referring to the aims or objectives of the project. Whereas, the use of the terms “improved health and wellbeing” feature in Clean Break’s *Barriers to Learning* project (CB/B2L/03). Failing to mention health outcomes does not mean that evaluators have been remiss in their write up of the project outcomes: evaluators cannot include everything within their reports and have to be selective in what they include; however, it could suggest that

currently there is no health readership or audience for this work. Applying points raised in McAvinchey's (2011) work, this could add weight to her view that government, through funding and other discourses within policy, controls and influences applied theatre practice as well as how it is evaluated. Thus, unanticipated outcomes, such as health benefits would not be explicitly reported because practitioners are encouraged only to report on how they are successful in addressing their stated and predetermined aims.

Other ways a health discourse is represented in these documents can be identified in Geese's focus on self-efficacy in their projects *Inside Talk* (GE/IT/09) and *Insult to Injury* (GE/I2I/07). Self-efficacy is a theory originating in psychology that has been adopted by many public health promotion practitioners in behaviour change programmes. Originally developed by Albert Bandura, and arising out of his social learning theory, self-efficacy beliefs are said to determine how people think, feel and motivate themselves and behave, (Bandura, 1994, p.73). Bandura argues that by having an increased sense of self-efficacy and confidence, people are able to develop ideas about what they are capable of, create plans to achieve this, and anticipate possible outcomes of these actions or behaviours. The use by Geese of an approach that is considered credible by health workers again reflects the adoption of a discourse, which is supportive of both the collaborative discourse and the evaluation discourse, that calls on applied theatre practitioners to use approaches which are considered better at quantifying the outcomes of their work. Many applied theatre practitioners also adopt a cognitive behavioural approach to their work (as do public health promotion practitioners), using methods to understand changes in attitudes, beliefs and behaviours amongst their target group through measurement scales developed in the field of psychology. Other examples where health outcomes are reported and can therefore be seen to reflect dominant health discourses include Clean Break's *Women and Anger* project (CB/WAA/05), in which the author indicates that Kolb's *Cycle of Learning* was employed to encourage behaviour change, and Clean Break's *Missing Out* report (CB/MO/09) and Geese's *Reconnect* report (GE/REC/08), both of which refer to the *trans-theoretical model* developed by Prochaska and DiClemente (1983). However, that is not to suggest that applied theatre practitioners simply adopt these because they conform with policy discourse or the requirements of their funders, these models provide applied theatre practitioners and health workers with a structured way of addressing health issues, and provide not only quantifiable measures of the outcomes of their work, but also qualitative ones that help understand how the practice affects their experience in the programme.

The similarities between the goals and approaches used by applied theatre and public health practitioners is clearer within discourses identified within New Labour policy where different policy areas were required to refer to each other. In the previous chapter I highlight how education and employment policy influenced the development of different justice policy strands and through discourses of power, have led to prison theatre companies to adopt

discourse from these policy areas in their practice. This has happened mainly through a language that addresses their needs. The interview extracts below demonstrate how education practice that reflects a developed policy area led companies to speak confidently about the impact of their practice on offenders' education and employment opportunities; but their understanding of how their practice influenced health outcomes was made less confidently:

I could certainly articulate a health outcome from that work, in the way that drama can always help to address health issues, but it's not one of our primary objectives...

...the work is often focussed around education outcomes and moving women into improved employment opportunities, moving women away from crime...so we talk about self-confidence...which is health related. (Anna, Clean Break)

We think that our work increases people's sense of self-efficacy and self-worth and their abilities to make decisions about their own lives...

...I'm sure you are aware that providing people with qualifications to help them get work is a good thing because work has been shown to assist people with reintegration. It helps with a sense of wellbeing and purpose...so anything you do could contribute to somebody finding a role in society is a good thing... (Andy, Geese)

References to education and employability highlight how theatre companies engage in policy level discourses that require them to demonstrate an economic impact through their work. Engagement with health policy discourse here also suggests that applied theatre companies are able to interact and articulate the relationship of their work with these wider policy discourses. The health and wellbeing outcomes of TiPP's practice is neatly summarised by Simon when he talks about the value of applied theatre practice in prisons:

there is an intrinsic value and an extrinsic value - intrinsically, implicitly all the work that we do can have a positive impact on mental health issues... but you can also use arts based approaches very explicitly to tackle very explicit issues...so everything from sexual health, to alcohol and drug use to issues around healthy lifestyles...you could probably tackle most issues using drama. (Simon, TiPP)

The use of a health discourse in the construction of evaluation was also evident in Esther's outline of the outcomes in another one of their projects entitled *Memory Portal*. Dance was included in the rehearsals to encourage participants to consider the impact of physical activity, leading Esther to conclude that the impact on "their body was really powerful". In another project working with prisoners on lifetime sentences, Esther indicated that before engaging with the project a participant, who was a former drug user, reported that he felt he was "buried" and that the intervention had helped him "dig himself out" of this situation and ultimately improved his health and wellbeing.

As mentioned earlier, health discourses which were clearly articulated by respondents in interview may not have been reflected in evaluation reports because of the intended audience for the documents. This issue of how respondents speak about health and why these discourses are excluded from reports (when health outcomes are present) is further exemplified by interviewees when they outline the health outcomes in their work. Andy indicated that Geese struggled with this because it was assumed (by prison and health workers) that “theatre practice should always focus on behaviour change”; and when they had worked alongside health workers he commented that “they [health workers] were fixated on measurable outcomes”, and that qualitative measures were not valued by them. This highlighted a potential lack of understanding between the aims and goals of public health promotion and theatre practitioners, and was a point supported by Andy who indicated that this lack of understanding between the goals of different professionals from different disciplines was a mutual one. Moreover, he was surprised by the interest health workers had in their work, especially because they just received a public health award.

They don't necessarily either look outside of what they do or...they are just not necessarily aware of us because we don't have a very high profile within the health sector, despite the fact that we have just received an award from the Royal Society of Public Health. (Andy, Geese)

In this case the award represented external recognition for the innovative approaches they used to address the public health needs of prisoners.

Conflict and confusion between discourses here could also be understood in CDA using the Foucauldian concept of *discursive struggle*. Laclau and Mouffe (in Jørgensen and Phillips, 2009) suggest that “discourse constructs the social world in meaning, and that meaning can never be permanently fixed” (p.6). As indicated earlier in this chapter, discourses are constantly being transformed through contact with other discourses and this presents a *discursive struggle*. In many areas theatre companies respond to evaluation discourses set at the political level which require companies to measure the effects of their practice to justify the investment in them, by both indicating a desire to use *quantitative methods*, which theatre companies are told through policy discourse are *better*, and in their rejection of this discursive pressure. This could be carried out by comparing these perceptions and social constructions with those of funders or staff from health and prison, and would have enabled an interpretation of these effects in different ways. Neither perception is more real or meaningful, but an examination of the different ways that practitioners within these disciplines interact and respond to these discourses would therefore be worthy of further study.

The interviewee comments also express a wider discourse in which health is considered a *superior* discipline. For example, in many health discourses, evaluation and evidence has led to the concept of *Evidence Based Practice* (EBP). As Mantazoukas and Watkinson (2008) in their examination of the discourses around EBP indicate, EBP is portrayed as a “rational,

moral, right and superior decision-making framework” (p.131) and therefore in healthcare, anything other than EBP is “irrational, immoral, wrong and inferior practice”. Health discourse has increasingly focused on EBP, and in doing so suggests that any practice not based on evidence is “invalid, unwarrantable and unsafe”. Furthermore, the term *evidence* is contested both within the health profession and outside of it, with a number of variations vying with one another for legitimisation (Springett, 2001); reflecting the earlier debate around the authority given to various evaluation practices. Recognition of this discourse is reflected through comments made by respondents in this study where they replicate a discourse around what constitutes evidence, frequently using language in binary opposition to reflect their approach and what they feel the approaches of health workers consist of:

....we say we are just doing arts projects or being involved in learning projects. It has benefits and we are trying to measure those benefits...they are not short term medically provable benefits ...you know we are not trying to cure someone of schizophrenia...we are not clinicians...we are interested in looking at the wellbeing of clients over a course of a lifetime...and because they are looking for short term measurable outcomes we don't really fit the bill.... (Matthew, Escape Artists)

We are not health specialists so we haven't articulated the work in that way, but it probably would be a good thing to broaden and look at it like that. (Anna, Clean Break)

In the first statement, Matthew suggests that there is a substantial difference between their practices and those of health workers. By reflecting and making comparisons between applied theatre practitioners and health promotion workers he suggests that the approaches to evaluation are very different, and perhaps that the outcomes cannot be compared (a further rejection of an evaluative discourse that focuses on measurable outcomes, and a call for a focus on the affective realm). The assumption that health outcomes are short (or immediate) is an interesting discursive dismissal in that it again positions health and arts practice on a continuum and adopts terms from a health policy discourse that favours long term impact. Furthermore, the reference to health in terms that align with a medical perspective of health suggests that this company, and other theatre companies, view themselves in different ways to that of health workers. This indicates that despite policy level discourses encouraging health practice and collaboration (ACE, 2003a; DH, 2002), a lack of acknowledgment between the disciplines of their differences may prevent this from happening.

Reflecting concepts around the social impact of the arts in the work of Belfiore and Bennett (2007a, 2007b, 2008), applied theatre workers can be seen to adopt a discourse that considers evaluation methods and evidence in a broader hierarchical and epistemological order which accepts certain types of knowledge as legitimate and others as illegitimate: qualitative evidence is positioned as inferior compared to quantitative evidence which is given authority. But evidence in the research literature suggests that these views are perpetuated by an evaluation discourse that has been influenced by disciplines such as health, where

evidence based practice has been developed for a much longer period. This point is supported by Mantazoukas (2008) who suggests that within health, qualitative studies, professional experience and personal preferences are contrasted to systematic reviews, randomised control studies and quantitative research studies, where the “latter are privileged as legitimate types of evidence and the former are found wanting or invalid types of evidence” (p.133). This adoption of an evaluation discourse that is influenced by health policy and discourse, and encourages people to consider knowledge gained using qualitative and quantitative approaches as legitimate and illegitimate, is reflected in the comments made by Esther:

we use qualitative and quantitative methods when we do our evaluations, but qualitative only for monitoring really, we don't do it as good as you guys from health - but that's where the evidence is really at, that's what policymakers and funders want. I just guess it's better evidence at showing what we do. (Esther, Synergy)

In Esther's quote, she makes reference to “showing” what they do and this reflected other respondents views about which issues made it into evaluations. By using language that is familiar to those within health, Esther is aware that the outcomes of this work could therefore be better understood by health practitioners and this understanding could encourage further collaboration. Debates within the literature also comment on whether only planned outcomes, or if all, even unplanned, outcomes should be reported in an evaluation document (Gray and Jenkins, 2011). In the evaluation documents by TiPP and Geese, evaluators appeared to be aware of different policy discourses and were therefore able to use a discursive style of language that referred to health and education outcomes, reflecting the need to demonstrate the wider impact of the work.

5.6 Partnerships and collaboration discourses

Policy discourses identified in the previous chapter highlighted the government's desire to support work in different policy strands such as health and education using the arts, and that this should occur through partnership and collaboration (ACE, 2003a; ACE, 2013). The evaluations examined in this study indicate that collaborations with health workers had taken place in some projects; for example, Geese's *Inside Talk* programme engaged the support of education and prison officers who completed observation records; and collaboration between education staff was particularly evident across the Synergy playwriting projects; in the evaluation of *Fallout* (SYN/FO/09), the report states that this project became one of Synergy's “most successful” projects due to the support from staff at HMP Brixton. They report that around 70 members of staff attended the performances and assisted in the participatory opportunities, which for them, demonstrated their “commitment to the project” and “belief in rehabilitation work with prisoners” (p.5).

When talking about partnerships with other workers within the prison system, theatre practitioners drew on a power and control discourse suggesting that health and prison workers worked to different models and values and that their practice would therefore be different. This difference was also expressed in their approaches to evaluation and adherence to policies that guide and direct their work. This is demonstrated in the following quote:

we will do everything that is required in order to work inside prisons using arts projects meeting all the objectives of the secure state and the PCT but even so I still don't think it will be enough because I think they [health workers] are just fundamentally different....we are living in different worlds really (Matthew, Escape Artists)

The discursive statement “living in different worlds” despite working in the same environment, was a feeling expressed by other respondents: Esther indicated that she felt that their practice was “similar but with fundamental differences” citing behaviour change as a shared goal, but the way in which this was measured as the difference. When these comments were explored further it was clear that the aims and goals of public health promotion workers in prisons were not clearly articulated by health workers to arts workers. A lack of knowledge about what health workers do is expressed by Anna who, despite appearing to have a good understanding of what she refers to as holistic approaches to health, and indicating that she thinks that is how health workers operate, also questions how theatre practitioners can effectively address the wide range of prisoners’ health issues:

We have a rounded remit we are seeing the woman and all her needs holistically so we are not working with one aspect of her...so we are not working with her drug issues, we are working with her and it might be her drugs or housing, mental health, relationships it might be a whole range of different things ...and as far as I know health partners work like that increasingly. (Anna, Clean Break)

Respondents also felt that theatre interventions that led to educational and health outcomes for prisoners was undervalued compared to that of other professionals who were directly involved in the education of prisoners or in addressing their health issues. Matthew reinforces this point through a comment which demonstrates two points, firstly the influence of education policy on their practice is stronger than a health policy one, and secondly that working with health partners presents challenges because health partners often do not articulate what they want as outcomes, or perhaps appreciate the outcomes an applied theatre intervention offers the prisoner:

I don't think [health workers] are clear at all about what they want...at least prisons state what they want so they say they want a certificate in x or y at level a or b, and that will feed into their life skills programme, or their learning programme...so you know pretty much what it is that the prisons want...whether they want you to actually deliver it or not is another matter altogether...but with health I don't think they know what it is that they want

as an outcome ...obviously they want people to be healthy but how they measure those outcomes is different...(Matthew, Escape Artists)

Respondents also indicated that disseminating the results of their evaluations to those outside of the arts sector was difficult, which may have a further impact on the development of partnerships. All respondents indicated that they and their organisations were involved in the Arts Alliance, a group set up by ACE to enable practitioners to discuss practice in prisons, identify evidence and influence policy. Matthew summaries how this will assist prison theatre practitioners to develop their practice and connect with other policy areas through “a dialogue between arts companies, prisons and [other] government departments.” Simon indicated that TiPP were also actively exploring collaborations with health goals via the Offender Health Network; however, Anna was critical of these organisations suggesting that theatre companies’ involvement in these was for other purposes, it was “less about evidence to improve practice and more about sharing evidence to assist in funding bids.”

Respondents’ comments also suggested that they drew on a rhetoric that indicated that *proof* was there but that it was just not disseminated very widely. As a result of not disseminating their health outcomes, health workers were not able to appreciate the *health benefits* of applied theatre practice with prisoners, and this may have prevented health workers from seeking out partnerships with them. Through analysis of evaluations in this thesis, it was clear that documents many were not shared outside of the organisation and only to those that were involved in the project or funded it (e.g. CB/MS/10, SYN/WN/09, and SYN/NWP/06), and as a result of this inward looking approach, theatre companies were not receiving any *buy in* from health. This need for wider dissemination of evaluation findings, to encourage an appreciation of the effects of this work from others, is exemplified in the following statement:

it's all very well and good us saying we think our work works and we know it changes people's lives and it makes people feel better or whatever it is we are saying but actually that argument falls a bit flat if it's just you and your colleagues saying it - me, and Anna, Clean Break, Simon, TiPP, and Matthew, Escape Artists, just banging and banging on about it saying 'oh yes we know it works' because we slightly have a vested interest in it - so from my point of view, we are trying to get evaluations done which in some ways provide an evidence base for the work that we are doing.... it's all about promoting the use of the arts for menot as an added extra luxury kind of item... (Andy, Geese)

Simon also suggests that partnerships with health workers can also assist in tracking the long term outcomes of applied theatre practice. By sharing the health outcomes of applied theatre work with health workers who engage with individuals throughout their life course, and continuing to work with them, the long term impact of applied theatre interventions can therefore be monitored.

5.7 Power and control discourses

In the previous chapter, policy level power discourses increasingly demanded arts organisations to evaluate their work and threatened to withdraw funding if the effects and return on investment could not be demonstrated (Woolf, 2004; ACE, 2010; ACE, 2014). Furthermore, many guidance documents alluded to the need to improve evaluation methods, encouraging practitioners to adopt quantitative measures where possible.

Rather than seeing the number of evaluation discussions in the interviews and documents as an indication or sign of the degree of power being enforced, they can be seen as an indication of the scale of the problem posed by applied theatre practitioners and/or their resistance to other ways of knowing. Specific policies were not mentioned in evaluation documents; however, language such as “evidence what worked” (GE/IT/09) and the need to “demonstrate outcomes to highlight the changes for offenders” (CB/WAA/05) suggest that evaluators were aware of the *what works* and *public accountability* policy discourse. Moreover, when respondents referred to the term “policy” in interview, none cited specific policies, but did suggest that bodies such as ACE *required* evaluations of their work to justify their funding.

Moreover, their comments suggested that the effect of an educational policy discourse, through a power discourse, has encouraged the development and reporting of educational and employment outcomes. Anna explicitly states that much of their work has “changed” as a result of Clean Break adopting a discourse which has encouraged them to “report educational outputs”. Theatre companies have therefore taken on other policy level discourses that have helped them progress their practice. This point is supported by Belfiore (2006) who outlines how the cultural sector has gained a higher degree of visibility in the political arena by “tapping into the budgets and policies of other sectors” (p.35). As a result of this, applied theatre workers have had to work with, through and around the different policy discourses, and whilst this gives them the added benefit of working with different sectors, it also brings with it the added pressures of having to satisfy different policy demands, and demonstrating the effectiveness of their practice is just one of them. Gray (2002) defines this as “policy attachment” (p.77) where a *weaker* policy sector with limited political clout to attract enough resources or cohesive policy to direct its work, attaches itself to other policy concerns that appear more worthy, or that occupy a more central position in the political discourse of the time.

5.7.1 Policy influence on evaluation

Some documents included a rationale for the use of theatre and discursive statements made within these demonstrate a link to criminal justice and arts policy. For example in TiPP’s *Looking Good* evaluation, Jenny Hughes, includes a rationale supporting the use of participatory arts with socially excluded young people, specifically referring to DCMS policy

(DCMS, 2001) which replicated discourses that promote arts organisations as “worthy partners in regeneration processes” (p.10) and advocates research into “short and long-term impact” (p.11). Hughes goes on to cite other organisations such as the Social Exclusion Unit who advocate for the use of the arts to help meet social inclusion targets and prioritises the evaluation of projects “to gauge the impact on social exclusion factors such as health, education, crime, and employment” (p.11). Geese’s evaluation of *Reconnect* (GE/REC/08) also makes reference to policy; the authors refer to prison service policy which they draw on to support their aims of addressing individuals’ needs around “cognitive skills, substance use problems, anger management and relationship problems” (p.3). By referring to the work of Hughes (2004) they support the view that qualitative measures are limited, and indicate that there is a clear need for further research around the use and effectiveness of drama in prison contexts. In both of these examples, by referring to policy and the pressure on theatre companies to evaluate and provide evidence of effectiveness, these evaluators can be seen to use a language that reflects the dominant discourse of evaluation. In doing so it is also clear that they wish to clarify to those who read the report that they have carefully thought about their practice and have ensured that their practice and methods evaluation methods are robust and reflect the requirements set out by funders – challenging the quantifiable notions of what is considered effective and by whom. Other evaluation documents, such as Synergy’s *Fallout* (SYN/FO/09) and Clean Break’s *Missing Out* (CB/MO/09) avoid defending the need for evaluation, replying on a focus on what they did and what impact this had for participants. When discussing this with Esther, she asserted that they know that they have to demonstrate that their “projects produce results” and Anna indicated that funders wanted them to “focus on the outcomes”. Thus, two different discursive styles can be seen in the evaluation reports examined in this thesis: ones which begin with an explanation and justification for the use of drama techniques and the approach to evaluation, and another which appears to focus on outcomes and accept the policy discourse that guide their practice.

In this analysis, the way theatre companies replicated and challenged discourses identified across the macro policy level suggest that theatre practitioners are using a language that both *satisfies* the requirements of funders and policy makers, but they are also pushing at policy that presents a bar to their practice. Evaluation discourses identified within policy indicated that in an attempt to understand what works, quantitative methods such as social return on investment and cost-benefit measures were forcing theatre companies to play down the outcomes identified through qualitative evaluation methods (Woolf, 2004). In the evaluation of Synergy’s *Elmina’s Kitchen* (SYN/EK/06), the author’s inclusion of assertive and non-negotiable statements such as “how was Elmina’s Kitchen able to meet its aims” and “we can show participants moved from disengagement and disaffection to full engagement, appreciation and acceptance of success” (p.3) is indicative of a discourse that challenges the restrictive evaluation demands set out for practitioners in policy. As a result of policy pressure, this analysis suggests that theatre companies are engaged in a process where they are

encouraged to disregard some ways of knowing over other ways considered more acceptable. This drive for quantifiable evidence is becoming, in Foucauldian terms a “regime of truth” (1995, p.83), or a “regimented and institutionalised version of ‘truth’”.

The nature of power and control discourses within policy, where theatre practice is predominantly seen as a tool to influence change, transform, or develop individuals, rather than as a form of enjoyment and entertainment, can also be seen in the way it is reported in evaluation documents and how it is referred to by practitioners. Most evaluations are framed in terms of what prisoners gain from the experience in terms of education, employability skills and health outcomes, and any mention of fun and enjoyment is avoided. This feels unconventional, since drama is considered as a medium of entertainment and fun for the non-prison population then it would only to be natural and expected that the use of such a tool within prison should also result in *fun* or *enjoyment*. This feature of the discourse could be explained using Foucault's notion of the creation of *legitimate knowledge*. He indicates that discursive structures map out what we can and cannot say, and what we consider as legitimate knowledge. In *The Order of the Discourse*, Foucault (1981) suggests that a process of *exclusion* operates on discourse to limit what can be said and what can be counted as knowledge. Discursive and institutional limitation prevents certain things from being discussed through prohibition or taboo. This view is made possible by the fact that other ways of *knowing* about theatre in these contexts has been excluded. Therefore, in this example there is a naturalisation of these dominant discursive structures within which drama is discussed in utilitarian ways in order to make those excluded discursive positions available and to gain credence for them. Exclusion also works in another way, and focuses on what can be said around the discourse of those who are considered *insane* and therefore not *rational* (Foucault, in Hoy, 1986). The views of *rational* people, such as those from the medical profession, often carry more weight; so if we apply this notion to applied theatre and an evaluation discourse, we can see that the methods used by what discursive structures call *rational* people, such as health professionals, are given more weight than those from drama. Furthermore, Foucault argues that discourses are bounded by rituals which limit the number of people who can utter certain types of utterances. In this way, policy could be considered as a form of regulation of discourse: there are strict rules about what can pass for evaluation and evidence.

A power discourse that sits within an evaluation discourse is therefore visible within those approaches to evaluation that applied theatre practitioners are expected to adopt. As indicated earlier, evaluation is increasingly based upon a positivist epistemology in which means and ends are separated and the task of the evaluator is to measure the relative effectiveness of various means for the attainment of specified achievement outcomes (also referred to by McAviney as a *discourse of investment and return*). The discourse assumes a rigid dichotomy between facts and values, implying that measurement and observation can

avoid the problems of value justification and therefore is an approach to evaluation based upon an economic view of the effects of applied theatre in prisons. Codd (1988) in his analysis of educational reform and contradictory discourse around evaluation indicates that this move is a direct product of the dominant motives and interests generated within what he calls a *technocratic society*. Applying this concept to applied theatre; evaluation discourse in policy, with its reductionist approach which is often dependent upon a positivist view of knowledge, can be defined as *technocratic* in its denial of the wider value of the effects (or the affective realm) of applied theatre. In opposition to it is a discourse which emphasises evaluative judgement within a professional context. In addition, the discourse of power in policy is evident in the way effectiveness is often described from a quantitative perspective, mainly through the use of the term *measurement*, and therefore evaluation documents are never merely an act of reporting how things are done, but is shaped by power relations around what is considered better. This reflects Foucault's concept that power enables the production of knowledge, and it also maps out the powerful position from which to speak. So, those adopting these powerful positions (through the use of quantitative evaluation methods) could be argued to do so because they are influenced by discourses that value positivist knowledge and this then maps out the position from which they speak.

5.7.2 Funding influence on evaluation: 'jumping through hoops' and satisfying the 'paymaster'

The theatre companies examined in this study are supported to some extent through government funding; however, many of them were funded by Charitable Trusts with only a couple receiving additional project funding through ACE (Synergy's *Write Now* and TiPP's *What's the Point*), others were supported through criminal justice sector education funds, and none were funded by health organisations. Therefore, despite being afforded some level of independence through independent sources of funding, their core public funding steams kept them attached to policy discourse. None of the reports indicate how the funding was achieved and what requirements, if any, funders placed on them in the delivery of the project and in its evaluation. However, in interview, respondents such as Andy indicated that the funder did not place too many restrictions in what they did, and they often "told the funder what [they] were doing and how [they] would evaluate the work."

Comments made in evaluation documents suggested that the author had a specific audience in mind; and those that focus on the *benefits* rather than any *limitations* in the project, appear to be written with future funding in mind. This point is supported by respondents who spoke about the pressure of demonstrating *what works* to secure future funding. In their analysis of policy and its impact on the practice of arts workers, Belfiore and Bennett (2007b) found that increased pressure on arts workers to address specific issues have led many to disguise or conceal other intended outcomes from those who fund the work. In doing so, they argue that arts workers are able to work around policy, and funders' objectives, that may restrict what

they do. Thus, reflecting on points made earlier about the health outcomes reported in documents and the way language is used by some who play with the funders requirements, it could be argued that these companies and evaluators make a conscious decision to select what is included in the evaluation report and what is omitted. An example of this can be seen in the evaluation of *Insult to Injury* (GE/I2I/07), where the author primarily reports on specific educational outcomes associated with “a reduction in anger, aggression and violence”, which are outcomes their funder requested of them (a view confirmed in conversation with Andy), but they also report other outcomes such as benefits to the participants’ relationships and mental health, which are not included in the original aims of the project.

This response by theatre companies and evaluators could also be interpreted as a desire to challenge the strong managerialist framework that policy has been based on. At the macro level of analysis it was noted that an evaluation discourse led to an increased administrative burden on theatre companies which could be seen in respondent interviews when they suggested that it distracts them from addressing prisoners’ issues. So, theatre companies such as Geese, who report against the expected outcomes, can be seen to ensure that they fulfil what they are expected to do, but do not allow the evidence based policy and audit culture to restrict what they do. This is not unique to arts workers and is a point reflected by Robert Geyer (2012) in his paper examining education and health policy where he criticises the targeting and audit strategies of the audit culture and suggests that an approach which allows for openness and flexibility can assist the weaknesses and negative response felt as a result of restrictive policy.

In what can be seen as a challenge to dominant discourse, respondents spoke about how and why they disseminate details of their practice evaluations. However, at the same time they also aired concerns over sharing these findings with other theatre companies as well as health and other professionals who work with prisoners, as exemplified by Andy in the following quote:

it's quite important as a sector that we are quite clear about how we talk about our worth and how we provide a rationale for it....because the arts in criminal justice sector is a sector which is very easy to hit over the head and it's very easy for the Daily Mail and the Sun to bash us over the head and it's quite hard sometimes to form arguments that people will listen to, to say why its useful work.... (Andy, Geese)

This fear of being “hit over the head” and the need to “create a dialogue between arts companies, prisons and government departments” reflects the pressure imposed by the public accountability and what works policy discourses. By adopting a discourse that positions their evaluation practice as lacking could reflect what psychologists call the impostor syndrome: a psychological phenomenon in which people find it difficult to internalise their competence, often despite external evidence of their achievements (McElwee and Yurak,

2010). This contrasted with other views, often held by the same respondent, in which applied theatre practitioners assert the positive influence of their practice on prisoner health and wellbeing outcomes, as demonstrated in the following quote:

*We know it works, why should we prove it...other than to the feed masters of course...
...well, the main reasons we evaluate is to prove it...in the language of the feeder, the people that feed us...so they can understand the impact in their language, so that often means that we have to be quite fleet of foot and the master of several languages. (Simon, TiPP).*

Thus, discourses expressed in evaluation documents and in interview demonstrate how individuals are negotiating with discourses at various levels. In the example above, the use of the word “*language*” signifies Simon’s awareness that practitioners are involved in, and playing, a discursive game, constructing their evaluation reports to meet discursive parameters set at the policy level and as a result of the expectations communicated by funders. In this thesis, comments made by practitioners indicate that they are aware of the dominant discourse and its demands for evaluation that favours quantifiable outcomes. However, the influence of shifting policy discourses around the use and the effectiveness of the arts to meet national objectives, identified within the ACE National Policies for theatre in the previous chapter (ACE, 2000a; ACE, 2006), appears to have left practitioners without a shared language around evaluation causing them to become reluctant in sharing evidence of their practice with those from other disciplines.

In a quote from Simon cited at the beginning of this chapter, and in the quote from Andy below, both refer to a control discourse to justify and explain the pressure they experience when it comes to evaluating their work. Andy’s use of the metaphor “jumping through hoops” reflects the macro level discourse which requires theatre companies to justify their public funding, this is also reflected by Matthew who refers to the culture of “*ticking boxes*”, and Simon’s use of the term “*paymaster*” and “*feed master*”, which also point to the unequal relationship between theatre companies and funders:

*[in response to a question asking how evaluation is devised] they are the feed masters as it were aren’t they, so what I’d do is kind of frame the information back to them in the terminology that they appreciate...
[in response to a question around dissemination] it depends on what the paymaster wants, and what we think is relevant, it’s usually shared between the organisation and the board. I have never had that experience [referring to earlier point where a funder does not want information from an evaluation disseminated externally] (Simon, TiPP)*

We want to work directly with offenders and if we have to seek funding to allow us to do that then you sort of have to play the funding game a little bit you have to jump through the relevant boxes. (Andy, Geese)

The use of the term “play the funding game” reflects Goffman’s contribution to game theory and helps understand how these companies adopt an approach to work *through* and *around* the power and control discourses and use them to satisfy their own needs. A power and control discourse is also expressed by Anna, who indicates how frustrating providing statistical evidence can be because, to her, it does not accurately reflect the true effect of their practice on participants:

A lot of the evaluation that we do now, and what we have been encouraged to do from the criminal justice system, is about creating an evidence base so that’s a need in terms of how the arts works in criminal justice settings....so we are encouraged to use university criminologists in the evaluations that we do so that we have statistical evidence and evaluation of change that they would recognise. It can be frustrating because we are often talking about distance travelled, and kind of faculties and that kind of evaluation is often about are they offending or not... (Anna, Clean Break)

Continuing this control discourse, Esther argues that there is pressure to evaluate to secure funding and as a result of this, evaluations will be short term; and Andy expresses conflicting opinions about the pressure to evaluate and the effectiveness of their practice (possibly based on Geese’s varied work in education and prison sectors):

Evaluation is linked to funding - funders tend to fund a project...so at the end of your project you have to do your report, so most people are probably doing short term evaluations. (Esther, Synergy)

It probably does [have an impact] when you are outward facing to the funders, but actually on the ground it probably doesn’t. (Andy, Geese)

Esther also indicates that other practitioners “think they have to [evaluate] for their money” which suggests that this pressure could be constructed by theatre companies themselves as they internalise policy level discursive pressures that do not actually filter their way into the funders objectives. In an additional statement she also indicates that there may be less pressure to evaluate than other companies assume, reflecting an earlier point regarding the impact of policy discourses on people’s thoughts around practice. This finding is consistent with discourse found at the macro level which indicated that the evaluation discourse in policy was fragmented and unclear and emphasises the need for clearer policy direction and guidance.

In addition to this pressure inherent within policy, comments made by respondents indicated that they were aware of discourse shifts at policy level and recognised the impact of these on practice and evaluation:

It strikes me that there clearly is, and has been, a major shift over the last few years towards offender health. (Simon, TiPP)

....because we can now measure educational outputs we are looking to measure wellbeing outputs as well...so we're talking to the PCT in Cambridge about delivering a big project in Little Hay Prison...so that would mean we are meeting the prison objectives because we can provide the educational outputs which is what they really need in order to deliver key skills and government targets....at the same time we are hoping we can deliver the wellbeing objectives for the PCT (Matthew, Escape Artists)

In these examples, respondents were aware that the focus of their practice needed to change in response to policy pressures from different areas, which also reflected a change in how they played the funding game mentioned earlier. A move from a focus on education to health was also noticeable as respondents indicated their need to develop skills in these areas and enhance the partnerships that they had with health practitioners. This is expressed by Simon who was also very aware of the wider political impact on TiPP's work and the need for change. In the following extract, he demonstrates an awareness of the changing discourse around evaluation which increasingly focused on public accountability and value for money. This also indicates that rather than practice changing to reflect these directives, these companies have changed their language to frame what they are required to do by the funders, again reflecting Foucault's notion of *exclusion* and what is considered *acceptable* discourse:

Regardless of whoever has won the election it doesn't make much difference, in terms of what was going to happen to the funding in the medium term, is that there is going to be a much greater focus on outputs and outputs of a specific type...and of proving....kind of really specifically the value for money aspect. Evaluation is really key within that, but at the same time what's happening is that ...although our projects remain the same our language is constantly shifting so this is going to be the same for all of us what we have always had to do is change our language and shift our terminology and our frames of reference depending upon the trends in funding. (Simon, TiPP)

In a paper exploring the power relationships between evidence based practice and policy, Gray and Jenkins (2011, p.41) highlight a complex interdependency between policy and evaluation. In their portrayal of these issues, they highlight that there are truths and powers in both policy and evaluation; and policies are both founded on and productive of evaluation. When talking about the policy perspectives of evaluation, they indicate that developments that refer to evaluation as *realistic*, *participatory* and *empowering* are nothing but, because a lack of outward vision and willingness to remove the bars that restrict work may represent to some in the policy community that practice is influencing policy and that it is not providing clear direction; something they refer to as policy's "protection of perfection over performance" (p.45). Furthermore, for those involved in evaluation during this time, policy makers were criticised for often overlooking their outcomes and the way they changed direction before the evidence had been gathered, or even denied the evidence put forward. For Gray and Jenkins therefore, policy prefers to "see no evil, hear no evil and *fund* no evil" (p.50), and they suggest that it tends to restrict evaluative investigations to what it already favours, to resist findings

that contradict expectations and therefore to fund evaluation that is predisposed to be supported. In Foucauldian terms, this reflects the way that evaluators and theatre companies operate within *discursive limits*: they are therefore not free to express whatever they wish, and have to work within the discourses set at the dominant level.

A results-based approach to funding during this time was argued to further marginalise the most vulnerable of offenders, especially if activities carried out by theatre companies did not bring about the desired results. Prisoners are a very resource intensive group and evidence in the literature suggests that interventions may not bring immediate results (Hughes, 2008; Marshall, Simpson and Stevens, 2000). In health, *payment-by-results* is an established practice that has been in operation throughout this period; if lasting and meaningful partnerships between theatre companies and health are to be developed in prison work, some companies may need to be clear about the outcomes of their services, but this can be difficult, because the impact these companies make to people's lives is difficult to prove using quantifiable criteria. Furthermore, once outcomes have been decided, choices need to be made with regard to what tools are used to measure those outcomes and how those results are communicated to funders and partners. A payment by results model of funding was highlighted by Crispin Blunt (Parliamentary under Secretary of State for Justice) at the third annual Arts Alliance conference in September 2010. During the conference speakers and delegates discussing this new mode of funding concluded that it would pose significant challenges as well as opportunities for those using the arts in criminal justice. Arts organisations were anxious about the outcomes they would be asked to meet and also about how they would meet them. Moreover, others were worried that funding could cause *cherry picking* by organisations eager to achieve results by working with those who are the easiest to engage with, rather than those people with more complex needs. Payment by results is only just beginning to have an impact on the theatre sector, the arts unit at HMP Doncaster (IMB, 2011) is one example where this has been in place since 2010 and is therefore an area worthy of examination in future studies.

5.8 Chapter summary

This chapter presents a discussion of the discourses identified within prison theatre company evaluation reports and interviews carried out with key individuals within them. Using a CDA approach, this discussion was triangulated between policy level discourses identified in the preceding chapter, discourses identified in evaluation documents and those identified within interviews with theatre companies. Four dominant discourses were identified: evaluation, health, partnership and power and control discourses.

Discourse can be seen to construct categories and narratives for subjects which are not simply imposed, but are subject to negotiation by those subjects. The practice of evaluation is a set of discursive constructs with which subjects interact, refusing certain elements and

accepting others. it is clear that the evaluators do not simply adopt practices and expectations mapped out for them by discourses at the macro level; rather, their discourses reflect some elements, reject others, and attempts to change others. Therefore, individuals are evaluating and considering their position around evaluation, and inevitably, their position on the wider discourse. In this chapter this can be seen as I untangle the relationship between those discourses that theatre companies work within and uphold or replicate, and others that they challenge, play with, or question.

Companies were able to articulate how their practices impacted on prisoners' health and wellbeing, even if these "health outcomes" were not overtly referred to in these terms. On the whole the short-term effects of their practice could be demonstrated leading evaluation report authors and companies to express the need for evaluation methods that enable the assessment of longer term change, reflecting the policy level discourse around the public accountability and what works agendas. Furthermore, the move towards partnerships with workers from disciplines such as health can be seen in the use of evaluation techniques and language that is commonly used within those fields. Through an analysis of the dominant discourses that exert power over the approach to evaluation, it was also possible to see how theatre companies have responded to increasing demands for this quantifiable evidence, and adopt a language that reports outcomes in quantifiable terms.

The policy rhetoric for long term evaluation was reflected by organisations such as Clinks and the Arts Alliance who were making many contributions to knowledge in this area. However, by opening this debate it could be argued that they also contributed to a replication of a policy level discourse that perpetuates the notion that there are legitimate and illegitimate forms of evaluation practice and resultant knowledge. Some researchers in this area support this view for quantifiable evidence calling for practitioners to move away from reflective and anecdotal accounts in their evaluations (Belfiore and Bennett, 2010), but there was a corresponding and growing call from arts workers to reject and challenge the drive for quantitative approaches to assess the impact of their work. This move is supported by McAvinchey (2011) in her examination of prison theatre who argues that "the effectiveness and evidence [of applied theatre practice in prisons] is questioned more frequently than the aesthetic or political terrain" of the work (p.43) and in debates that also reflect Thompson's (2009) call for a move to focus on the *affective realm*, McAvinchey calls for theatre companies to reject the business of arts activity, which was rooted in cultural and social policies of the New Labour government, and instead to focus on the practice and the engagement benefits for participants. This is an argument that this thesis concurs with and develops by suggesting that a deeper understanding of the outcomes of the work, and a move away from quantifiable methods, that merely serve to satisfy macro level discursive demands to *measure* and *quantify* impact, will help construct an evaluation framework, or approach, that will assist practitioners in sharing the outcomes of their work and gain respect for their contributions. The use of discourse by

prison theatre companies in this study suggests that they were also aligning themselves with this view: not only responding to and replicating policy level discourses in their evaluation practices and through how they speak about it, but pushing at the bars that policy has created that control and restrict their practice. Theatre companies are therefore both working with these discourses and using a language that is subtly challenging the frameworks that these discourses impose on applied theatre practitioners collectively calling for a focus on the *affective realm*. This therefore sets the ground for approaches that appreciate the use of applied theatre in prisons that contribute to improved health outcomes for prisoners, rather than those that merely attempt to quantify the impact on individuals.

Chapter 6 Conclusion and recommendations

The thesis has been written during a time when economic concerns have led to dramatic government cuts in all areas of funding including the arts, healthcare and criminal justice; accompanying this is an increasing demand for evidence and cost benefit measures (Geyer 2012). Geyer, in his examination of evidence based policy making and his critique of “audit culture” indicates that policies laid down by New Labour which encouraged the growth of the arts have now been set aside as the focus on value for money becomes of increasing importance. The debates in the literature around arts funding cuts at the end of the 1990s and early 2000s have resurfaced, and in response to the autumn budget in 2013, Alan Davey, Chief Executive of ACE stated that the reduction in DCMS budgets has led to a 33% real cut in their grant aid compared to the levels of support before the cuts in 2010/11(ACE, 2014). The increasing privatisation of prisons has led to further difficulties for both arts and health workers working with prisoners, resulting in many rehabilitation initiatives being cut in favour of approaches that fit education and employability policy discourses. These pressures have forced many theatre companies into closure, including Escape Artists who have been a victim of these policy changes. By shining a light on issues of evaluation through this thesis and the benefits applied theatre practice can provide to improve the health outcomes of prisoners, it is hoped that the detrimental impact of funding cuts may be avoided and applied theatre practice in prisons that has a health outcome be respected for the contributions it makes to the overall rehabilitation of prisoners. However, as Sir Peter Bazalgette, Chair of ACE warns in their 2013 annual report (ACE, 2013), the recent funding cuts may have long-term impacts on arts work that may take many years to repair; going on to suggest that this repair work not only needs to focus on the use of the arts but in how the outcomes are valued by others.

In this conclusion I reflect on the key issues that initiated this research study, the findings that have been identified and discussed, limitations to the study and recommendations for practice, policy and further research.

6.1 Research aims and how they were achieved

This study aimed to analyse the specific ways that applied theatre practice is planned, implemented and evaluated in prisons when it contributes to improved health outcomes for prisoners and to understand what discourses influence the evaluation practices and methods that are used.

Through an examination of discourses identified in policy and practice it has been possible to gain a deeper understanding of applied theatre practice in relationship to prisoner health and address the aims and questions posed at the beginning of the study; in particular, how this work is evaluated and what influences these methods. I use the metaphor of the bar to demonstrate how policy both sets and creates a bar to those wishing to work in the settings:

guiding what they do, as well as restricting their practice through requirements to *prove* the effects of their work by methods that often do not accurately and appropriately reflect the contributions they make. Through an examination of company evaluation documents companies can be seen to adopt evaluation discourses in policy that require them to adopt quantifiable measures, and replicate them within their practice, but in other contexts conflicting discourses highlight how they are challenging policy and pushing at the bars that restrain their practice within prisons. Finally, through an examination of discourses expressed within interviews and the wider literature, I have highlighted how applied theatre companies are setting the bar, by arguing for a focus on the affective realm of this work.

This study began with a personal quest for answers to the question of how applied theatre can be used to rehabilitate prisoners and have an impact on their health and wellbeing. Terms such as *evaluation*, *evidence*, *effects*, *measurement*, *value for money*, and *proof* were key terms that framed the discussions in this thesis, and as indicated in the literature review, have been important debates for applied theatre practitioners and researchers in this field. This thesis has therefore attempted to position the outcomes of the research in relation to the debates around current policy which has created a situation where the effects of applied theatre practice are increasingly questioned and positioned around issues of quantifiable outcomes rather than the wider contribution this practice has on prisoners' health and wellbeing. Through an identification and examination of a set of discourses this thesis provides a useful lens through which to view and analyse current and future practice. They demonstrate how applied theatre practice can assist in the rehabilitation of prisoners and in how the practice can be used to improve prisoners wider health concerns. They also enable a deeper understanding of the policy impact on both practice and the evaluation of it. I hope these will eventually lead to clearer and more meaningful evaluations to take place when applied theatre is used to improve prisoners' health and wellbeing or when it is planned and delivered in collaboration with public health workers. Indeed, the construction of evaluation discourses have identified that the discourse of proof itself is a construction for a particular disciplinary moment of history and therefore rather than identify a set of evaluation principles or a model, this study has highlighted the discourses that affect practice and how the effects are communicated to others.

6.1.1 Originality of research

This study has provided a deeper understanding and contributed new knowledge around the debates of effectiveness in the field of applied theatre, both in how it is used with prisoners to lead to improved health outcomes, but in how it could be used in applied theatre practice in the general population. The literature highlighted the use of applied theatre in the prison system and in other settings to improve health and wellbeing, but also highlighted tension around the drive for evaluation within the field. The arguments presented in the work of Hughes (2008), highlighted the use of applied theatre to address health issues and were

important starting points in this debate because they summarised growing tension in the field around both the demand and the need for proof. The importance and influence of policy on practice and evaluation was particularly evident in much of Belfiore and Bennett's work and highlighted the need for a deeper understanding and exploration (Belfiore, 2002; Belfiore, 2006; Belfiore and Bennett, 2007b; Belfiore and Bennett, 2010). The examination of evaluation in this thesis was therefore worthy of in-depth study and by drawing together a body of theoretical knowledge around the use of applied theatre in prisons and synthesising concepts and ideas focussing on discourses that have not previously been done, it provides an original and unique interpretation of the evaluation of applied theatre practice that builds on the debates of these researchers and others and contributes new insights to this field.

The literature also highlighted a need for further cross disciplinary and collaborative working (Haldane, 1999; Madden and Bloom, 2004; Watson, *et al*, 2002; Thompson, 2009) a point also increasingly reflected in government policy (examples include DH, 2006; DH, 2005; DH 2004a; DH, 2004b). This thesis therefore provides an original contribution to the evaluation debate by working across the disciplines of drama, criminology and health and uses various methodologies to enable a useful contribution to knowledge to be made. Indeed, when presenting a paper entitled *Demonstrating Effectiveness: Applied Theatre, Prisoners and Public Health*, at the Festival of Public Health conference in Manchester 2013, the conference Chair stated that the initial findings of this thesis highlighted the complexity of a discourse around measurement and the need for public health workers to appreciate the wider contribution of other practitioners in addressing health and wellbeing goals. This thesis has therefore also highlighted how applied theatre workers are aware of this need for *effectiveness, evidence and proof*, but one that public health workers, operating in a discipline where measurement and evidence is continually monitored, at times take for granted and need to question.

6.1.2 Methodology achievements

This study draws together applied theatre scholarship and practice, that aligns with the goals of public health, within the theoretical framework of Fairclough's CDA approach and specifically utilises the work of the theorist Foucault to explore and examine ways in which theatre is created for prisoners and ultimately how it is evaluated. On a methodological level, the challenge in this study has been examining three different fields of study: applied theatre, criminal justice and public health. Although I have attempted to show how each of these works in collaboration with each other; for example, theatre companies using applied theatre in their practice with prisoners can clearly demonstrate health benefits for their clients, what influences practice and how the effects are communicated to others (e.g. the health benefits) this has been both challenging to identify and report. Moreover, adopting a social constructionist approach to examining this issue which has moved me away from positivist approaches that my background in public health made me comfortable with has also been

challenging. However, adopting a CDA approach has enabled me to examine discourses at a macro political level, meso documentary level as well as the micro textual level and reflecting on Foucault's work at various stages in the analysis and discussion chapters of this thesis; in particular his work around power/knowledge, enabled particular discourses to be conceptualised and clarified.

6.1.3 Contribution to existing literature and research

The study examined a specific part of the body of current research and literature to situate this study within relevant debates in the field of applied theatre, public health and criminology. With such a broad and diverse field, I did not want to get embroiled in etymological discussions about the origin of theatre and the development of disciplines but wished to concern myself specifically with its use and its effectiveness. However, it was necessary to both describe the field whilst highlighting where this study adds to the overall body of knowledge, as this combination of disciplines and examination has only been touched upon by others (e.g. HAD, 2000; Angus, 2002; Reeves, 2002; Hughes, 2008). In combining three fields of enquiry I was sensitive to examining others' work, in particular my critique of evaluation practices within applied theatre.

Charting the history of policy in the criminal justice sector led to an understanding of how applied theatre has found a place in the rehabilitation process and in particular New Labour policies in the arts, health and criminal justice. The impetus for these strengthening partnerships could be seen in the 1999 government report, *The Future Organisation of Prison Healthcare*, and later in the white paper *Choosing Health: Making Healthier Choices Easier* - both of which moved the responsibility of prison health to PCTs. Along with the disadvantages, the transfer brought with it opportunities for applied theatre workers. However, accompanying this was a need for better evidence and, policy through guidance and discussion quickly emerged (Woolf 2004). The discussion of policy in the literature review chapter identified that New Labour policy led to a strengthening of a discourse that presented its practitioners with a sense that creativity was supported, and that a new respect for the arts had emerged. Publications and work by Belfiore and Bennett touched on issues around evaluation and the effect of the arts (Belfiore, 2002; Belfiore, 2006; Belfiore and Bennett 2007; Belfiore and Bennett, 2010), and later in the period issues raised by Thompson (2006, 2009) developed these arguments and pushed at the restrictive bars calling for a new respect for the arts - an affective realm - which led to many more questions being highlighted in this thesis.

6.1.4 Macro, meso and micro discourses

Through an examination of policy, evaluation documents and discussions with theatre company staff, this thesis has aimed to demonstrate how arts policies and guidance documents issued in the late 1990s and early 2000s increasingly espoused a requirement to

develop theatre practice and to do this in conjunction with other policy areas such as health, but at the same time require them to prove the effects of applied theatre practice in prisons. At a macro political level, it was clear that an evaluation discourse equated effectiveness with measurement, value, cost-effectiveness and a demand for proof.

By examining more closely the emergence of discourses around the effectiveness of applied theatre within these contexts it has been possible to see how these discourses have influenced the evaluation of applied theatre in certain ways. For example, there are now a number of practitioners who call for applied theatre practice to be evaluated in ways that appreciates not only the qualitative outcomes but also the quantitative outcomes (Balfour 2004) and, despite the challenges associated with quantitative measures, at least attempt to understand and communicate the longer-term effects (Hughes, 2008; Clinks, 2010). However, the findings in this study has also identified evidence of practitioners who refused to sit behind the bars that this discourse creates, and push and challenge discourse that increasingly positions evaluation in polarised terms of *good* and *bad*, or *better* and *worse* (Nicholson, 2005; Datta, 2006; Balfour, 2009; Belfiore and Bennett, 2010; McAvinchey 2011). This thesis has therefore shown that there are different ways of explaining effectiveness, and these constructions have led to the need for further knowledge and discourses that in turn, as Foucault (1972) argues, construct experts who serve to reinforce these constructions through increased knowledge and more powerful discourses. An example of this can be seen through the construction of the need for an evidence base: some practitioners move away and reject the need to do so, others welcome it, some feel that they must concede and measure how effective their work is if their work is to continue to be funded. The role of effectiveness and discussions around what works has consequently led to the emergence of *new* types of experts. As argued by Foucault (1972) this form of knowledge is ultimately used to control people whilst making it appear to be in their best interests and is considered to be a form of *disciplinary power*. The role of *expert* knowledge and the *expert* gives authority to discourse, and these discourses become so powerful and pervasive that to question them seems unnecessary. They then become part of a common sense view that is willingly accepted as a reality.

In this thesis I have shown that the construction of effectiveness has increasingly gained importance, in so far that those working in applied theatre feel the need to explore, explain and account for their work in a discourse that talks of measurement rather than the work itself. Those that fund the work are therefore creating and using a discourse that increasingly places more emphasis on the impact and outcomes of an initiative, rather than to consider the process and the cumulative effect in collaboration with other interventions such as those by health workers. What has not been possible in this thesis is to compare this to applied theatre work that is unfunded or not directed by external funding, for example work that is carried out

in other countries such as Africa and South America, where the work may be discussed in different ways, which would be an interesting area of further study.

This thesis highlights how discourse frames how evaluation practice is carried out, and also how it is communicated to others. Foucault indicates that discourses operate in a cyclic manner and frame how practice is carried out, and therefore untangling and understanding the origin of discourses and pinpointing their effects has been challenging (Gordon 1980). However, this thesis has been able to position evaluation and discourses as a power, which then creates power discourses. By positioning them as such it is able to see how the impact of this discourse creates a sense of mistrust, anxiety, and cognitive dissonance among practitioners. Discursive positions within the discourse of evaluation may suggest that the tension between evaluating and just doing the work is even more complex than one might originally assume, as evidenced by the conflicting discourses identified and discussed in this thesis.

Competing discourses have encouraged theatre companies to identify various models of evaluation practice, but the findings in this thesis demonstrate how they encounter difficulties when they come to proving their worth. This direction to evaluate is exacerbated because of applied theatre's attachment to stronger policy areas in the prison rehabilitation agenda (Gray 2002) and because they feel a need to *satisfy* the government's and funders (or as one respondent puts it, the *pay master's*) desire to prove that approaches work (Belfiore and Bennett 2007). This belief is then kept alive and upheld by those who work within these contexts. The discourses identified within this thesis also provide an understanding of the language used by some companies to challenge the discourses that expect them to produce reports that include quantifiable outcomes. Through both identifying and applying these discourses to various levels of analysis this thesis provides an understanding of the subtext at play which influences the choice of evaluation and how it is reported. Utilising Foucault's writings on discourse it has been possible to provide the field of applied theatre, public health and criminology with a new understanding of the discourses that surround evaluation practice. The research has therefore explained how language is used to represent a dominant position, therefore privileging some discourses over others, uncover how discourses and constructions of effectiveness have legitimated specific courses of action (mainly political). The conclusions drawn from writing this thesis, therefore, are that effectiveness has indeed been constructed around notions associated with *evidence*, *worth*, or *proof*. The benefit of adopting the social constructionist perspective lies within the potential to challenge current constructions of "what works" and the subsequent dominant discourses that drive it forward.

An interesting point that is raised within the meso and micro level discussions of practice and the interviews is how discourses have affected the practice of evaluation and how it is spoken about. Theatre companies are therefore expected to report outcomes based on approaches

(often involving quantifiable measures) that can provide, what could be considered, as *good evidence* to others if they are to gain recognition for their practice and be respected for the outcomes. Theatre companies therefore, need to not only be confident to demonstrate the effectiveness of their practice through approaches that do not follow the expectations set out by macro level discourses, they also need to be confident enough to challenge the evaluation practices, evidence and proof shared by public health specialists.

I also suggest that moving away from policies that restrict and constrain work comes with its benefits, it enables workers to add their own interpretation of what policy demands of them, and it prevents them from blindly following complex and restrictive policy directives; this lack of knowledge or confusion is not just reserved to workers from applied theatre backgrounds; it is a problem that affects prison staff and health workers, and are issues worthy of further research in themselves. However, a factor that intensifies this amongst applied theatre workers is the lack of specific policy in this area. As Nicholson (2002) suggests when talking about arts policy guiding work in prisons, it is clear that the absence of a national policy or strategic response to the use of applied theatre in prisons has knock-on effects for professionals and practitioners who operate largely without explicit guidance and standards. Although Nicholson was writing over a decade ago now, the need for guidance and standards remains an unaddressed issue.

6.2 Limitations of the study

I was aware of a variety of limitations and weaknesses in this study and considerations were made to overcome any weaknesses at each stage of the decision-making process; however, there are some weaknesses that could not be overcome. Following principles for good research set out by Punch (1998) I was mindful of these and openly reported them throughout the study; in doing so, I was able to make attempts to minimise them at every opportunity. I have grouped these limitations into three key areas.

Firstly there were the methodological limitations of this study. I am mindful that the knowledge that discourse analytical research produces has its limitations. The social constructionist debate that all knowledge is discursively produced and therefore contingent, suggests that there is no possibility of achieving absolute or universal knowledge since there is no context free, neutral base for truth claims (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2009). Therefore, the researcher can never be entirely neutral and see things as they really are; creating reality at the same time as representing it. Some critics of social construction therefore argue that social construction is practically unusable because it cannot determine what is true: every result is just one among many other possible stories about reality (Burr, 1995). However, I argue that the discourses highlighted and examined in this thesis do enable a deeper understanding of evaluation practice and therefore recommendations can be made that can assist future practice.

Some researchers suggest that data should be checked with participants so that trustworthiness can be assured (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). It was decided that the interview data, or my analyses, would not be shared with participants during the process for a number of reasons. Firstly, participants informed me that they had limited time to engage in this study, so asking them to check data, transcripts and findings would demand more of their already limited time. Secondly, as highlighted above, CDA is essentially subjective and therefore, there are many journeys that could be taken in any research of this nature. It is for this reason that the researcher has to be open and honest about their interests and their background, so that people are aware of their frame of reference and the potential bias and take they have on the data. One could argue that because of this, the data and transcripts should be made available for secondary analysis; this would then enable others to identify their own findings and therefore enable a richer exploration of this topic. I accept that the secondary analysis might offer new insights about the meanings constructed, however, another researcher's interpretation of the data may be very different to the one presented in this thesis, and as mentioned earlier, qualitative research cannot claim to give "the true" and only picture.

A second limitation lay in my imbalance of prior knowledge. Having not trained in drama this was an area that I needed to research extensively to ensure that I could understand the nuances of discourse within this field and therefore provide an accurate, honest and balanced discussion. Analysing the work of applied theatre practitioners from within a different discipline (that of public health) was also challenging in that theatre companies whose work I was examining were initially suspicious and reluctant to engage with this research. As outlined elsewhere in this thesis, this issue of non-engagement was overcome, but there are issues of bias related to outsider/insider research that cannot be overcome. However, I argue that my public health position and viewpoints were not detrimental in this study because this study did not aim to explore the views of public health or health promotion workers who use drama techniques in their work with prisoners, and then compare these to those working within applied theatre. This was a conscious decision made at the outset, because before engaging in this research I was unaware of anyone with such a background in public health and applied theatre. It was only through doing the study that a few freelance workers with such an interest were identified, but their work is not extensive enough to be worthy of in-depth study at this stage. Moreover, the aims of this study were not to compare the two disciplines, but to identify and discuss the discourses to assist practitioners to understand, and also to influence, future evaluation practice. In addition, I have also had to deal with criticism and scepticism from those within the public health field who have questioned my focus on the evaluation of applied theatre practice which highlights how I have added knowledge to this field and created further debate, but that this only begins to touch on the use of applied theatre in public health.

A final limitation was that of time. I experienced three periods of serious ill-health during this study and the completion of the study was delayed by an additional three years. It was originally anticipated that this study would be completed within six years which would have prevented such an extensive and ongoing literature review process having to take place. This was a challenge to manage, but as the research in this field of study grew, this also meant that I was able to spend more time making interpretations of the data and the findings, and draw on a richer research base in the discussion chapters.

6.3 Key recommendations, further study and personal reflection

Through an identification and examination of the discourses in this study, recommendations for practice were identifiable and can be summarised into five areas. The first of these relate to communication and understanding. Through the analysis of interview data applied theatre practitioners appeared to be held back by approaches to evaluation that did not helpfully or accurately demonstrate the outcomes of their work. Although some adopted an evaluation discourse that positioned some forms of knowledge in a hierarchical and epistemological order, all respondents in this study indicated that they knew their practice was effective so questioned and challenged the dominant discourse that encouraged them to prove their practice in quantifiable ways. Therefore, a deeper understanding of the outcomes of the work, and a move away from quantifiable methods, that merely serve to satisfy macro level discursive demands to *measure* and *quantify* impact, will help construct an evaluation framework, or approach, that will assist practitioners in sharing the outcomes of their work and gain respect for their contributions.

Secondly, this study identifies a number of evaluation discourses through case studies that assist an understanding of what works. By supporting the need for an evaluation practice that recognises how policy level discourses influence the choice of evaluation methods, this thesis adds to the evidence base that explores the effects of applied theatre practice and will help practitioners identify and use appropriate evaluation models. It will also help practitioners to confidently disseminate the outcomes of their work to others, such as public health workers; even when these do not *quantify* the impacts of their work.

Thirdly, health outcomes were identifiable in the projects examined in this study, however, many of these were not reported as health outcomes and none of the work was funded by health. The discourses identified in this study may help applied theatre practitioners to confidently report their qualitative health outcomes, and for health workers to better understand the influence of applied theatre practice on health outcomes for prisoners; and in doing so enable applied theatre practitioners to attract sources of funding from health to continue their rehabilitative work with prisoners. Although there has been a reduction in funding across all sectors since 2010, it is slowly becoming available and applied theatre practitioners may be able to attract this funding by collaborating with public health and by

being clearer about the health outcomes of their work. By disseminating and sharing these outcomes with health workers, a greater appreciation of the benefits of applied theatre can also be facilitated.

Finally, the metaphor of the bar reminds us that those working with prisoners are controlled through policy and ideology in almost everything they do in prisons. There is a need to work within the boundaries that policy creates but what is key to the development of applied theatre practice is enhancing the awareness of the value of this approach, and how it can be used in partnership with others. For example, by adopting a holistic approach to health and wellbeing, as offered by Dahlgren and Whitehead (1991), applied theatre practitioners can work with public health agendas. It requires those in applied theatre with a public health interest, and those in public health who have an interest in the use of the arts, to advocate and support those working behind the bars and in doing so they can gently push at them and eventually set the bars. This study goes some way in identifying why, when and how health and applied theatre practitioners can work more closely together; by engaging in collaborative work it is hoped that applied theatre workers will be able to influence future funding and policy.

This research points the way for subsequent research and study and has identified that there are many further questions that are in need of investigation to enhance our understanding of how applied theatre may be evaluated and also in how it could be further used to address the health and wellbeing of prisoners. Although these questions and areas of further study have been highlighted throughout this thesis, an important and significant area of examination lies in the further examination of the evaluation practices in criminal justice and public health which would enable a comparison of discourses to be made and further highlight how evidence is perceived. However, it was not the remit of this study to formally refer and share these discourses with those within these fields of practice and what was achievable in the timescale was to identify the discourses in applied theatre practice and share them via conference papers and presentations. This process has enabled them to be refined in this thesis; however, as Foucault's work reminds us, discourses are never stable or fixed so further study will aim to examine specific aspects of those that have been identified here (Joseph 2004). It is hoped that these will then inform future publications during the dissemination process.

Reflecting on the issues which led me on this journey: my public health background, my interests in the use of drama in health, and listening to the needs of prisoners such as Daniel who made me question my own practice as well as my knowledge; this study has left me more knowledgeable in this field but also more passionate about supporting and promoting the use of applied theatre in public health practice. One of my original aims was to uncover why, and what types of evaluation takes place and after examining this from various levels and perspectives I feel I have contributed to the overall body of knowledge by demonstrating

how these companies evaluate their work, the wider discursive impact on these choices to evaluate, how and why they communicate these outcomes to others, and what restricts this dissemination.

However, examining the effectiveness of applied theatre practice within health is not new, and although this study has contributed much to these debates, much more remains to be done in this field of research. I have attempted to highlight these practices, discourses and influences by untangling many strands of a variety of arguments; some of these journeys have led to dead ends whilst others have led to further questions. I make no apologies for what has at times been a descriptive exploration of policy and practice during this period; because it is hoped that this deeper understanding of discourses will enable those who currently use applied theatre within health to further develop their practice and collaborate with each other. In particular, applied theatre field's expansion into public health practice I suggest can be promoted through an understanding of policy and discursive frameworks within it and how they are replicated or challenged in practice. The challenge that lies ahead is taking this knowledge and sharing it with applied theatre practitioners, public health workers, and others who work in the criminal justice sector so they can develop and further build on the discourses identified here.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Theatre companies working in prisons and final sample

Company Name	Company Overview	In sample	Reason for inclusion or rejection
Clean Break	Clean Break is the UK's only women's theatre education and new writing company for ex-offenders, prisoners, ex-prisoners and women at risk of offending due to drug or alcohol use or mental health issues. Clean Break produces theatre which engages audiences in the issues faced by women whose lives have been affected by the criminal justice system.	Yes	Willing to engage
Escape Artists	Escape Artists works through the arts to break down barriers and encourage social inclusion and empowerment across many marginalised groups. As an integrated arts and education company, we are committed to: - Presenting high-quality and challenging artistic productions which focus on issues of social inclusion and open access to such work across all sections of our community - Developing innovative education projects which help to engage, empower and inspire our wide range of clients and deliver real results - which can, in most cases, be accredited if required.	Yes	Willing to engage
Synergy Theatre	Synergy Theatre aids reintegration into society by supporting the continuing personal development of offenders and ex-offenders through the provision of theatre performance opportunity and access to the resources of professional theatre whilst placing the wider issues surrounding imprisonment in the public arena.	Yes	Willing to engage
TiPP - Theatre in prison and probation	TiPP works from the belief that theatre and related arts have the power to transform people's lives. We develop and implement participatory arts projects and undertake training for artists and for professionals working in the Criminal Justice System.	Yes	Willing to engage
Geese Theatre Company	Established in 1987, Geese Theatre Company is a team of theatre practitioners who work exclusively within the Criminal Justice System. The company deliver performances, workshops and group work programmes with offenders in prisons and the community. Geese also run training events for staff and performances at criminal justice conferences.	Yes	Willing to engage
Creative Expression	Creative Expression delivers high quality psychotherapeutic arts intervention for people in individually and socially difficult circumstances in the South West of England. It is a forum for innovative, ethical approaches in arts and health. Our work is multi-disciplinary, combining the expertise of arts practitioners with the in-depth knowledge of creative psychotherapists. Our vision is that that everyone can be an active and positive member of society using his or her unique talents to influence social circumstances.	No	Not able to take part due to work commitments.

Company Name	Company Overview	In sample	Reason for inclusion or rejection
Telephone Box Performance Company	The Telephone Box Performance Company (TBPC) specialises in working with offenders and ex-offenders, developing arts programmes that address issues such as drug addiction, social exclusion and recidivism. Established in 2001, the charity has developed a unique and successful format using participatory drama as a catalyst for change. Our work is recognised as achieving outstanding results with offenders. The charity places an emphasis on providing our beneficiaries with continuous access to our work, and uses an innovative approach to rehabilitation. We are committed to sustaining our relationship with penal institutions, in order to encourage the Prison Service to support the arts more widely.	No	No response
Breaking Image Theatre Co	We produce original devised theatre based on real life experiences of drug addiction. Facilitated by professional theatre artists, the work is devised and performed by recovering addicts.	No	Funding issues prevented company from engaging.
Company Paradiso	Company Paradiso - specialists in drama and video / film projects. Currently involved in 'Your Story', a 20 month Arts Council funded project including outreach with West Sussex YOT and a Pupil Referral Unit, to complete December 2006.	No	Project now complete
Covenant Players (UK) Trust	Covenant Players is a professional theatre company and communications resource, fielding touring troupes throughout the world which perform original theme-based plays in service to the leadership of churches, schools, social service agencies, community and government organisations.	No	No response
Insight Arts	Insight Arts is one of the country's leading arts organisations offering exciting opportunities to prisoners, ex-prisoners and those on probation to get involved in arts projects. We promote the rehabilitation of offenders through drama, film and multi-arts projects, some leading to large-scale public performances.	No	No response
Restorative arts	Our company's RET process (Responsibility, Empathy and Tolerance), engages participants in examining, experiencing and contemplating. Through a varied range of specialised Arts based exercises the facilitators work with the participants towards devising a performance, which is the accumulation of the efforts and contributions of the whole group throughout the RET process.	No	No response
Rideout (Creative Arts for Rehabilitation)	Rideout specialise in drama, theatre and multi-artform projects in prisons. The aim of the company's work is to aid prisoners' rehabilitation through the provision of a range of art activities.	No	Not able to take part due to work commitments.
Safe Ground	Safe Ground educates male prisoners and young people at risk in the community. Our courses Family Man and Fathers Inside use drama combined with basic Literacy training to help these groups build strong family ties, reducing the risk of future institutionalisation	No	Community based - education focus
Amersham & Wycombe College	The college provides accredited learning opportunities in the arts at HMP and YOI Holloway. The women are encouraged to study the arts at a more advanced level when the leave prison.	No	very little drama work

Company Name	Company Overview	In sample	Reason for inclusion or rejection
Artlink Central	Artlink Central enables a wide range of marginalised and special needs groups to work with experienced professional artists on high quality arts projects in the Stirling, Falkirk and Clackmannanshire areas of Central Scotland.	No	Visual arts
Connecting Youth Culture	The course to build on young offenders' confidence, self-esteem and self-worth using the arts as a platform to get them back into learning and achieving.	No	Visual arts
Drama Workhouse	The aim of the drama workhouse is to provide an education and training in drama to those who would not ordinarily have access to the Arts.	No	Not much work in prisons
Life Skills Training	Marie Miles is a highly experienced teacher and facilitator and works with people of all ages to develop confidence and assertiveness skills, as well as to combat stress and low self-esteem.	No	Individual artist
London Shakespeare Workout (LSW) & LSW Prison Project	The London Shakespeare Workout (LSW) and the LSW Prison Project seeks to employ the works of Shakespeare and other major dramatic/cinematic writers/thinkers as a tool towards effective interaction in order to promote confidence through the will to dream for all. It celebrates all literacies. In 2004 alone (to review but one calendar year) LSW interfaced with 2,974 inmates (the equivalent of the entire inmate population of, currently, the two largest UK prisons) in 43 different UK correctional centres.	No	Education rather than applied theatre
Marian Liebmann and Associates	Marian Liebmann has worked at a day centre for ex-offenders, with Victim Support, and in the probation service. She was director of Mediation UK for 4 years and projects adviser for 3 years, working on restorative justice issues.	No	Education rather than applied theatre
Mary Stephenson	Mary was Writer in Residence at HMP Channings Wood from 1998-2004 and now works on projects within the Criminal Justice System. In 2004 she set up the String of Pearls	No	Education rather than applied theatre
Michael Crowley	I produce creative writing magazines with young people and also use creative writing and drama to explore offending behaviour. As a playwright I have written for stage, BBC Radio and short film.	No	Individual artist
NACRO Theatre Company	Nacro Theatre Company works with young people at risk of offending or exclusion using arts based practice to engage and inspire	No	Visual arts
Odd Theatre Company	Odd Theatre Company Ltd is a young and dynamic organisation that is committed to making positive changes in the lives of its participants. We run issue based workshops and conferences for the criminal justice system, or with young, vulnerable and excluded communities. Techniques used include role-play and discussion, character construction and analysis. Issues explored include drug and alcohol abuse, cultural diversity, peer pressure and anger management. We question issues pertinent to offence related behaviour and help to identify personal responsibility; the experience of active participation increases self-confidence and self-awareness for participants.	No	Not much work in prisons

Company Name	Company Overview	In sample	Reason for inclusion or rejection
Recre8	By combining elements of psychology together with drama, Recre8 are unique in the work that we offer. Working with young offenders and those who are at risk of offending, our programmes actively challenge perspectives and reintegrate individuals back into society through strengthening cognitive tools and helping the young people overcome their personal limitations.	No	Education rather than applied theatre
Red Rose Chain	Red Rose Chain creates high quality film and theatre productions. Much of our work is developed through specialist workshops and gives a voice to marginalised groups.	No	Not much work in prisons
Streets Alive Theatre Company	Streets Alive Theatre Company works with young people aged 16 to 25 who are in housing crisis, usually living chaotic lifestyles in hostels, temporary accommodation or even street homeless.	No	Young offenders in community settings

Appendix 2: Invitation email

Dear [name]

I am researching the use and effectiveness of applied theatre practice with prisoners, and came across your details on the Anne Peaker web site. I am seeking the support of around four companies in this study, and as a key player in this field, I would be grateful if you would agree to take part.

The study will adopt a discourse analysis approach to examine work that resulted in health outcomes for prisoners. I aim to explore the extent to which interaction between different disciplines such as theatre and health is occurring in prison settings in the UK and, rather than trying to find out if the work of theatre companies is effective or not, the study will then explore how companies assess and evaluate their work and what methods or models they use. Thus, the focus is not in effectiveness itself, but in *how practitioners assess their effectiveness* which will assist in the understanding of evaluation practice and assist in future implementation and evaluation.

I fully appreciate that you may be busy, and if you choose to take part in this study the time involved will consist of a telephone or face-to-face interview with you or a member of your staff lasting no longer than an hour and then the provision of evaluation reports and recorded work (if you have any) for me to look through. Full details of the study will be made available to you when it is complete as well as any journal publications that arise as a result of it.

This research study is being conducted as part of a PhD study at the University of Manchester and is being supervised by Professor James Thompson. I have attached a more detailed outline of the research for you, but if you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch.

I do hope you are able to assist and look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

Ranjit Khutan

Appendix 3: Policies examined

Criminal justice

- 1998 Crime and Disorder act
- 1999 Youth, Justice and Criminal Justice act
- 1999 The Future Organisation of Prison Health Care
- 2002 National Offender Management Service Reducing Re-offending Action Plan

Health

- 1997 The New NHS Modern and Dependable
- 1998 Independent Inquiry into Inequalities in Health (also known as the Acheson Report)
- 1998 Our Healthier Nation, a Contract for Health
- 1999 Saving Lives, Our Healthier Nation
- 2000 NHS Plan: a Plan for Investment, a Plan for Reform
- 2003 Tackling Health Inequalities, a Programme of Action
- 2004 Choosing Health
- 2006 Our Health, Our Care, Our Say: a New Direction for Community Services
- 2010 Improving Health: the National Delivery Plan

Arts (and theatre)

- 1999 Boyden Report
- 2000 The Next Stage
- 2000 & 2008 National Policy for Theatre in England
- 2004 A Guide to Evaluating Arts Education Projects (Woolf)

Health and criminal justice

- 2001 Shifting the Balance of Power

Health and the arts

- 2010 Restoring the Balance: The Effect of Arts Participation on Wellbeing and Health

Other

- 2001 National strategy for neighbourhood renewal. Policy action team 10.
- 2010 Demonstrating effectiveness (Clinks)
- 2010 A new focus on measuring outcomes: where do we start? (Clinks)
- 2011 Demonstrating the Value of Arts in Criminal Justice (the Arts Alliance)

Appendix 4: Evaluation reports

Report code	Company	Report title	Year	Summary	Funding Source	Evaluation approach or methods	Evaluated by
CB/MS/10	Clean Break	Miss Spent	2010	A drama project for young women in at a Josephine Butler unit MHP Downview. Work with nine female offenders aged between 17 and 18, over 10 day period.	Funded by The Monument Trust (part of The Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts).	Worker reflection, case study observational reports on the development of the girls involved, self-assessment questionnaire, engagement matrix, interviews (individual and focus groups), interviews with education and prison staff.	Externally evaluated by independent evaluator Karin van Maanen.
CB/MO/09	Clean Break	Missing Out	2009	Play developed in partnership with prisoners and then toured around prisons in 2008.	Funded by a number of charitable trusts.	Recording the number of performances, prisoners who participated, watched the play etc. Written feedback forms, oral feedback during workshops.	Internally evaluated by Anna Hermann, Head of Education at Clean Break.
CB/B2L/03	Clean Break	Barriers to learning - Mental Health Project	2003	A project aimed at understanding the barriers to learning for women with mental health needs.	Company funded.	Using approaches from drama, the views of women who are in custody and those who have been released were sought. Interviews and focus groups.	Internally evaluated by Anna Hermann, Head of Education at Clean Break.

Report code	Company	Report title	Year	Summary	Funding Source	Evaluation approach or methods	Evaluated by
CB/WAA/05	Clean Break	Women and Anger	2005	15 x 2 hour sessions designed to enable women to address issues around self-control, victim awareness and attitudes to crime, communicate their anger better so to reduce the likelihood of harm to themselves or others within the community.	Funding source unknown.	Feeling angry questionnaire, cycle of change questionnaire, personal communication style questionnaire, participant feedback forms.	Independent evaluation by RE-Claim.
GE/IT/09	Geese	Inside Talk	2009	Aimed to improve the listening and speaking skills of offenders as well as looking at their attitudes to anger and violence and thinking skills. The programme used theatre performance, experiential exercises, skills practice role-plays and metaphors such as the mask to improve listening and speaking skills for offenders, particularly 'hard to reach' offenders who find more formal courses difficult.	Funding source unknown.	Pre and post-programme psychometric tests and interviews.	Independent evaluation by Centre for Forensic and Family Psychology, School of Psychology, University of Birmingham.
GE/I2I/07	Geese	Insult to Injury	2007	Drama-based programme to explore the processes of anger, aggression and violence.	Funding source unknown.	Pre and post-programme design using the tool: State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory-2.	Independent evaluation by Centre for Forensic and Family Psychology, School of Psychology, University of Birmingham.

Report code	Company	Report title	Year	Summary	Funding Source	Evaluation approach or methods	Evaluated by
GE/REC/08	Geese	Reconnect	2008	Theatre performance, experiential exercises, skills practice role-plays and metaphors such as the masks to invite the group to consider and explore issues connected with their release and re-connecting with a life outside prison.	Funding source unknown.	Pre and post-programme psychometric tests, behaviour ratings, and interviews.	Independent evaluation by Centre for Forensic and Family Psychology, School of Psychology, University of Birmingham.
SYN/TOU/09	Synergy	Tales of the Unexpected	2009	Playwriting course and then showcase to an audience within prison and outside.	Funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation.	Recording the audience numbers who viewed the performance, questionnaires for workshop participants and audience members.	Internal evaluation.
SYN/WN/09	Synergy	Write Now	2009	Playwriting course, drama workshops and then showcase to an audience within prison and outside.	Funded by the Arts Council England	Recording the audience numbers who viewed the performance, questionnaires for workshop participants and audience members.	Internal evaluation.
SYN/FO/09	Synergy	Fallout	2009	Playwriting course, drama workshops and then showcase to an audience within prison and outside.	Funded by the Trusthouse Charitable Foundation & Wates Foundation.	Recording the audience numbers who viewed the performance, questionnaires for workshop participants and audience members.	Internal evaluation.

Report code	Company	Report title	Year	Summary	Funding Source	Evaluation approach or methods	Evaluated by
SYN/NWP/06	Synergy	New Writing Project	2006	Intensive scriptwriting project to a group of 12 young people at a Pupil Referral Unit, all of whom are at risk of entering, or have already entered the criminal justice system.	Funded by the Trusthouse Charitable Foundation & Wates Foundation.	Questionnaires for workshop participants and observation of behaviour change.	Internal evaluation.
SYN/T2N/07	Synergy	Tagged to a number	2007	Script for the play devised in workshops with prisoners led by the playwright who was an ex-offender himself.	Funding source unknown.	Recording the audience numbers who viewed the performance, questionnaires for workshop participants and audience members.	Independent evaluation by Anne Peaker centre.
SYN/EK/06	Synergy	Elmina's Kitchen	2006	Script for the play devised in workshops with prisoners led by the playwright who was an ex-offender himself.	Funding source unknown.	Recording the audience numbers who viewed the performance, questionnaires for workshop participants and audience members. Use of an 'engagement matrix' to assess the changes that had taken place.	Independent evaluation by Anne Peaker centre.
TP/BLG/03	TiPP	The impact of <i>Blagg!</i> on challenging and reducing offending by young people	2003	Focus on offending behaviour and anger management - a drama based offending behaviour workshop (<i>Blagg!</i>) developed by TiPP.	Commissioned by Manchester and Bury Youth Offending Teams and TiPP.	Case studies of six implementations, monitoring of participants, questionnaires, interviews, recording reconviction rates.	Centre for Applied Theatre Research, University of Manchester.

Report code	Company	Report title	Year	Summary	Funding Source	Evaluation approach or methods	Evaluated by
TP/WTP/05	TiPP	What's the Point	2005-6	Evaluation of drama based Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) project. Arts Enrichment programme through PAYP with young people at risk.	Funded by Arts Council England.	Case study approach, participant numbers, video diaries, text messaging, questionnaires, observations.	Independent evaluation.

Appendix 5: Interview schedule

- Begin by providing the rationale for the study
- Check that the participant is happy for me to record their interview.

Interview questions:

Area: Current work

1. Please tell me a little about any current or recent drama projects in prisons that you have been involved in?

Area: Work in prisons with a health focus

2. Please tell me about work that you or your company has been involved in that has a health focus or leads to a health outcome.

- What was the project called, what was the aim, who did it involve?
- What was/were the health issue(s)?
- How was this health issue identified?
- Who funded the work?
- Did funding have an impact on how the work was carried out? (e.g. length of contact time, type of intervention)
- To what extent did this have an impact on how it was evaluated?

3. When working in prisons, in what ways do you feel drama can help to address health issues?

- Which health topics are more suited to the use of drama?
- Why are traditional health interventions not as useful in addressing these topics?

Area: Engagement with health partners

4. Describe what your working relationships have been with health partners?

- What were the benefits and what were some of the obstacles and challenges?
- Were there any differences, in working practice methods, than those of your own profession?

Area: Evaluation

[Still thinking about drama work in prisons that focuses on health outcomes]

5. What is your understanding of evaluation?

6. What would you say is that the purpose of evaluation?

7. What techniques and methods do you use when evaluating your work?

- What are some of the challenges you experience when evaluating your work
- Which models do you use? Or have you identified any useful methods of evaluation
- How do you share information about your work i.e. your evaluations

8. When working with health partners, what do you feel are their specific requirements around the evaluation of the work? How do these compare to your own requirements?

9. What three things would help you evaluate your work in prisons?

End.