

**Art Programs in Prison:
An Impact Study of Twelve Inmates in the Netherlands**



Painting by Interviewee Jaap

Bachelor's Extended Thesis

Maria Messner

3703916

Supervisor: Alexis Aronowitz

University College Utrecht

Spring 2013

Word Count: 17,798

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	5
2. PURPOSE OF STUDY.....	5
3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	6
4. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	6
4.1. The Historical Development of the Prison System in the Netherlands	6
4.2. Modernization plans of the Dutch prison system.....	10
4.3. Models of Rehabilitation in prisons.....	11
4.4. Art therapy in prison.....	13
4.5. Art therapy vs. art programs.....	14
4.6 Art programs in prisons.....	15
4.7 Use of Art in Dutch Prison.....	17
4.8 Evidence for psychological well-being.....	17
4.8.1 Autonomy.....	18
4.8.2 Environmental mastery.....	19
4.8.3 Personal growth & development.....	19
4.8.4 Self-acceptance.....	20
4.8.5 Art as communication	22
4.8.6 Art as a coping mechanism.....	23
4.9 Evidence for behavioral improvement	24
5. JUSTIFICATION FOR THE CURRENT STUDY.....	25
6. METHODOLOGY.....	25
6.1 Participants	25
6.2 Materials & Design.....	26
6.3 Procedure.....	27
6.4 The Art Program in De Geerhorst	27
6.5 Influence of Art Program Ideals on Interview Questions.....	28
7. ANALYSIS.....	29
7.1 Autonomy & Environmental mastery.....	29
7.2 Personal growth & development.....	31

7.3 Self-acceptance.....	34
7.4 Art as communication	35
7.5 Art as a coping mechanism.....	37
7.6 Behavior.....	39
7.7 Motivation.....	41
7.8 Uniqueness of Art Program.....	44
8. DISSCUSION.....	44
8.1 Relation to Previous Research.....	45
8.1.1 Facets of Psychological Well-Being.....	45
8.1.2 Art as Communication & Coping Mechanism.....	46
8.1.3 Effects on Behavior.....	47
8.2 Implications for the Modernization Plans of the Dutch Prison System.....	48
8.3 Implications for Rehabilitation Programs.....	49
8.4 Limitations of Current Study.....	49
9. CONCLUSION.....	50
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	51
REFERENCES.....	52
APPENDICES.....	56
A. Research proposal sent to Custodial Institutions Agency.....	56
B. Letter to Inmates.....	57
C. Interview Questions.....	58

1. INTRODUCTION

“Art is about risk-taking, self-exploration and self-expression; prison is about regulation, imposed controls and minimizing of risks. These two apparently incompatible words can combine in a fruitful partnership...” (Riches, 1994, 77)

Since its first evaluation, art programs have been viewed as unique opportunities for prisoners to express their emotions and help cope with the stressful environment of prison. It has not only positive effects on the individuals, but was also found to produce monetary benefits of around \$100,000 for each offender. Furthermore, it reduced aggressive incidence rates in a Californian prison by nearly 10% (Cleveland, 2000; Brune, 1999). Since this first finding in California, prisons across the United States, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands have discovered the positive effects of art programs. The effects are found in both the behavioral and psychological realm. Behaviorally, art may help offenders learn patience, delay of gratification and cooperation with others, resulting in less incidences of aggression. Psychologically, art may provide an important way of expressing oneself, coping, feelings of accomplishment and self-worth, autonomy and personal growth. These benefits are unique to the medium of art and thus, may provide a distinctive advantage to prison programs. The Dutch government has recently recognized these exclusive advantages of art programs and has included them as part of their person-oriented approach in their modernization plans of the Dutch prison system. In one Dutch prison, de Geerhorst, an art program has been offered for over twenty years and may provide essential information about the effects of art activities in prison. This study will profile and detail the experiences of current inmates in de Geerhorst and will further detail the behavioral and psychological effects of the art program.

2. PURPOSE OF STUDY

Art is powerful and unique; despite stories of its positive and life-changing effects, there has been little systematic research done of its use in stressful environments, such as prisons (Ezell & Levy, 2003; Mears, 2008). Although this is true, art programs have been utilized in many countries and have been active in Dutch prisons since the 1950's (Nelissen, 2000). Until

recently, with the desire to reduce recidivism by 10% in the Netherlands, re-integration programs have taken front stage in the Modernization Plans of the Dutch Prison System (Krabbendam & Nelissen, 2012). In this plan, creative activities are considered important for the successful re-integration of inmates to society. This paper will provide more evidence for the effects of these art programs in behavioral and psychological realms. Furthermore, it will detail what kind of offenders are attracted to these programs and detail their experiences. This paper is unique in the profiling of offenders as well as being the most current study done of art activities in the Netherlands. This study is important in furthering the database on art activities in prisons as well as providing empirical evidence for the person-oriented approach utilized in the new modernization plans of the Dutch government.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question of this study is the following:

- Does the art program in de Geerhorst prison have a positive effect on the inmates?

Additional questions that will be answered include:

- What offenders participate in art programs in de Geerhorst?
- In what ways has the art program affected elements of psychological well-being?
- What kind of behavioral changes have been found in the inmates?

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1 The Historical Development of the Prison System in the Netherlands

The history of prisons in the Netherlands is important to contextualize the modernization plans of the Dutch prison system. This section will not only review the history of prisons but will also discuss links with theories on the purpose of prisons, which are valid for several countries. At the end of the 16th century, prisons were first seen in the Netherlands (Nelissen, 2000). The purpose of this prison system in the Netherlands was rooted in the consequentialist approach (Newburn, 2007). This approach justified punishment on the basis of what it will achieve in the future, thus, it is forward-looking. This approach is based off of principles of utilitarianism. The utility of

punishment in this view is to prevent or reduce crime. Advocates of the consequentialist approach explain that this can be done through three ways: deterrence, rehabilitation and incapacitation. Punishment has two deterrent effects: 1) imposing it deters potential offenders (called general deterrence) and 2) it can deter those who have already offended from doing so again (called individual deterrence) (Newburn, 2007). Deterrence was the main focus in this period, thus, criminals were locked up in correctional houses and were often forced to do hard labor. This was thought to add structure and order to the inmates' life. The most important form of sanctioning, though, was the use of bodily harm or even death to punish criminals for their crime. However due to changes in attitudes on punishment, in the early years of the 19th century this type of punishment was seen as uncivilized. Prisons began to be more localized and were meant to not only punish prisoners but also help better them. In 1821, the Royal Decree on the Organization of Prisons ('Koninklijk Besluit houdende de Organisatie der Gevangenen') noted the poor conditions of the prisoners and mandated standards for food, clothing and hygienic practices. Furthermore, prisons began to differentiate and house only particular groups (ie. those sentenced and those not, men, women, children, adults) (Nelissen, 2000).

In the 19th century, religious views colored the view and use of punishment. It was thought that criminals committed crimes because their souls were morally corrupt. Thus, the 'treatment' needed to involve a change in the inner thoughts of the criminal; this was accomplished through locking a prisoner alone in a cell, with little contact with other prisoners. By 1847, the importance of education, even for the incarcerated population, was found to be imperative in the change of the prisoner. Those who were in the larger prisons were given education in math, reading, writing and some specific expertise. In 1886, the cellular system of prisons was introduced in Dutch law. The prisoner at this time had little rights and had several duties through the prison, still for the purpose of moral betterment (Nelissen, 2000).

In the 20th century a new science emerged, the study of crime. With the rise of criminology, there was more attention given towards hereditary, social and psychological origins of crime. Many academics, including criminologists, anthropologists and sociologists, argued that the behavior of the criminal was due to causes outside of the inmate's influence. This led to a shift in views of prisoners and again, their treatment. The consequentialist approach still reigned but then with an emphasis on rehabilitation (Newburn, 2007). The New Way ('de Nieuwe Richting') argued that locking up prisoners was not good for their future functioning. At

the same time others argued that society needed to be protected and prison was important in deterring people from committing crime. Between the two wars, there was much discussion about the origins of crime but little changed in the system itself. It wasn't until after the Second World War, in 1953, when the laws began to try to address these problems. In the principle law and prison procedures (*Beginselenwet en Gevangenismaatregel*), they first mentioned re-socialization. It was then defined as assisting in the preparation for the return of inmates to society (“de voorbereiding van de terugkeer van gedetineerden in het maatschappelijk leven”, Nelissen, 2000, 44). With this, inmates received greater freedom within the prison. There was an increase in social and psychologically based activities. Despite the popularity of this idea, experts of criminology found that the theories behind the re-socialization in the Netherlands had no coherent theoretical basis. The policy makers had combined a mix of psychological concepts, theories of social work and other thoughts about humanity as well as conventional norms. At the end of the 1960's it was thus concluded that the treatment was too peripheral and that recidivism was not emphasized enough (Nelissen, 2000).

Criticism of re-socialization continued into the 1970's with the publication of national and international research that found imprisonment failed in re-socializing individuals. Martinson published a book reviewing the empirical evidence of rehabilitation programs and concluded ‘nothing works’ (Newburn, 2007). Studies even found that staying in prisons could have perverse effects on the integration of inmates (Nelissen, 2000). Creating bonds within the community was thus deemed a responsible goal for detention. Still, skepticism continued and was evident in policies; budget cuts put pressure on staff of prisons, there was a shortage of cells and the freedom of movement for inmates was reduced. This emphasis on cost, efficiency and automation resulted in visions of retribution and punitive measures (Nelissen, 2000). The mid-1970s is when this approach to punishment began to become popular: retributivism. This backward-looking approach justifies punishment by saying that the offender is held to deserve it (Newburn, 2007). There was an emergence of ‘new retributivism’ which birthed the just deserts theory. This theory says that punishment should be proportionate to the harm caused. They argue that this is important so that a moral sense of wrong being is the reason for obeying the law rather than fear. Although this approach has caught a lot of attention and support in the last decades, notably in government policies of highly punitive and exclusionary strategies, criticisms have also been strong. Firstly, it is complicated to enforce: it is difficult to order offenses

proportionally. Furthermore, proportionality may not be the primary aim of sentencing as just desert theorists propose. Secondly, this theory does not regard social conditions that have been shown to influence criminality. Thirdly, it severely individualizes and over-rationalizes offending behavior (Newburn, 2007).

In this time of criticism and shift in approach to prison, the Dutch prison system needed clearer goals and direction. In the 1990's three core principles were developed that hoped to give a clear direction for the prison system: safety, dignity and appropriateness. Firstly, safety was to be accomplished through locking and hold dangerous individuals. It also included setting up effective reintegration programs. Secondly, dignity was to improve the quality of the rules and care of inmates, particularly, through preventing the physical and psychological worsening of criminal thoughts and behaviors. Finally, appropriateness or efficiency, involves understanding risk assessment and placing attention on individuals with most need (Nelissen, 2000). These goals are a clear reflection on a general movement towards 'new retributivism' (Newburn, 2007). Although these core principles gave some direction, there were still problems not properly addressed in the Dutch prison system.

It is important to note, for the sake of the purpose of this study, that although prison sentences became longer and governments took a more punitive approach, (Sundt et al, 1998; Petersilia, 2005; Cullen, Jonson & Nagin, 2011), rehabilitation still has a strong voice in the criminal justice system. Rehabilitation is arguably one of the most important ways to try and reduce recidivism. Prison as a punishment does not seem to deter people from committing crime, as evident in this "era of mass imprisonment" (Cullen et al, 2011, 613). Furthermore, several studies have noted a criminogenic effect of prisons. A review of four studies showed that incarceration resulted in a 7% increase in recidivism when compared to a community sanction (Cullen et al, 2011). A study done in the Netherlands of people who had been imprisoned for the first time, found that first-time imprisonment was associated with an increase in criminal activity, even when level of risk was matched. This result was even found across several offense types (Nieuwbeerta et al, 2009). Although there is report of public support for being 'tough on crime', other studies have found that people see rehabilitation as a legitimate correctional objective (Sundt et al, 1998). Perhaps the rehabilitation approach is in need of taking a different direction. Ward and Maruna (2007) argue that there is too much of an obsession with finding out what works and that our viewpoint needs to change into 'what helps people go straight'. They, as

well as other researchers, are trying to find out why certain people do not return to prisons (Bucklen & Zajac, 2009). Rehabilitation, with an emphasis on re-integration, may be the most integral facet of prison and may provide a solution for reducing recidivism.

The reformation and improvements in the Dutch prison system in the 2000's reflect many of these arguments for the importance of rehabilitation with a special focus on re-integration. New objectives were put in place to address the goals set out by the Dutch cabinet. In 2007, the prison system identified several reasons for change in policy including better cooperation between the prison system and chain partners, improving working and living conditions with the prison, dealing with more serious and complex behavioral problems better, changing capacity standards and implementing the financial task-setting of the CIA (Krabbendam & Nelissen, 2012). Furthermore, the recidivism rates continue to be a problem in the Netherlands. More than half of the ex-inmates of both prisons and juvenile detention centers come in contact with the judicial system crime within two years of release (Wartna et al, 2011). These reasons for policy change as well as the high recidivism rates demand a new program for the Dutch prison system, hence the birth of the Modernization Plans of the Dutch Prison system.

4.2 Modernization Plans of Dutch Prison System

Recently, there has been a desire for the prison system to be more transparent and in harmony with the political, social and economical issues in the Netherlands (Krabbendam & Nelissen, 2012). Furthermore, the prison system has been given an objective by the cabinet to reduce recidivism by 10% from 2008 to 2013 (Krabbendam & Nelissen, 2012). This calls for the implantation of a new, improved and modernized prison system. The modernization plan of the Dutch prison system clearly states their aim: re-integration. The program hopes to improve personal and social functioning of inmates in hopes to achieve lower rates of recidivism and thus, a safer society. This will be implemented through a person-oriented approach in which each offender will be assessed and a personal plan will be made for his/her sentence. This personal plan will include a wide range of activities which should offer hope for the future, increase motivation for re-integration and raise self-reliance/self-regulating skills. These re-entry activities include not only behavioral interventions but also creative, educational and sport activities to allow the inmate to experience success in improving skills in various life areas

(Krabbendam & Nelissen, 2012). One of these re-entry activities is a creative activity, which is the inspiration and importance of this thesis.

4.3 Models of Rehabilitation in Prisons

Rehabilitation has long been an important concept in criminology. Within this study of criminology, three models of rehabilitation have reigned. In the 1990's the Risk-Need-Responsivity Model was developed. This model says there are three principles that are integral to the rehabilitation process. Firstly, the risk principle: the level of the program intensity should match the offender risk level. Secondly, the need principle: programs should target criminogenic needs. Thirdly, the responsivity principle: the mode and style of the intervention should be fitting to the offender's learning style and abilities (Andrews, Bonta & Wormith, 2011). This model has received a lot of empirical support in reducing recidivism and has even been effective for difficult groups like sex offenders (Andrews et al, 2011). Although it has been found to be effective, there have been several criticisms of this model: namely that this model pays insufficient attention to human agency, it minimizes the role of motivation, it downplays the relevance of contextual or ecological factors and it favors one size fits all (Andrews et al, 2011). These criticisms were mainly brought from the developers of the Good Lives Model.

In 2003 the Good Lives model, which originates from positive psychology (Sun, 2008), was first written about (Andrews et al, 2011). This model emphasizes the role of human motivation and agency in criminal behavior. The core idea of this model is that all meaningful human actions reflect attempts to achieve primary human goods (Ward & Brown, 2004). These primary goods emerge from basic human needs. They propose that basic human needs should be addressed in offender rehabilitation programs. These basic needs are friendship, enjoyably work, loving relationships, creative pursuits, sexual satisfaction, positive self-regard and an intellectually challenging environment. By addressing these needs, some obstacles which previously blocked offenders from living a fulfilling life, can be removed (Ward & Brown, 2004). Through the use of cognitive behavioral interventions many of these needs can be addressed. These interventions should involve a treatment plan which takes into account the offender's preferences, strengths, primary goods, relevant environments, resources, etc. available to achieve these goods (Ward & Brown, 2004). If and when these needs are addressed, the best interest of the offenders is utilized and will result in a psychologically healthy individual

(Andrews et al, 2011). This model suggests it is not only important to measure risk, needs and suitability for treatment but that it is also important to interview inmates about personal goals and priorities (Sun, 2008). Furthermore, this approach makes rehabilitation contextualized and promotes personal identity as it relates to daily choices and actions (Ward & Brown, 2004). This model has been criticized as being too optimistic and also too simplistic (Ward, Mann & Gannon, 2007). It may not be possible to reach the goal of promoting these primary goods with individuals who are dangerous and live in hostile environments. Furthermore, offender's primary goals may also be deviant.

The most recent rehabilitation model was featured in the 11th volume in 2012 of the scientific journal, *Criminology and Public Policy*. This model is called the signaling perspective. It originates from labor economics, where it is used to explain why a university degree expresses more than an educational achievement. In labor economics the university degree is referred to as a 'signal', it says something about the person due to the process not necessarily due to its relationship to work productivity (Bushway & Apel, 2012). Several authors have contributed to *Criminology and Public Policy* and argued that this model has important implications for rehabilitation programs in prisons (Bushway & Apel, 2012; Maruna, 2012; Mears & Mestre, 2012). Its application to criminology revolves around the common fact of desistance which is often referred to in studies of developmental criminology. Sampson and Laub were founders in the idea of desistance which finds that as people age; they discontinue committing criminal acts (Newburn, 2007). The criminologists in favor of the signaling perspective argue that there are ways that criminals signal they are on the trajectory of desistance. These signals are "voluntary enrollment, active participation and successful completion of prison and community based employment programs" (Bushway & Apel, 2012, 33). Thus, an inmate participating voluntarily in a rehabilitation program may be inadvertently showing their position on the life course of crime. They argue that these inmates should be able to show, through the use of a certificate or some form of legitimization, that they are potentially productive and safe individuals for the society (Maruna, 2012). This process of accreditation acts as symbolic capital for inmates and may help them transition better into society. Furthermore, it provides people outside of the prison (ie. employment agencies) with information about the commitments and motives of ex-convicts (Bushway & Apel, 2012). This model of rehabilitation

has important implications for art programs in this prison and may help further goals of re-integration.

4.4 Art Therapy in Prison

Although visual expression has been used for healing throughout history, art therapy did not arise as a profession until the 1940's (American Art Therapy Association, 2012). The American Art Therapy Association (2012) defines art therapy as "the therapeutic use of art making, within a professional relationship by people who experience illness, trauma or challenges in living, and by people who seek personal development". Art created in these therapy sessions are analyzed, often psychoanalytically as a reflection of unconscious thoughts and processes, thus the art work serves as a bridge between fantasy and reality (Lande & Howie, 1997). Art therapy is unique in comparison with other talk therapies; it offers certain benefits that other therapies cannot offer. Firstly, its uses the means of non-verbal communication, thus, for those with a deficit or difficulty in verbal ability, art therapy offers an easier way for some to express themselves (Liebmann, 1994). In the same vein, subject matters that may be difficult or embarrassing to talk about may be easier to discuss since the art work acts as a bridge. Furthermore, it is a form of self-expression for experiences which are hard to put into words. It is a safe and suitable way to releasing feelings, which may be unacceptable (ie. anger, aggression). Since clients make art work in the therapy sessions, there is a concrete object to reflect and look back on. Finally, it requires active participation which encourages engagement in the therapeutic process (Liebmann, 1994).

"Where prison walls can contain the body, art therapy can contain fears and feelings, and image making can liberate the mind. With this freedom may come real change, growth and responsibility" (Murphy, 1994, 37). Murphy (1994) illustrates that the unique points of art therapy are applicable to the prison setting. Gussak (2009a) supports this in detailing the advantages of art therapy in prison. Art therapy is helpful in consideration of the disabilities often present in the prison population (ie. low education, low verbal ability, illiteracy and difficulty in verbal communication). It also permits inmates to express their emotions in a way that is acceptable both to the prison culture as well as the culture outside of it. Art therapy can also bypass unconscious and conscious defenses which may hinder the therapeutic process. It also supports creative activity in prison which can give a necessary diversion and emotional

escape in a demanding environment (Gussak, 2009a). The creation of art in art therapy also offers an opportunity for increased self-awareness, the use of decision making skills and increased self-esteem (Harrington, 1997).

Since art therapy appeared to have great advantages to the prison population, it has been utilized in several prisons in the United States. David Gussak has done years of research, mainly in Florida, on the effectiveness of art therapy in prisons (Gussak, 2006, 2007, 2009a, 2009b). His studies use a pre-test, post-test design with a control group which receives no art therapy treatment. Gussak found in 2003 that there were significant decreases in depressive symptoms in the experimental group. He also found improvements in mood, participant's attitudes and acceptance of each other and their environment. Furthermore, he found improvement in the participant's interactions with peers and staff. In a follow-up study, he found again a significant decrease in scores on Beck's Depression Inventory in comparison with the control group (Gussak, 2006). These results were replicated in yet another study in 2007. He expanded his research by considering not only the effectiveness of art therapy in reducing depression but also in the concept of locus of control. Locus of control is "the degree of control that someone feels he or she has over his or her environment" (Gussak, 2009, 203). It is thought that criminals have external locus of control in that they have the tendency to believe that outside forces control their behavior. A 'healthier' view of one's behavior would be of internal locus of control, where an individual attributes their behavior to their own control or responsibility (Gussak, 2009). In one study he found approaching significance of pre-test, post-test scores on the Adult Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale (ANS). In another study he found that both male and female inmates reported a significant decrease in external locus of control. This study also had a high effect size of .6 and .7 respectively (Gussak, 2009). This supports that art therapy can "put responsibility for past actions firmly in the person's own hands. This can be painful, but may also be a first step to acceptance and integration" (Murphy, 1994, 32). Gussak's studies have provided substantial evidence that art therapy can contribute to significant changes in the psychological well-being of inmates.

4.5 Art Therapy vs. Art Program

As previously discussed, the Prison System Modernization Program in the Netherlands will offer a creative element to their person-oriented re-integration plan. This creative element, which is

the topic of this research, is not an art therapy session but rather an art program. The distinctions between these two approaches are important since they differ in aim, structure and implementation. Firstly, the main difference is in aim. Art therapy focuses on the personal processes of the participant. That process is of primary importance whereas the art work is secondary; “a painting is the means to an end, not an end itself.” (Riches, 1994, 80) In art programs the purpose is opposite; the main aim is creating a piece of art. The participant, through accomplishing their goal, will experience and find many benefits (Liebmann, 1994). This explains why art in itself is considered “therapeutic” (Riches, 1994, 81). Secondly, the structures of the two programs are different. Art therapy uses a trained therapist who uses the creative expression to generate insight for treatment, the healing process or diagnosis of the client (Singer, 2010; Ezell & Levy, 2003). Furthermore, art therapy is an established therapy that has its own diagnostic tools, tactics and theories on interpretation of art. In an art program, the lessons are led by educators or artists who focus on the creative process and the production of a piece of art (Singer, 2010). They teach, assist or give lessons to the clients in producing a particular piece of art, technique or medium. There is no diagnosing or healing purposefully taking place in these sessions. These distinctions are important to remember in further looking at the benefits of art programs for inmates.

4.6 Art Programs in Prison

One of the first art programs began in 1977 in a prison in Vacaville, California (Cleveland, 2000). In this program, the Prison Arts Project, professional artists gave workshops for several mediums of art (poetry, drawing, painting, and ceramics). This pilot project was received enthusiastically by the inmates; spots filled up quickly and dropout rates were extremely low. The framework of the program was to have a “model of creative self-discipline and show the making of art as work which demands quality, commitment and patience” (Cleveland, 2000, 77). The artist as well as the prison staff began to notice a reduction in tension and violence within the prison. Since the project made a difference within that prison they decided to create a statewide program entitled Arts-in-Corrections. With the growing popularity and noticeable changes, Dr. Brewster, a sociologist, was independently contracted to conduct a cost-benefit analysis in 1983 (Cleveland, 2000). He found that the program produced benefits of \$228,522 with a cost of \$135,885. Furthermore, he discovered a reduction in incidence rates in the prison

of nearly 10% (Brune, 1999). His report astonished politicians, policy makers, academics and the public alike, leading to a statewide visual art exhibition displaying prison art for a crowd of more than 50,000 people (Cleveland, 2000).

This stirred on other states to create institutionalized, statewide programs, for example, the Mural Arts Program in Philadelphia. This program allowed inmates to give back to the community by painting murals throughout the city (Brune, 1999). There is also the “Rehabilitation through Arts in New York” which found that of the 12 ex-participants, 10 are living prison-free lives (Brune, 1999). Another study done in California in 1999 found that inmates who participated in the art program had 20% lower recidivism rates (Harrington, 1997). There are also several types of programs that use different mediums of art, such as theater and music that have shown to even have long term impacts on social and communication skills, greater control of emotions and engagement (Jacobi, 2008; Wilson, Caulfield & Atherton, 2008).

Although art programs have seen budget cuts in recent years in the United States, there are successful and running programs in the United Kingdom. Art programs are utilized there in prisons as well as underprivileged neighborhoods. They use these programs to combat social exclusion since they have found evidence that it has both individual and community-wide effects (Jermyn, 2001). Research in Ireland, Austria and the UK found that community-based art activities helped develop personal skills, social cohesion, self-worth, awareness and identity in the participants involved (Jermyn, 2001). They declared that art activities utilize a certain type of learning which is related to renewal, critical reflection and transformation; all elements that exemplify human development (Jermyn, 2001). In a large scale study with 243 participants, adults reported improvements in self-confidence, practical and social skills and desire to become involved in community activities as a result of the art program (Jermyn, 2001). Many of the studies in the UK look at community-based art activities, but they are also arguably relevant to the prison environment. Furthermore, evidence for improvements in interactions between guards and inmates in prisons after an inmate attends art classes may indicate an underlying community-level aspect that art programs address. This is further supported in a large scale study on art in prison settings in England and Wales. They found that the benefits were personal, educational, social, recreational and commercial (Jermyn, 2001).

4.7 Use of Art in Dutch Prisons

The history of art in prisons started after the Second World War in the Netherlands. After this war, inmates were given an opportunity to make crafts. Particularly in the 1950's, creative activities were given substantial attention in prisons. This was most likely due to the focus on re-socialization and social/psychological activities taking place in prisons. Talented inmates were even allowed to create murals and other decorative arts within the prison building. The support for art activities continued into the 1970's were several initiatives for art activities began. Many of these activities were supported and set-up through artists. In the 1980's the cooperation between art centers and prisons increased. The Ministry of Cultural Recreation and Social Work (Ministerie van Cultuur Recreative en Maatschappelijk Werk) began subsidizing art projects in prisons. These activities were considered important for the personal development of the inmates, his/her relationships with others and awareness of the socio-cultural environment. In the early 1990's some research was collected to consider the effects of the art programs. At that point in time, 95% of prisons in the Netherlands offered art activities. In 1993, notes given to the local advisor revealed that the art programs helped better the relationships between guards and inmates, the inmates could function better in a group and the inmates reported feelings of self-worth. Although the reports in the 1990's showed positive effects of art activities in prisons, there seemed to be a change in the form of such activities. In some prisons it was given very little attention whereas in others it was a blooming activity. Currently, these activities are still offered but in many prisons it is only for particular prisoners, such as those who are motivated, those struggling with addiction or diagnosed with psychiatric problems. In general, the opportunity to participate in art activities has decreased for most inmates. These activities are in clear need of re-evaluation and accreditation, especially since there has been little research carried out since the 1990's (Nelissen, 2000).

4.8 Evidence for Improvements in Psychological Well-Being

Psychological well-being is an umbrella term that is defined differently by various disciplines of psychology. Ryff (1995) created a conceptual framework which brings together a breadth of wellness that includes the following six facets of one's life: purpose in life, environmental mastery, positive relationships, autonomy, personal growth, self acceptance. These six markers of one's life reflect overall psychological well-being. There is evidence for many of these

markers in the literature about art programs, however purpose in life and positive relationships have not been researched. This section will thus look at the evidence for improvements in four of the six indicators. Additionally, art as communication and a coping mechanism will also be considered due to the ample amount of evidence for this in art programs in prison.

4.8.1 *Autonomy*

Autonomy is one of the three organismic psychological needs which help develop a natural motivation for learning, growing and development within a person (Reeve, 2009). Autonomy is defined as “the psychological need to experience self-direction and personal endorsement in the initiation and regulation of one’s behavior” (Reeve, 2009, 146). Autonomy involves perceived locus of control (as discussed in the section on art therapy), volition and perceived choice. These three elements are evident in art programs available in prison. Not only have the therapeutic benefits of art shown that an individual has a more stable, internal locus of control (Gussak, 2009a) but art programs also are voluntary and are offered as a choice, allowing decision-making flexibility in the rigid, mundane and controlled set-up of prison. It is therefore not surprising to find that studies have found increased sense of autonomy among participants of art programs. Gibbons (1997) shared that the women prisoners she studied were able to attain moments of special freedom, personal release and accomplishment, thus, experiencing personal autonomy.

“The hallmark of a person is that he orders his life by his own deliberate choices.” (Riches, 1994, 97) This quote reflects the life course research that has been done about desistance. Some cognitive factors have been found to be primary contributors to criminal desistance. Of these three factors, two reflect autonomy: greater control over one’s life and destiny and take responsibility for shaping one’s future (Bielby, 1997). Autonomy may indirectly play a role in desistance and also may be the first step towards personal development. Autonomy has been found to support engagement, increase conceptual understanding and information processing, lead to greater performance and increased psychological well-being (Reeve, 2009). The benefits of autonomy come through the supportive structure of the environment and the actions of the person. When this psychological need is satisfied, the inherent growth potential is energized (Reeve, 2009). Thus, autonomy may play an integral role in personal development in the life course, which is extremely valuable to rehabilitative work.

4.8.2 *Environmental Mastery*

Mastery beliefs are a conceptual cousin to autonomy and related to perceived locus of control (Gibbs Puzanchera, Hanrahan & Giever, 1998; Reeve, 2009). This has been found to be a part of the process of art programs: “the mastery of art still requires patience, self-discipline, and long term commitment.” (Cleveland, 2000, 87) This reflects a mastery motivational orientation where a person responds to undesirable difficulties and setbacks with remaining task focused and on achieving mastery (Reeve, 2009). The skills of patience, delaying gratification and self-discipline are certainly goals important for the incarcerated population. One of the risk factors for antisocial behavior in children, adolescents and adults deals with deficits in these areas. These are neuropsychological deficits, namely problems associated with self-regulation and planning, which are found in the incarcerated population (Bartol & Bartol, 2011). Improvements in these areas alone are essential to “an inmate’s ability to function responsibly after release” (Cleveland, 2000, 87).

“When people lack the skills and strategies to modify at least some of their social situations, feelings of helplessness usually result.” (Bartol & Bartol, 2011) Helplessness involves a fragile view of self, withdrawal, giving up when things get difficult and acting as if a situation is outside of one’s control (Reeve, 2009). Mastery is the opposite of this and has been found to combat feelings of helplessness. Gibbons (1997) recognized that mastery gained through creative activity helped minimize feelings of victimization and helplessness. Thus gains in mastery belief can help inmates who generally fall apart in the face of setbacks to become energized through setbacks. Art programs may help increase mastery beliefs, thus teaching inmates how to persevere when things get tough.

4.8.3 *Personal Growth & Development*

Personal growth is another marker of psychological well-being. A person experiencing high personal growth is someone who sees him/herself as emerging and expanding, who is open to new experiences, sense of realizing their potential and who sees improvement in their self and behavior over time (Ryff, 1995). Art programs have had an effect in this facet of psychological well-being through various ways. Firstly, cognitively, art seems to help enable people to acquire knowledge about their environment through their senses (Riches, 1994). This sensory perception helps enlarge awareness of one’s self and how one fits in society and/or their environment.

Another study also found that the most chronic and violent youth offenders who participated in art programs had a greater sense of cultural awareness and community identity after the program (Ezell & Levy, 2003). Secondly, through learning, art programs also help inmates realize their potential. Art programs are a non-traditional way of learning; it is learning by doing which is attractive to inmates and may help them achieve objectives (Riches, 1994). In many cases offenders do achieve their goals, in Ezell & Levy (2003), 60% of the chronic delinquents learned vocational skills. They also were successful in their goal attainment and for those who participated in the art programs; they had much higher rates of high school graduation than those who did not (Ezell & Levy, 2003). Jermyn (2001) argues that this type of learning that art participants experience is related to renewal, critical reflection and transformation which characterize human development. A large scale study looking at over 200 adult inmates found that those who participated in arts reported personal development benefits. These included self-confidence, practical and social skills and becoming involved in community activities (Jermyn, 2001). This is arguably a form of human capital; such developments in people's education and skills can increase their personal effectiveness (Jermyn, 2001). Through art awareness of one's place in the environment is broadened and through learning one sees improvement in self and their potential increases, all leading to psychological well-being.

4.8.4 *Self-Acceptance*

Self-acceptance is defined by Ryff (1995) as someone who possesses positive attitude toward self, acknowledges and accepts multiple aspects of self and feels positive about life. Several studies have shown the impact of art on self-esteem, sense of value and worth and self-expression which are a reflection of the level of self-acceptance. "For members of our society who are confined physically or emotionally, access to the creative process through the arts, provides a vital link to self-expression and self-esteem, to productivity and potency" (Cleveland, 2000, 85). In producing a piece of art, inmates experience a sense of personal satisfaction which often results in an increase of self-worth (Riches, 1994). Self-worth is improved by admiration from staff, other inmates and family/friends that visit and see their art work. The actual completion of the art work is not the only encouraging and uplifting part that results in increased self-esteem, the freedom given in the process also seems to be essential (Riches, 1994). The ability to choose, even within limits, what an inmate makes as well as how they will accomplish it, lays the

foundation for an increase of self-respect. The impact of the process and set-up of the program is also affected by the artists/instructor. The instructor plays a role in affirming the prisoner's dignity and can be seen as a facilitator or catalyst of the inmate's self-esteem (Riches, 1994).

Empirically the link between self-esteem and art programs in prison is strong. In a study done by Harrington (1997), inmates recognized and reported an increase in self-esteem and status enhancement. In an art program for the most violent and chronic youth delinquents, 70% reported positive feelings with the project and 17% had feelings of accomplishment (Ezell & Levy, 2003). The artists working with these youth also noticed improvements in engagement, that the youth were happy with the program and that they were more open in sharing personal issues (Ezell & Levy, 2003). In a meta-analysis of ninety art projects, 91% of the participants said that self-esteem contributed most to personal improvements, followed closely by 82% who said self-confidence was also a contributing factor (Jermyn, 2001). In her study of a two women's prisons in Australia, Jacqueline Gibbons (1997) found that women were able to maintain and define their selves through the therapeutic and cathartic elements of their art program. Neil shared his opinion about the effects of the art program in his prison in England, "I think art can and does help one to find out about oneself. It helps an individual grow and also will enhance his view of himself" (Riches, 1994, 90). He continued by saying that many prisoners have a very low opinion of themselves, which contributes to their unsocial behavior.

Criminologists have long studied the possible link between self-esteem and crime. Some have argued that self-esteem is a mediating response in aggression (Scheff, Retzinger & Ryan, 1989). To illustrate, a person with low self-esteem has more negative expectations and therefore may be more sensitive to disapproval and therefore more easily frustrated. A series of experiments found support of this by comparing the reactions to verbal attacks on subjects of high and low self-esteem. Interestingly, although the low self-esteem group was more angered they also showed more constraint in expressing their anger (Scheff et al, 1989). Yet still other studies have found that boys who are aggressive tend to interpret events more hostile, as predicted by the hostile aggression theory, and often have low self-worth. Stemming from this research is Kaplan's esteem-enhancement model of deviance which proposes that "delinquent behavior serves to enhance self-esteem for individuals who have experienced failure and lowered self-esteem" (Scheff et al, 1989, 170). Although research has not shown a causal link between

self-esteem and crime, there seems to be a relationship between low self-esteem and aggression. Art programs contribute to a higher self-esteem which may indirectly affect deviant behaviors.

4.8.5 *Art as Communication*

The ability to communicate one's ideas, struggles and emotions are an integral part of the human experience. For the prison population this is a struggle since many inmates have low verbal ability (Riches, 1994; Bartol & Bartol, 2011; Singer, 2010). This hindrance can be succumbed through art. Art, in itself, integrates intellect, emotion as well as manual skill in order to explore and express personal experiences (Riches, 1994). Implicit in this process is communication; however, this type of communication takes a visual form, which allows a unique way of communication for those struggling with low verbal ability. Furthermore, prisoners tend to be reluctant in exploring or expressing personal experiences and feelings (Riches, 1994). This can be due to several reasons: fear of criticism, fear of misunderstanding followed by ridicule and the fear of being uncovered. Thus art may be an unthreatening medium for inmates to dispose of their emotions. The artist leading the art class has an integral role in this process of communication. In order to have a positive and safe environment the artist must help create trust, give encouragement and guidance to the inmate (Riches, 1994).

Art is also an important form of communication because it allows inmates to express emotion in "a safe and eloquent manner" (Singer, 2010, 185). An inmate in an art program shared this important realization he made during the art classes: "This", he said, "is an area where art comes in, because when you express yourself in a way which is good and constructive, you realize that there is more than one way. There is another way" (Riches, 1994, 90). This is an important point to reiterate since lack of emotional control is a core element in several theories that explain why criminals commit crimes, particularly violent crimes. Most famously, Gottfredson and Hirschi's general theory of crime explains all types of criminal acts through lack of self-control (Newburn, 2007). The hydraulic model explains violence as a buildup of frustrations and anger (Bartol & Bartol, 2011). Thus one of the main values of art programs is "to express needs, frustrations or feelings that would otherwise remain unarticulated" (Jermyn, 2001, 20) or expressed in detrimental ways.

Furthermore, some studies have found that the communication produced in the art room in a prison extends beyond that realm. Inmates have given art to family, attorneys or friends as a

memorabilia for them and as way to communicate their love, guilt, gratefulness, support, etc. (Harrington, 1997; Riches, 1994). In terms of re-integration, art may be a good bridge for opening communication lines to the outside world through the paintings produced.

4.8.6 *Art as a Coping Mechanism*

Art programs have found to be “pockets of calmness” (Gibbons, 1997, 75) in the midst of the controlling and stressful arena of prison. It is hypothesized that art programs are utilized by inmates as a coping mechanism. Coping mechanisms/strategies are conscious, purposeful efforts with the intent to manage or solve a problem in a given situation (Cramer, 1998). In a study of male inmates, it was found that inmates used the creative process to bear and adjust to their new environment (Singer, 2010). When the art themes employed by inmates in their art work were analyzed, images were found that symbolized inner escape fantasies. Thus, inmates used the art to play out anger and also symbolically ask for redemption and atonement, with the Christian cross often being portrayed (Singer 2010). Harrington (1997) also found that death row inmates referred to their time of doing art as a time to escape. They claimed it was then possible to focus on something else besides their looming death as well as keep their mind occupied. Furthermore, similar results were found in a study that looked at female inmates. The female inmates experience alleviation of traumatic symptoms and rehabilitative healing through their creative activities (Singer, 2010). Gibbons (1997) found this was also true in two women prisons in Australia. She found that although many inmates had problems with grief, anger and depression, much of their emotional stress was alleviated through the availability of self-expression. Gibbons (1997) attributed this finding to the cathartic process; that the workings of art allows one to explore, express and escape from states of distress or pain resulting in successful coping of negative emotional affect. Riches (1994) agreed in arguing that the prisoners they studied experienced relief from stress through the exploration, communication and diffusion of their emotions. Thus, there is support for art programs acting as coping mechanisms to help inmates escape, alleviate stress and other negative emotions and to endure the stressful environment of prison.

4.9 Evidence for Behavioral Improvement

Although psychological well-being is an important facet of crime, behavioral changes may be a better indicator of behavioral improvement. Therefore, research of art programs has also looked at the behavioral indications of such activities. One of the most common measures of behavioral changes within prison is incidence rates or discipline reports which are interpreted as reflections of institutional aggression. Institutional aggression has been found to be generally predictive of post-release recidivism (Mooney & Daffern, 2011). In a meta-analysis of sixty-eight studies, the programs that were most effective in reducing levels of misconduct in prison also resulted in reduced rates of recidivism (Gendreau et al, 1996). Thus, if art programs show reductions in incidence rates in prison this may be predictive of future recidivism.

One of the first major studies looking at art programs was that conducted by sociologist, Dr. Brewster, in California. He found a 10% decrease in incidence rates for those who participated in the arts program (Cleveland, 2000). During a 13-month period, Harrington (1997) found a reduction of 29% in discipline reports for participants in the art program. Harrington (1997) also found that six very disruptive prisoners show significant reductions in troublesome behavior. The guards and managers of the wing also reported improvements in prisoners' attitude to work and ability to occupy themselves in their cells. Another study that looked at art workshops that were given for youth delinquents found a significant decrease in incident reports (Ezell & Levy, 2003). On average 3.331 incidents were reported prior to the workshops and during the workshops the average decreased by two-thirds to 1.21. This study also followed the youth after the release and found that of those who participated in the art workshops, only 16.7% recidivated compared to non-participants of whom 32.9% recidivated within a 6-month follow-up period (Ezell & Levy, 2003). More support was found in a study that particularly researched the most violent and chronic youth offenders and found decreased delinquent behavior (Ezell & Levy, 2003). These studies seem to show that art programs may help reduce incidences of aggression within prison, resulting not only in a less hostile environment but also, predictive of less recidivism.

5. JUSTIFICATION FOR CURRENT STUDY

This review has highlighted the uniqueness and importance of art activities within the prison environment. Not only is it very fitting for inmates since many struggle with verbal ability, but it also seems to have several benefits for both the inmates and the institution: behavioral (lower incidence rates, less aggression, more patience, delay of gratification) and psychological (expressing oneself, coping, increased autonomy, sense of mastery, personal development and self-acceptance). Furthermore, art programs in prison, add support to the growing acknowledgement of how important rehabilitation, with an emphasis on re-integration, is in our current prison situation. The current changes in the Dutch prison system have incorporated art activities and it is necessary to find out exactly what kind of impact these activities have on inmates. Impact studies in this field are scarce and none have been done in the Netherlands before. This study will thus utilize personal interviews to understand what behavioral and psychological effects inmates from De Geerhorst, a prison in the south of the Netherlands, experience in their art program.

6. METHODOLOGY

6.1 Participants

Since this study wanted to look at the impact of art programs on prisoners, participants needed to be inmates who were active in an art program. Inmates were selected from De Geerhorst prison because it has a long standing art program and they were open to the research. De Geerhorst is a prison located in Sittard in the province of Limburg in the Netherlands. De Geerhorst serves as both a prison as well as a detention center. It can house up to 315 inmates. There is a department which provides care including special help for inmates with psychological disorders and sex offenders (DJI, n.d.). In order to participate in this study, inmates needed to be involved in the art program for at least two months. This was deemed an adequate amount of time for them to not only learn but also reflect on their development. Thus, a list was made of those who had been in the art program for more than two months. Then twelve participants, six of whom were awaiting trial and six who have been convicted, were randomly selected by drawing numbers from a hat. These twelve participants were approached by the art teacher, Peter Nelissen, and asked if they

would like to participate. One randomly selected participant spoke neither Dutch nor English, thus he was deemed unfit for the interview. Another was busy with work and did not wish to participate, thus both of these participants were replaced by two other randomly selected inmates. They were then called in during their free time and were given a letter by the researcher which gave further details of the study (Appendix B). After this every participant signed a consent form to allow the interviews to be recorded. Following the protocol at De Geerhorst, all guards were informed of the research since participants were called during free time to be interviewed.

6.2 Materials & Design

Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were conducted for this study. Semi-structured interviews were deemed as the most fitting methodology to capture the experiences of inmates in the creative program. This semi-structured interview asked the same question to each inmate but also allowed room for clarification or further questioning. This is a benefit and essential in the prison environment since inmates often have low verbal ability and thus, find it difficult to express themselves (Riches, 1994; Bartol & Bartol, 2011; Singer, 2010).

The interview questions used in this study were based off of findings from previous research (for complete interview questions see Appendix C). Previous research, as summarized in the literature review, found positive effects of art programs in prison in psychological and behavioral realms. Within the psychological realm, art programs in prison were seen to improve communication, help cope with the prison environment and affected four aspects of psychological well-being (autonomy, environmental mastery, personal development and growth and self-acceptance). For the aspects of psychological well-being, questions were developed from Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale (1995). Interview questions about autonomy and environmental focused on knowing beforehand what the inmate wanted to make during the art program and goal setting. Personal growth and development questions asked about growth in skills, difficulties faced in the art program and the importance of discovering new things. Finally, inmates were asked to report about themselves and what they have learned about themselves to measure self-acceptance. For coping, inmates were asked if they felt the art program helped them cope with stress or difficulties. To measure communication/expression inmates were asked if they were able to express different emotions in their art work and how, if they used elements of

their experience in prison in their art work and if they showed their artwork to family/friends. For the behavioral realm, inmates were asked if they were ever frustrated during the art program and how they handled it. They were also asked if they saw changes in their behavior and were to give concrete examples of those changes. Finally, questions were added to understand more of the motivation and creative background of inmates, since authors had mentioned the importance and interest of this in this field of study (Ezell & Levy, 2003).

6.3 Procedure

Before being able to begin with this research, permission to interview inmates was first needed from the Custodial Institutions Agency (Dienst Justitiële Inrichtingen, DJI) within the Dutch Ministry of Justice and Security. A research proposal was thus sent to their research department (Appendix A) and after a few months, an approval of the research plan was granted. This research on art programs in Dutch prisons was completed in De Geerhost in Sittard, Limburg. This institution was particularly chosen since they have a large art program which has been going on for more than twenty years and both the institution and current art teacher, Mr. Nelissen, were willing to allow and assist in research in this realm.

6.4 The Art Program in De Geerhost

In 1989 Peter Nelissen was called into the prison, De Geerhorst, to help guide guards in working with inmates during their creative arts program. The idea was that the guards would take inmates to the art program and would help direct them as well, but this was quickly deemed not a good or successful approach. Mr. Nelissen began experimenting with ideas on how to teach art. As a person who studied criminology and law as well as at an art academy, he was able to contextualize and use art in way that was beneficial for this particular audience. He is currently teaching art classes three days a week and they are all 1 ½ hours long. On average, there are five to eight inmates per class. Half of the people coming to the art program are in detention awaiting their sentence. After twenty years of experience in De Geerhorst, Mr. Nelissen found a fitting and successful method of running the art program in this particular prison.

When participants choose to join the art program, they are welcomed by Peter, told the possibilities of art making in the room (painting, clay, mosaic, etc.) and are given freedom to chose what they want to make. If participants are not sure of what to make, he suggests them to

think of someone or something they really love and make their first painting from this inspiration. Nelissen argues that this forces inmates to think realistically and places their thoughts in the here and now. Inmates learn how to make a framework, how to put the canvas on, how to draw the inspiration, how to layer paint, mixing colors, etc. Throughout the program, inmates continue to work on their paintings and Nelissen gives them feedback, helps them with anything they need and gives the time and space for them to figure things out themselves. Although most inmates decide to paint or draw their inspiration they also have the opportunity to use plaster, make ceramics, paint glass, make mosaic, build things with matches, etc.

Nelissen has completed training in education for adults. He learned that especially for inmates, it is important for them to work alone and be treated as autonomous adults. This is particularly important for criminal offenders since many have experienced failure in the normal education system; putting them in groups reminds them of this failure. Thus, Mr. Nelissen allows inmates space to discover their ideas, decide what they want to do and discusses and teaches individually. Overall, Mr. Nelissen uses an individualized art program which focuses on realistic art making.

6.5 Influence of Art Program Ideals on Interview Questions

Looking closely at Mr. Nelissen's method, there are several proposed effects of art programs which are touched upon. Firstly, he gives them personal attention which grants him a special role in the creation of self-acceptance. He emphasizes skill training by starting from scratch and teaching them all the steps to making a painting. He specifically tries to imply that painting is similar to the future. In the same way that they may want to plan ahead for some life goals, they still have to make choices today and tomorrow to reach the goal over five years. The same is true with painting, little steps lead to the end goal. This is something Peter thinks is important and openly remarks about it with participants. Finally, Peter gives all participants a great deal of autonomy. If they do not feel like painting, he allows them to sit and drink a cup of coffee at the table. He lets all inmates chose what they want to make and work on their own. He encourages them through the process, gives advice and helps when asked.

Mr. Nelissen's approach influenced the questions asked by the researcher. In particular, a question was asked about giving art work to family/friends. Not only was this something that other researchers mentioned would be important to investigate further, but Mr. Nelissen also

encourages inmates to make paintings of loved ones. This question was deemed very important to figure out what they did with these paintings and how that may have affected their communication and expression. Thus, the methodology used by Mr. Nelissen also influenced the interview questions used in this study.

7. ANALYSIS

The following section reveals the responses from the interview questions about the effects of the creative arts program in De Geerhorst. The twelve participants whose accounts are shared were all male and were, on average, 38 years old. The youngest was 22 and the oldest was 57. Eight of the twelve were white Dutch men, one had a Caribbean background, another had an Indonesian origin, and one was Belgian and another Romanian. All names used in the following account are fictitious. The six participants from the detention center had been, on average, detained for seven months. Those who were convicted were in De Geerhorst for around sixteen months.

Accordingly, the average length of participation in the creative program was different for detainees and convicted offenders. Detainees had participated on average for five and a half months whereas convicted offenders had considerably longer participation at around thirteen months. Those who have been convicted had an average of two to three year long prison sentence, with one outlier of sixteen years. Most of the detainees were still in the pre-trial stage and were therefore unaware of how long they would be sentenced. Of the twelve participants, eight had no previous art experience. Two mentioned that they did but reported participation in arts during high school but not anything further. Two had completed studies that are hands-on such as carpentry and painting.

7.1 Autonomy & Environmental mastery

Since autonomy and environmental mastery are conceptual cousins, two questions were used in the interview to look at both concepts. Autonomy is, in a sense, implicit in the set-up of the art program since it is voluntary. The first question looked to see if people also used this opportunity to act autonomously with what they would make

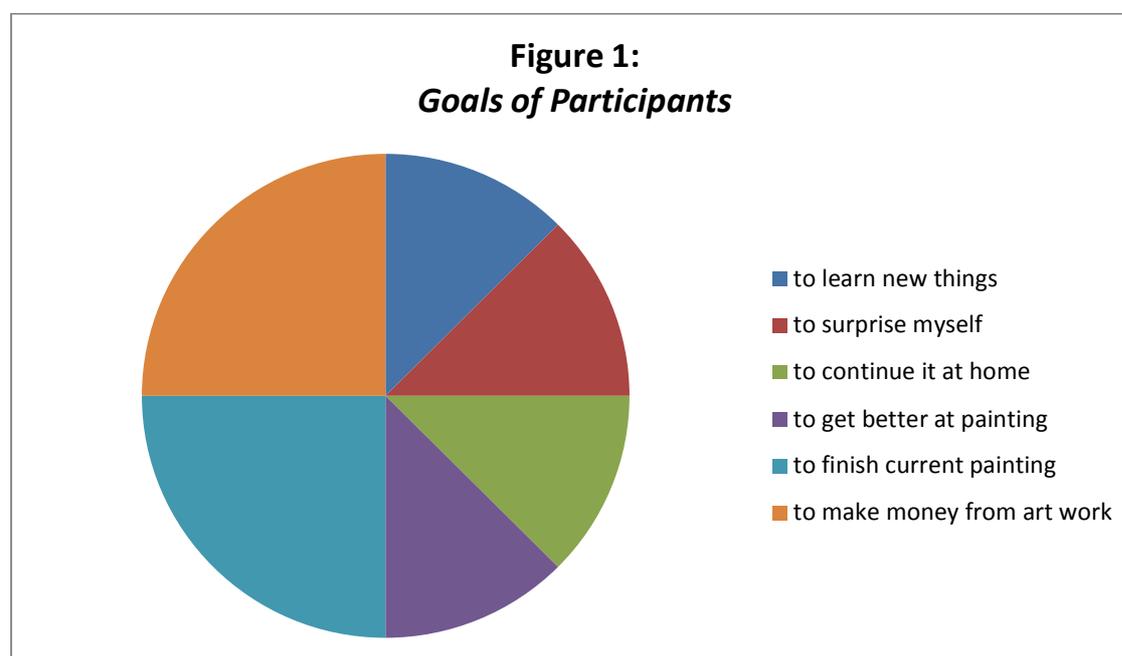
- Before you go to the art class, do you already know what you want to make or paint?
How often?

Eleven out of the twelve participants proclaimed they knew what they wanted to make. A few knew this every time and others sometimes. Even in the cases when they weren't sure what to make their ideas eventually came from their own inspiration, either by something they saw in a movie, while listening to music or while looking through a book.

The second question tapped into self-direction and long term commitment:

- Are there certain things that you would like to achieve with the creative activities and have you reached them?

Eight of the participants had goals in mind with the creative arts program. Three of the goals had to do with wanting to continue art after leaving prison and possibly making a living out of it. Others had the goal of developing their creative skills. The eight participants who mentioned having goals are listed in Figure 1. Two other participants said they had no goals or nothing they wanted to reach but it was rather something to keep them busy and make the time pass quicker. One participant did not give a clear answer to this question and another was not asked this question, thus both of these participants were not included in this part of the analysis.



7.2 Personal growth & development

Art programs are thought to use a unique type of learning which characterizes human development. Thus, three questions were asked to see what kind of growth inmates recognized, to see what they had learned throughout the process of making art and to explore their openness to new experiences. The first question was:

- Do you think your creative abilities are better than they were in the beginning? What changes have you seen?

Ten out of the twelve participants said they definitely saw a change in their abilities. Seven of those ten said those changes were evident in their general art skills (painting proficiency, mixing colors, creating depth, making shadows, the process of making a painting, etc). Two other inmates responded saying they saw changes in their desire to get better at art: “Yes, perfection. I want to be perfect in my work; that it continues to get better. To set higher goals” (Daan, interview, May 27, 2013). Bart reported seeing changes in his level of patience: “In the beginning I did everything fast, fast, fast and now, lately, I choose things carefully and then I actually spend more time on it... With more patience I can make something even more beautiful” (interview, May 29, 2013). One of the inmates who reported seeing no changes in ability said that although he had been involved in the art program for more than six months, it is only offered once a week and he thought this was too limited to really see changes. The other replied that he was already creative before he started the art program, thus, he didn’t recognize any changes in his ability.

The following question took an in-depth look at the process of making a painting/art piece:

- Of the art pieces you’ve made, which was the most difficult? What did you learn during the process and how satisfied were you with the result?

Eleven out of the twelve reported having difficulties with one of their art pieces. For half of the respondents the most difficult art piece was the one they were currently working on. In response to what they learned, seven reported learning particular painting skills such as depth, shadow, color, working with a brush, how to structure a painting, etc. Another reported that he learned how to paint animals and with that he had to learn about different muscle groups in order to accurately portray them. Ruben’s answer to this question reflected learning in the area of sensory perception:

“Yes [I’ve learned about] solidarity. Look, I’m busy with my project and around me there are other people making frames for their painting. I notice that everyone is helping someone and I think that’s important because Peter can’t be at every place... Here there is unity. It doesn’t matter which nationality you are, it doesn’t matter. We respect each other and to me, that’s very important” (Interview, May 29, 2013).

Bart also had a similar realization about the creative arts program:

“[Another effect] is to help others, that is also something I learned because in the beginning I was more quiet and I did my own thing. At some point, once I got to know other people, I saw that they appreciated my help and so I began to help more... I was more in my own world and at some point I’ve become more open. Actually, the creative arts program does much more than people think.” (Interview, May 29, 2013)

Overall, the participants seemed to struggle but learned a lot through the process of making a particular piece of art. In the end, seven were very satisfied with the result of their hard work.

“The first time that I drew it and painted the first layer of paint, I didn’t think it looked good. It was, I think, a disaster. But as you begin to put more layers of paint on it and you add the shadows, then it’s drastically better. It’s nice to see how that develops.” (Max, interview, June 3, 2013)

Two of the inmates were not happy with how it turned out but thought maybe later they can make it better.

The final question regarding personal growth and development was:

- How important is it for you to experience new things during the creative arts program?

Seven out of the twelve participants reported that experiencing new things was important to them. Three said it was not important and that it was more important for them to be busy.

Another was unsure and another did not answer this question. A mixture of the responses can be found in Table 1.

Table 1 : *How Important is it for you to experience new things during the creative arts program?*

Daan	“It’s very important because... It is a kind of learning process and you can never learn enough. So everything I can get out of the creative arts program is just a bonus for me.”
Bart	“Yes, of course, discovering new things but the time is short so you can’t for instance; learn a lot of new things.”
Ruben	“I think it’s really important... It’s not only to be out of the cell, it’s purely because you are here to work on something from your soul.”
Lucas	“Ya, that’s good and important. In the wings you see a lot of different people walking around but during the creative arts class it’s a bit calmer and then you can get to know people in a new way.”
Max	“It’s beautiful work, creating things. Creativity is surely something that is handy for life. Then later you can apply it to other things. I’m open to learn new things”
Willem	“It’s nice. Sometimes I think it’s the best 1.5 hours in my week. I’m not the type to play sports but I like to create and my mind is busy and that helps”
Guus V	“It’s pretty important because it is an emotional outlet. You are again out of the cell and you can do something else. You can think about something else, make jokes and so, it’s very important to me. I think that one time in the week is actually too short, I would like it to be more often”
Mark	“I’m not sure... If I’m busy with something or if I have something in my head then I want to make it. That is important... It’s maybe egoistical but I always think that if someone else can do something then so can I.”
Klaas	“It’s not really important to me. It’s mostly being busy, staying busy and having a nice result which is important to me”
Simon	“I wouldn’t say that it is important but it is more important that I’m busy with something. It distracts you. If you are so busy, then you need to really concentrate. Then you forget everything around you, all your worries, all your problems and so, it is also gives you peace”

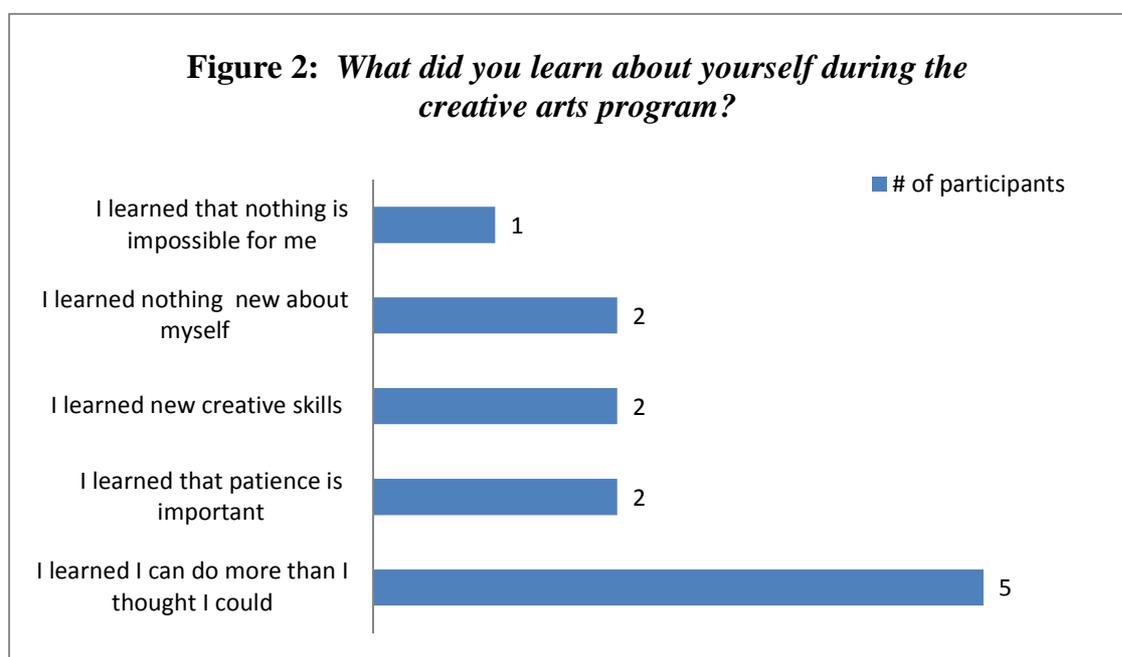
7.3 Self-acceptance

The relationship between self-acceptance and the creative arts program was investigated through two questions.

- What did you learn about yourself during the creative activities?
- In the domain creativity/artistic ability, what do you think you are best at? What do you think you are the worst at?

A person with high self-acceptance would possess a positive attitude toward self, acknowledge and accept multiple aspects of self and feel positive about life (Ryff, 1995). So the first question was to explore their sense of self in relation to the creative activities and the second was to see if they were able to acknowledge both good and bad aspects of self.

Ten out of the twelve were able to discover something the creative arts program had taught them about themselves. Figure 2 shows the five responses given by all twelve participants. About half of the respondents said that the creative arts program taught them that they can do more than they thought they could.



In response to the second question, eight participants were able to acknowledge both positive and negative aspects of their creative ability. Of the remaining four participants, two

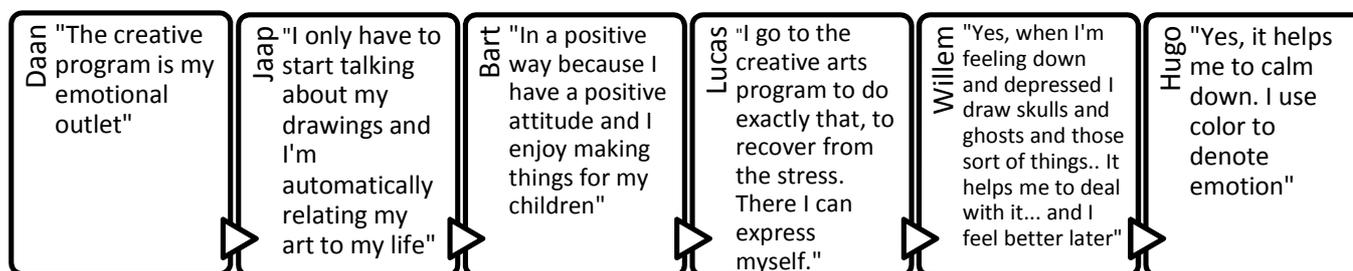
could think of no negative aspects, one could think of no positive aspect and another could think of neither a positive nor a negative aspect of their creative ability. Thus, most participants reflected high self-acceptance. It is important to add, that although participants were not further asked specifically about the effect of the creative arts program on their self-esteem or acceptance, half of them mentioned it in response to other questions. Lucas directly stated that making art work increases his self-esteem. Two others mentioned that it gave them satisfaction and gratification in their abilities. Max mentioned that with his art work he can be proud of himself. Another stated that he feels better while painting because then he can see what he is able to do. Finally, Jaap, shared that through the confidence he has gotten from the creative arts program, he has been able to defend his opinion and stand up for himself. He stated that he became more confident from others appreciating and purchasing his art work. He hopes in the future to use his new confidence to be able to say no to those asking him to smuggle drugs, get involved with crime, etc.

7.4 Art as communication

Since many inmates struggle with low verbal ability, and consequently, communication, two questions were asked to explore how the art program may affect their ability to express feelings.

- If you are sad, angry, happy, how do you express that? Are you able to express that through your art?

In response, half of the participants said yes, four said no and two were not sure. Figure 3 displays quotes that show several ways the six prisoners who said 'yes' responded. It seems that these participants use, see and experience the creative arts program as something that allows them to express their emotions and as a result, helps them release their emotions, whether it is stress, sadness or joy.

Figure 3: Positive Responses to “Are you able to express your emotions through your art?”

Of those who responded 'no', one said he only expressed emotions through playing his guitar and keyboard. Another said if he's emotional he doesn't paint. Simon was a graffiti artist and found that although he is making a graffiti-styled painting in De Geerhorst, he can't express emotions like he did when he was outside. He thought that the excitement and thrill when doing it outside might have been the catalyst of his emotion, now; he paints graffiti just to make use of his time. Finally, the fourth person to say no stated that he is so focused on reaching his goal of completing his painting that he doesn't experience emotions during the class. Two other participants were unsure of whether they actually portrayed emotions in their paintings or whether they actually expressed emotions during the creative arts class.

The second question regarding communication was developed from both Harrington (1997) and Riches (1994) studies which found that prisoners might use their art work to communicate love, guilt, gratefulness, and support to people outside of prison:

- Have you ever shown your artwork to family or friends? How did they respond?

Eleven out of the twelve participants had given or were in the process of making an art piece that they were going to give to a family member, friend or loved one. Through the interviews, it became evident that most of the inmates enjoyed making something for someone else. Two mentioned that it gave them feelings of worth and another said it boosted his self-esteem. There were three cases in particular where the prisoners clearly tried to communicate something to people outside of prison. Klaas makes sculptures for family and friends, "I think it's nice to give them something. They send me cards, money and they visit me, so I think it's nice to give something back" (Interview, June 5, 2013). For him it was a way to communicate gratefulness. Daan experienced a tragic loss while in prison and used his art work as a way for himself to express his grief as well as physically show his support for his family while they were going through a hard time. Max, who is in the special care ward, has received a lot of attention from

psychologists and social workers whom have helped him grow and develop. Because of this he has a positive image of the prison; however, if he tries to talk with his parents about it, they get very upset because they only think it's a terrible thing that he is there. He has a hard time communicating why he's positive about it so he thought if he made a good portrait of him and his two siblings then "they [his parents] can hang it up at home and maybe they can have a good image of this place" (Max, interview, June 3, 2013). Max hoped this art piece would give a different voice to his experiences in the prison.

7.5 Art as a coping mechanism

To understand whether or not inmates used art programs as a coping mechanism, the participants were asked:

- Has the creative arts program helped relieve you of any stress or tension in prison? If so, can you give a concrete example?

Eleven out of the twelve participants reported that the art program helped relieve stress. The way in which the eleven participants mentioned that it relieved stress/tension was varied. Three participants shared that the creative arts program was a distraction since they were busy with making something. As Hugo shared, "you feel free [in the art program], you are free of your case and that is important for me since my problem is quite tense. When I do something, like painting or something, [my problem] is directly gone" (Hugo, interview, June 5, 2013). One of the convicted offenders agreed, "I don't want to call it strain, maybe it's stress but just the idea of being behind the cell door the whole day is gone [during the creative program]" (Simon, interview, June 5, 2013). Two inmates described the art program as something that breaks the day, another mentioned that it was something he could look forward to and yet another proclaimed the art teacher helped relieve stress because he understood him. Altogether, it was clear that most of the offenders found that it did help with their stress and worries in prison. Interestingly enough, very few inmates mentioned other things which helped relieve stress within the prison walls. Of those who did mention things, medication, reading a book, music, having a visitor, sporting and going to the religious activities was named as things that also helped relieve stress.

A second question was asked to explore whether inmates used elements from their life in prison in their art, which could reflect using the artistic process as a way to cope with their environment:

- Do you use elements from your life in prison in your art? If so, in what way and how is that expressed?

Of the twelve participants, eight said they did not paint anything relating to their life in De Geerhorst. The remaining four did use something from their experiences thus far in their art work. One participant was making a mosaic of and for his motor club, which is not only important to him, but also the reason why he is in prison. Another had drawn his cell and also mentioned drawing dark things when he didn't feel well. Although many of the participants were making portraits of loved ones, only one participant thought that this was related to his experience in prison. "They aren't allowed to come visit me so maybe because of that I make things for them. Then I can still think about them. I miss them so I want to make something for them so they don't forget me" (Lucas, interview, June 3, 2013). The most profound answer to this question was by Jaap. His first painting had many symbols to his life in prison, his thoughts about his past and his outlook towards the future (This painting is on the cover of this thesis). His painting was based off of a movie in which there was a good group of people and a bad group of people. This movie inspired him to create this painting. In the middle of his painting he has a ying-yang, symbolizing the good and bad people but also the good and bad in himself. The process of making the painting led to him reflecting over his life and his thoughts about himself.

"The creative arts program helps to build a new way of thinking... The black part [of the ying-yang in his painting], the bad part, was bigger and that can't be. I want the good part to win so the white part must be bigger than the black part. That is something that I've just realized, in the last weeks I've been changing it. So the first five or six months the black part was really big and then I thought about it and I realized my life is different than that. I'm doing something good and other people also tell me that, so I want to put that in my painting. So, what is so great about art is that you can change it and make it as you want it to be. When I'm busy painting then I begin to think about being outside, about my future, that I want a wife and kids and I want to set things straight with my family. There are so many things I can think about and they assist each other: the creative arts program and beginning to find a normal life" (Jaap, interview, May 27, 2013).

Clearly, in this case, his painting helped him think through his future and discover new thoughts about himself. Art was a powerful way for him to cope with and work through his thoughts in wanting to change.

7.6 Behavior

Two questions were asked which surveyed whether inmates thought that the creative arts program had an effect on their behavior.

- Have you ever gotten frustrated during the creative arts program? How did you deal with your frustration?

The answers to this question were mixed, four said they had experienced frustration and eight said they did not.

Table 2: Have you ever gotten frustrated during the creative arts program?

	<i>Yes</i>		<i>No</i>
Jaap	“Because I come there very serious. I come to learn something and when we are sitting there with 15 people who can’t even hold a pencil... Those people don’t want to learn anything they just want a beautiful painting and that’s what I get frustrated about since I want to learn something and do everything myself.”	Daan	“Because I have the patience for it. If something doesn’t work, for example then I just set it aside and do something else. I’ll do it the next day.”
Mark	“If the detainees are there, then yes. They can’t do anything, they can’t start a painting, and they can’t make a canvas. They can’t really do anything.”	Bart	“No, sometimes you need to have patience because the teacher has to try and help everybody so you have to have patience for that, but I’ve never been frustrated.”
Willem	“Yes, a little bit. If I’m stuck in the process and it won’t work the way I had it in my mind then yes, that’s a little bit frustrating.”	Ruben	“Never. I have a good characteristic about myself and that is patience.”
Klaas	“Yes, if something doesn’t go right then I get a bit angry.”	Max	“With my department (special care ward) it’s always very peaceful and we come together to the creative arts program.”

			People treasure that time so they try [to make the most out of it].”
		Guus	“No and I’ve never seen it. Some people are more peaceful than others. Our group is always laughing.”
		Simon	“No, I always see people sitting peacefully working.”

The four respondents who had experienced frustration also shared how they dealt with it. Jaap has attention deficit disorder (ADD) and thus has difficulties with controlling his frustration. “That is what’s so difficult about painting. If I have a question then I want it to be immediately answered so that I can continue to grow. But I have to wait, wait, and wait. Patience is something I have to learn.” (Jaap, interview, May, 27, 2013). Mark realized he just needs to accept the fact that he will have to help and explain things to the detainees many times. He is trying to not get irritated by them. Willem shared that the teacher taught him that if he gets frustrated then he just needs to take a break from it. “That’s something to remember when something doesn’t go the way I want it to. Then just do something different and come back to it later” (Willem, interview, June 3, 2013). Klaas found that this was also a good approach to take when he gets angry: “I stand up and walk around a bit, ask for help and then its okay again. If someone can help me and show me how to do it then I’m calm again” (Klaas, interview, June 5, 2013). Thus, those who experienced frustrations learned or realized that stepping away and coming back to it later was effective in calming them down.

The next question regarding behavior was:

- Since you’ve started with the creative arts program, have you noticed any changes in your behavior? If so, can you give a concrete example?

Again, answers were mixed with five reporting yes and seven no. Two of the five who thought they saw changes in their said that it was due to its effect on their mood. The one said it made him happier and then he is more willing to interact with others and complains less. The other said he feels better after the creative arts program and that he then has the feeling that he has spent his time usefully. Three other inmates reported that the creative arts program’s effect on their

behavior had to do with the calmness it created in them. Jaap reported that the creative arts program is helping him with his patience, something he has struggled with for a long time. He gave a clear example of how painting was helping with his patience:

“You have to think ahead and you have to pay attention to the details. Sometimes I get a pencil and start to paint and then I don’t get what I had pictured in my head. Then sometimes I try to fix it really quickly, and then I fix things that were actually okay but you don’t realize that right away. So, if you remember that and then when you work through solutions for your problems, then I try to use this way of thinking for my life now in the prison and in my future. So yeah, painting helps me to put everything in its place. So from that I’m getting more patience. It’s a nice feeling when you’re working on something and you think, it’s going to be okay. I can make a mistake and that’s fine because I can just try and paint in another way. You continue to think things over in a positive way.” (interview, May 27, 2013)

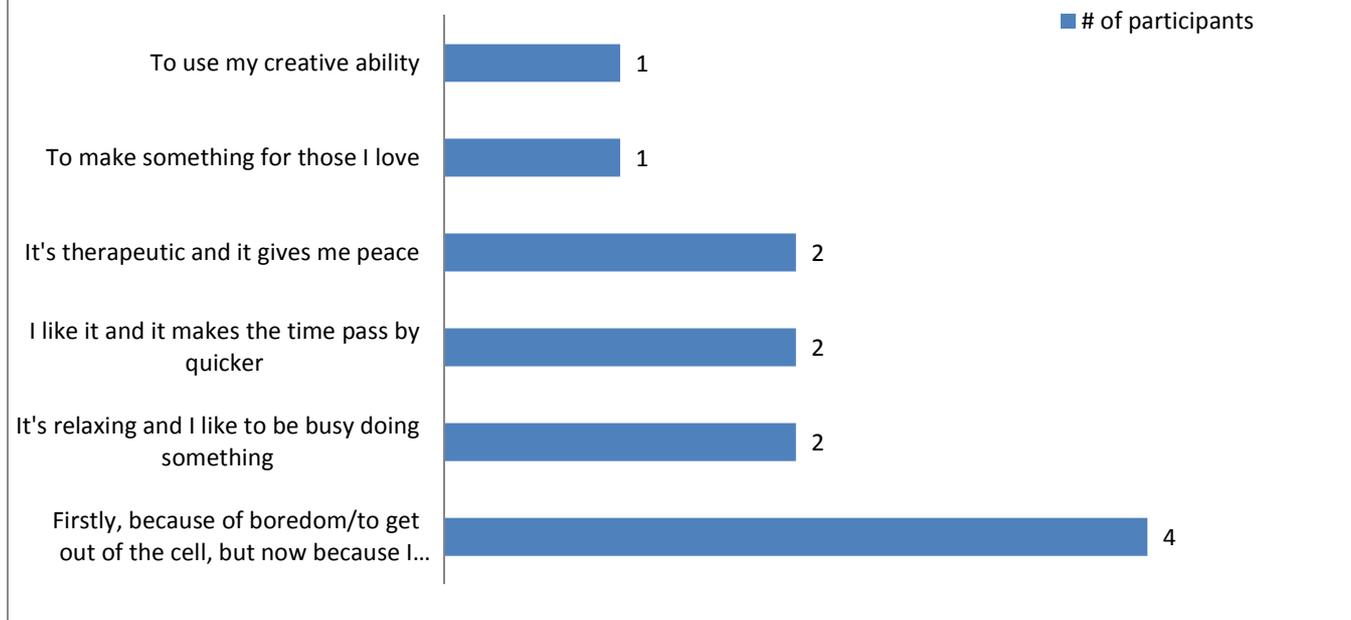
The seven inmates who answered that they didn’t see any changes in their behavior due to the creative arts program also had several reasons why. Three said they are just relaxed and positive people who are the same before, during and after the arts program. Another said he has just always been aware of his actions and words. The last three respondents did not give clear answers as to why the arts program did not make an impact in this realm.

7.7 Motivation

This is one of the first studies to look into the motivations of those participating in creative arts programs. During the interviews, participants were asked three questions regarding motivation:

- Can you tell me why you decided to participate in the creative arts program?
- Can you tell me what the most important reason is for you to continue going to the creative arts program?
- After you are released, would you like to continue doing creative/artistic activities? Why?

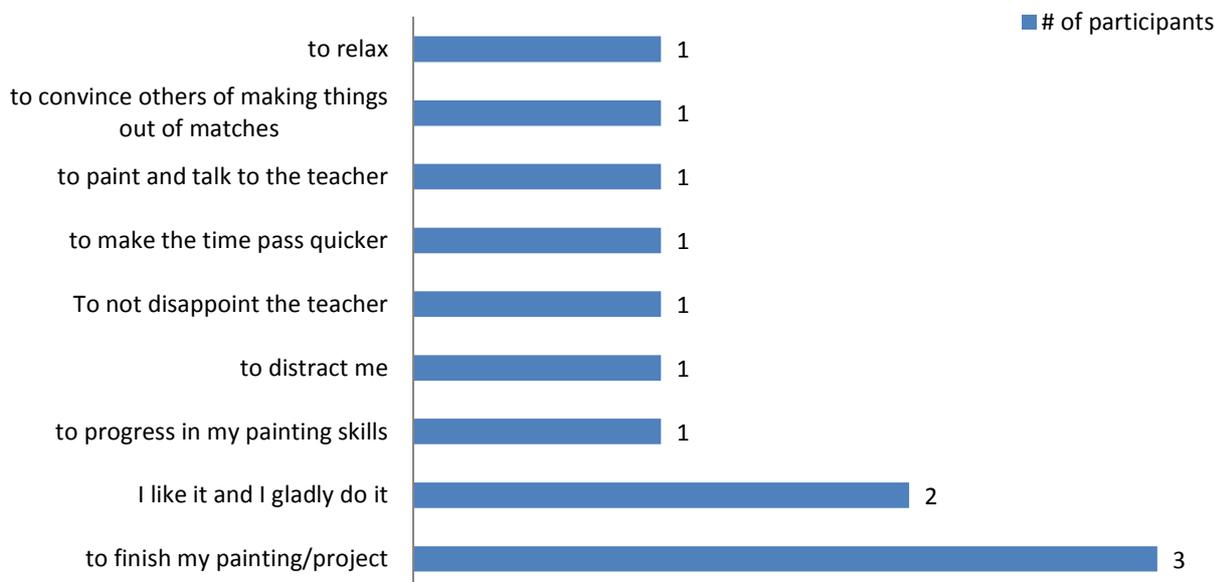
Figure 4: Why did you decide to participate in the creative arts program?



The reasons for wanting to start with the creative arts program varied amongst participants. This is reflected in Figure 4 above. Most responses included elements of enjoyment as well as some kind of practical use. This connects many of the elements discussed earlier, that the inmates noticed and received some type of benefit, mainly being psychological, once they became involved in the creative arts program.

Not only was the first motivation measured but also their current motivation (why do you continue to go to the creative arts program?) Participants were asked to name the most important reason. Again responses ranged from practical reasons (ex. time goes by quicker) to creative abilities (progressing in painting, finishing painting/project, etc). All responses can be seen below in Figure 5.

Figure 5: What is the most important reason for you to continue to go to the creative arts program?



Finally, participants were asked of future motivation:

- After your release, would you like to continue with creative/art activities?

In response, the majority (n=9) responded saying they would like to continue to do creative/artistic activities. Four of the nine said they would like to do this with loved ones (wife, girlfriend, children) and then they can also pass along the things they’ve learned about painting in prison. Two others wanted to also pass along their skills by either teaching creative classes or volunteering at a nursing home. Jaap thinks he will paint in his free time but he also hopes to earn money by becoming a tattoo artist. Simon wants to continue to use his creative abilities in his graffiti work. Lucas shared he would use it in a different way: “As a way to pass the time; it’s good for me to be busy with something else, otherwise I’m doing to do wrong things” (interview, June 3, 2013). Finally, Max shared that he not only enjoyed it but he was also proud of his creative ability, so he would surely continue with painting when he is released. For the two participants who did not think they would continue, both said so because life outside of prison is different and they have other things to do.

7.8 Uniqueness of the Creative Arts Program

Towards the end of each interview the interviewer summarized effects that inmates had given and asked them if they thought these things were a result of their participation in the creative activities. Of the eleven participants who were asked this, nine answered yes. “Yeah, they [the effects] are definitely from the creative arts program. I think these things [relaxation] belong to art programs.” (Klaas, interview, June 5, 2013) Jaap gained more will power and confidence in changing his life around after spending most of the last ten years in prison; he proclaimed “without the art program this would not have been possible” (interview, May 27, 2013). Of those nine, two also said that other prison activities could also have played a role in these changes (ex. the education courses, library, church, choir, sport). Bart also likes when they have free time to play sport but he claims it is different and wouldn’t have the same effects that the art programs because “sport is also relaxing but it’s a different kind of relaxing during the art program. The art program offers relaxation but you’re also busy with making something for the people you love.” (Bart, interview, May 29, 2013). Overall, it seems the psychological well-being and behavioral effects that inmates experienced were, they thought, uniquely results of the art program.

8. DISCUSSION

This study was unique in that it analyzed actual experiences of inmates in an art program in the Netherlands. Furthermore, it was one of the first studies to look at the possible effects of art programs in the Netherlands. The results of this study encourage that effects of art programs are cross-cultural since, not only was this sample a mix of cultural backgrounds, but also because similar findings were found in the United States and England. The effects were also relevant for both convicted offenders and detainees. There were no differences between answers these two groups gave and this suggests that art programs are relevant for both jail and prison settings. The results also suggest that inmates do not need to be involved for long periods of time to experience the positive effects of art programs, since the shortest amount of time was on average five and half months. This study found important outcomes with relevant implications within the field of criminology. Therefore, this section will consider the results of this study in relation to previous research, look at the implications for the Modernization plans of the Dutch prison system and rehabilitation programs and finally, account for the limitations of this study.

8.1 Relation to Previous Research

Little research has been carried out on art programs in the Netherlands. This impact study uniquely examined the real experiences of inmates in a Dutch prison (De Geerhorst) in the creative arts program. From the analysis, it seemed that the reports from the inmates themselves, in most cases, greatly supported what has been discovered by other researchers.

8.1.1 *Facets of psychological well-being*

The four indicators of psychological well-being were strongly experienced by participants of the creative arts program in De Geerhorst. Firstly, in terms of autonomy and environmental mastery, 11 out of 12 participants found inspiration from themselves. Furthermore, eight of the participants made goals for themselves. These results may be related to cognitive factors of desistance. These cognitive factors reported by Bielby (1997) were: greater control over one's life and taking responsibility for shaping one's future. Eight of these participants reflected having a mastery motivation in which they created goals for themselves, without encouragement or requirement to do so by the instructor. Furthermore, three inmates mentioned goals which were related to their time after release and are thus, long term goals. It is important to reiterate that the strength of autonomy may be found in the sheer set-up of it in prison in that it is a voluntary activity which is unique in prison.

In terms of personal growth and development, inmates also reported, in high numbers, important discoveries of development. Ten out of the twelve participants saw changes in their ability since they started. Furthermore, seven out of the eleven inmates found that they created or were working on something that was difficult and that they learned something from the process. Although it was hard to note if participants successfully reached their goal, since many were still in the process, they had until now persevered with their painting. Interestingly enough, two participants also mentioned gains in sensory perception. These two participants had become more aware of their self and their place in their environment. Participants also seemed to be open to new experiences and trying new things. Jermyn (2001) speculates that these aspects added together can increase personal effectiveness. Such gains can also increase the likelihood of successful goal attainment in other realms of life (Ezell & Levy, 2003).

Participants also reported strong experiences of increase in self-acceptance (self-esteem, self-worth and gratification of their abilities) during the creative arts program. Ten out of the twelve learned something about themselves during the art program. Half of those (n=5) said they discovered more about their potential: "I learned I can do more than I thought I could." A part of self-acceptance involves recognizing both positive and negative aspects of self. Although eight of the twelve participants could do this, it was not clear if this was at all related to the art program. Strikingly, in questions unrelated to self-acceptance, half of the participants had still mentioned increases in self-worth, satisfaction, feeling good while working on their art, etc. Previous studies also found that 60-70% of participants reported similar experiences (Jermyn, 2001; Ezell & Levy, 2003), although the results of this study should be used cautiously due to the small sample size (n=12). Overall, the four areas of psychological well-being were strongly part of the inmates' experience with the art program.

8.1.2 *Art as communication and coping mechanism*

Two other elements were found in the literature which seemed to be part of the psychological effects of art programs: art as communication and as a coping mechanism. These two elements were also explored in this study and produced some interesting results. This study found that half of the participants thought they could express their emotions in their art. In comparison to other psychological elements, this was slightly weaker. This could be due to participants not realizing the emotional elements of their paintings; for example, only one participant mentioned that making things for others was a result of his emotions whereas ten other participants did create things for others, but did not perceive it as a result/expression of emotion. This finding could also be linked to the fact that many inmates used their time making art as a distraction from their emotions, as will be further discussed later.

One of the most surprising findings of this study was the finding that eleven of the twelve participants had made or given a piece of their art work to a loved one. All of them mentioned enjoying doing this. Some cited it gave them a boost of self-esteem or feelings of worth. Three in particular used their paintings as a medium to communicate with family outside of prison. Previously, Harrington (1997) found this with the death row inmates he interviewed, who gave their art work as a way for loved ones to remember them. Similarly, Riches (1994) studied prisoners with long-term sentences for violent crimes and found that they also gave paintings to

family/friends which helped increase their self-worth. These two studies were the only ones which mentioned an effect and purpose for inmates in giving away their art work. Not only that, these two studies also reported finding this effect with a particular prison population: those with long sentences. This study found that all but one of the participants did this. The sample used in this study also comprised of varying sentences since it included those who were in detention. This result may have important implications for re-integration programs since it keeps the inmate connected to the outside world. It is also important to note, that this result could be a consequence of the method of the art teacher since he suggests participants to paint a portrait of something or someone who they care about. This result is nonetheless intriguing and asks for further study.

Another strong finding from this study was in the realm of art as a coping mechanism. Eleven out of twelve said that the art program helped relieve stress for them. Furthermore, only two participants mentioned other things that helped relieve stress within the prison walls. Psychologically, this result suggests that the art program may provide a very important service in helping inmates to successfully deal with negative emotions. Although this study did not look at the possible connection, this could also have implications for institutional behavior. Interestingly, although eleven participants reported that the program helped relieve them of stress, only four actually reported painting elements of their experience in prison. Thus, it seems inmates experience the release of stress through a different means than expressing their actual experience (with exception of Jaap, who clearly found in his painting symbols of his thoughts about his future). Previous studies did find several elements of the prison experience within inmates' art but they analyzed the paintings themselves, whereas this study did not; that could also be an explanation for this differing result.

8.1.3 *Effects on Behavior*

Finally, measures of behavior provided mixed results in this study. Only four out of twelve participants actually reported experiencing frustration, which was aimed to measure how the inmates tried to deal with their aggression during the class. Since very few actually remembered being frustrated, this measurement was very weak. Furthermore, only five participants saw a change in their behavior since they started the art program. This could be due to a selection bias, as section 8.4 describes. Previous research measured increases/decreases in incidence reports

which give a more realistic view of inmates' behavior; however that was not utilized in this study. This study took a subjective measure of behavior by asking inmates themselves and many of them reported not having a behavior problem, whether this is true or not was unknown to the researcher.

8.2 Implications for the Modernization Plans of the Dutch Prison System

The results of this study appear to encompass the goals of the Modernization Plans of the Dutch prison system. Creative activities were designed to be a part of the re-entry activities and had the specific aim of strengthening motivation, self-efficacy and improving life skills (reflection, perseverance, positive attitude, planning and cooperation) (Krabbendam & Nelissen, 2012). In a closer look at these aims, two of the three aims were strongly emphasized in participants' responses. Self-efficacy was evident in responses to what inmates had learned about themselves ('I can do more than I thought I could') as well as numerous accounts of increases in self-acceptance, esteem and confidence. Furthermore, effects in the realm of personal development and growth reflect many of the life skills intended by these plans. Eleven participants experienced making a difficult painting/project and persevered through the process. Participants critically reflected on their work and goals they created for themselves. Most of the participants also mentioned looking forward to the classes, that they would be upset if they were cancelled and that they would love to have more time in the creative arts program; thus, participants had attached several positive emotions with their experience and often reported leaving in a good mood. Finally, in terms of cooperation, participants thought that when their group was there, there was a good atmosphere, they didn't mind helping one another and some even found their role within this group.

The aim of strengthening motivation is questionable from the results of this study. Although motivation was measured, it was measured to understand more about the motivation of the offenders to join the art program and did not look into the relation to the art program and their motivation for re-integration. Although a few participants mentioned that it would be good to continue to do creative things so that they don't get involved with other 'bad' activities, this is still a weak look into this aim. Thus, more research should be done to see if this aim can be achieved through creative activities.

8.3 Implications for Rehabilitation Programs

Since prisons as punishment do not seem to be curbing the amount of crime and research has shed light on a criminogenic effect of prisons, rehabilitation programs may hold the key for reducing recidivism rates. This study applies not only to the Dutch modernization plans, but they also give a unique insight into rehabilitation programs in general, particularly those with an emphasis on re-integration. As discussed in the section on rehabilitation programs (4.3), the most recent rehabilitation model is called the signaling perspective. This model revolves around the concept of desistance and states that inmates who voluntarily participate in rehabilitation programs may be giving ‘signs’ of a change in their trajectory of crime (ie. desistance). Art programs may work as a type of symbolic capital for inmates which may help them transition better into society. This study uniquely found that inmates used their art to communicate something to the outside world, thus, their art work acted as a bridge to their loved ones. This is one example of the re-integrative qualities of art programs. The connection between art programs and re-integration, thus, should be further studied.

Furthermore, Maruna (2012) also argued that inmates should receive a certificate or something that would accredit their participation in such programs. One program, Arts Participation for Employability Programme (ARTSPEP) encouraged similar things in light of their findings. ARTSPEP argues that “the creative arts allow people to try new skills and ideas, build their resilience or self-confidence through success, develop the ability to communicate and work in a team, increase thoughtful self-evaluation or reflection” (n.d., 5) and these skills are transferable to the workplace since it encompasses similar skills that are needed to be effective learners. Thus, ARTSPEP builds on the argument of Maruna (2012) in saying that art programs are directly related to employability skills namely: being a team player, working on their own initiative, commitment to learning, bringing creative thinking and program solving (Arts Participation for Employability Programme, n.d.). The positive results of ARTSPEP add further support that there may be a substantial relationship between art programs and re-integration.

8.4 Limitations of Current Study

There are several limitations to this study. Firstly, a selection bias may have construed the results. All participants not only voluntarily participated in the research but they also voluntarily chose to participate in the creative arts program. Thus, it is possible that those who participate in

the program are more motivated offenders. According to the signaling perspective, they may also already be in the trajectory of desisting from crime. It was also noted by the researcher that most participants were quite peaceful; participants also noted that the creative arts program was quieter than other times in the prison. It is possible that more relaxed personalities are drawn into the creative arts class, making the behavior measure in particular, skewed. All concepts were also measured in a limited number of questions (on average two to three questions). It is questionable whether these concepts can be thoroughly measured with only a few questions. Accordingly, some questions may have tapped into different concepts than what the researcher hoped. For example, one question on autonomy was “Before you go to the art class, do you already know what you want to make or paint? How often?” This question could actually measure levels of creativity rather than autonomy. The method chosen also has a weakness of subjectivity since the researcher could not ask others if they were reporting truthfully. Furthermore, the results of this study may be difficult to generalize because, a) it was a small sample (n=12) and b) the results may be a result of the methods chosen by the art teacher. Not only did many participants comment that they have a good relationship with the art teacher, but the art teacher purposefully uses several therapeutic elements in his classes. Thus, given another art teacher, the creative arts classes may have not yielded the same results. Future studies should analyze a few different programs in order to try and control for the effects of the teacher. Finally, since the researcher conducted the interviews in her second language, Dutch, it is possible that translation errors occurred or that communication was not optimized.

9. CONCLUSION

The creativity and freedom art requires seems incompatible with the controlled and systematic institution of prison, however, they appear to connect in a unique and powerful way. Art programs have been found to increase self-acceptance, give a sense of autonomy, allow for mastery motivations, produce growth in life skills, improve communication skills and provide ways of coping with stressful environments (Gussak, 2009a; Cleveland, 2000; Riches, 1994; Ezell & Levy, 2003; Harrington, 1997; Gibbons, 1997). Not only have art programs been found to have psychological benefits, but various art programs have also found effects in the behavioral realm. Prisons with art programs have noted lower incidence rates and better

cooperation between inmates and prison staff (Cleveland, 2000; Brune, 1999, Harrington, 1997). All of these studies used quantitative measures hence, questions lingered about the actual experiences of inmates in the art program.

This study went to discover exactly that; for the first time an impact study was used to investigate actual experiences of inmates in an art program in the Netherlands. The researcher interviewed twelve inmates from De Geerhorst, a prison in the province of Limburg. The accounts of these twelve men revealed strong reflections of what previous researchers had quantitatively found. These inmates also shed light onto the possible bridge that making art provides between them and the outside world. Although this study provided encouraging and intriguing information, more research should be implemented to examine objective measurements of behavioral effects and to dive deeper into the implications for re-integration programs.

Current developments within criminology suggest that the way forward, in terms of reducing in recidivism, may involve a revision in rehabilitation programs. This revision would give re-integration the spotlight and may, indeed, look similar to the plans proposed in the Modernization Plans of the Dutch prison system. This study exposed the applicability of art programs in these new developments of rehabilitation programs with a focus on re-integration. In this light, the twelve personal accounts of the art program in De Geerhorst gave support that art programs are indeed unique, beneficial and should be encouraged within prisons.

Acknowledgement:

The researcher would like to greatly thank Peter Nelissen for his cooperation, guidance and help in making this research (and unique experience) possible. Also, a special thanks to Alexis Aronowitz for her advice and encouragement during the process of making this thesis.

REFERENCES

- American Art Therapy Association (2012). The Association's Mission. Retrieved from <http://www.americanarttherapyassociation.org/aata-aboutus.html>
- Andrews, D., Bonta, J. & Wormith, J.S. (2011) The risk-need-responsivity (RNR) model: Does adding the good lives model contribute to effective crime prevention? *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 38, 735-55.
- Arts Participation for Employability Programme. (n.d.) *New Horizons*[Brochure]. n.p.:Attenshun.
- Bartol, C. & Bartol, A. (2011). *Criminal Behavior: a Psychological Approach*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, USA: Prentice Hall
- Bielby, D. (1997). Art and Catharsis. *The Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society*, 27(1), 3-5.
- Brune, K. (1999). Creating Behind the Razor Wire: an overview of arts in corrections in the US. Community Arts Network. Available at http://wayback.archive-it.org/2077/20100906203717/http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2007/01/creating_behind.php. Retrieved February 12, 2013.
- Bucklen, K. & Zajac, G. (2009). But some of them don't come back (to prison!): Resource deprivation and thinking errors as determinants of parole success and failure. *The Prison Journal*, 89(3), 239-64.
- Bushway, S. & Apel, R. (2012). A Signaling Perspective on Employment-Based Reentry Programming. *Criminology and Public Policy*, 11(1), 21-50.
- Cleveland, W. (2000). *Art in Other Places: Artists at Work in America's Community and Social Institutions*. Praeger Publishers.
- Cramer, P. (1998). Coping and defense mechanisms: What's the difference? *Journal of Personality*, 66(6), 919-46.
- Cullen, F.T., Jonson, C.L. & Nagin, D.S. (2011). Prisons do not reduce recidivism: The high cost of ignoring science. *The Prison Journal*, 91(3), 48s-65s.
- Dienst Justitele Inrichtingen (n.d.). PI Limburg Zuid: De Geerhost. Retrieved from <http://www.dji.nl/Organisatie/Locaties/Penitentiare-inrichtingen/PI-Limburg-Zuid/De-Geerhorst/>.
- Ezell, M. & Levy, M. (2003). An evaluation of an arts program for incarcerated juvenile offenders. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 54, 108-14.

- Gendreau, P., Little, T., & Goggin, C. (1996). A meta-analysis of the predictors of adult offender recidivism: What works! *Criminology*, 34, 575–595.
- Gibbons, J. (1997). Struggle and Catharsis: Art in Women's Prison. *The Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society*, 27(1), 72-80.
- Gibbs, J., Puzanchera, C., Hanrahan, K. & Giever, D. (1998). The Influence of Personal Safety and other Environmental Concerns on Sense of Control and Emotional Well-Being. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 25(4), 403-25.
- Gussak (2006). Effects of Art Therapy with Prison Inmates: a Follow-Up Study. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 33, 188-98.
- Gussak (2007). The Effectiveness of Art Therapy in Reducing Depression in Prison Populations. *The International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 51(4), 444-60.
- Gussak (2009a). Comparing the Effectiveness of Art Therapy on Depression and Locus of Control of Male and Female Inmates. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 36, 202-7.
- Gussak (2009b). The Effects of Art Therapy on Male and Female Inmates: Advancing the Research Base. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 36, 5-12.
- Harrington, C. (1997). Time to Piddle: Death Row Incarceration, Craftwork and the Meaning of Time. *The Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society*, 27(1), 51-71.
- Jacobi, T. (2008). Writing for change: Engaging juveniles through alternative literacy education. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 59, 71-93.
- Jermyn, H. (2001). The Arts and Social Exclusion: a Review Prepared for the Arts Council of England. Retrieved from http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication_archive/arts-and-social-exclusion-a-review-prepared-for-the-arts-council-of-england/.
- Lande, R. & Howie, P. (1997). The Art of Crime. *American Journal of Art Therapy*, 36(1), 2-10.
- Liebmann, M. (1994). Introduction. In M. Liebmann (Ed), *Art Therapy with Offenders* (1-13). London, England: Jessica Kingsley Publishers Ltd.
- Krabbendam, R. & Nelissen, P. (2012). Reorganising the prison system: the ambitions of the Prison System Modernization Programme. *Sancties*, 6, pp.
- Maruna, S. (2012). Elements of Successful Desistance Signaling. *Criminology and Public Policy*, 11(1), 73-86.
- Mears, D. (2008). Accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in corrections: Shining a light on the black box of prison systems. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 7, 143-52.

- Mears, D. & Mestre, J. (2012). Prisoner Reentry, Employment, Signaling, and the Better Identification of Desisters. *Criminology and Public Policy*, 11(1), 5-15.
- Mooney, J.L. & Daffern, M. (2011). Institutional aggression as a predictor of violent recidivism: Implications for parole decision making. *International Journal of Forensic Mental Health*, 10, 52-63.
- Murphy, J. (1994). 'Mists in the Darkness': Art Therapy with Long-Term Prisoners in a High Security Prison. In M. Liebmann (Ed), *Art Therapy with Offenders* (14-38). London, England: Jessica Kingsley Publishers Ltd.
- Nelissen, P. (2000). *Resocialisatie en Detentie*. (Doctoral dissertation).
- Newburn, T. (2007). *Criminology*. Oxfordshire, United Kingdom: Willan Publishing.
- Nieuwebeerta, P., Nagin, D.S. & Blokland, A.A. (2009). The relationship between first time imprisonment and criminal career development: A matched samples comparison. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 25, 227-57.
- Petersilia, J. (2005). Prisons can be cages or schools. *Los Angeles Times*, October 16. Available at <http://articles.latimes.com/2005/oct/16/opinion/op-rehabilitation16>. Retrieved February 12, 2013.
- Reeve, J. (2009). *Understanding Motivation and Emotion* (5th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Riches, C. (1994). Therapeutic aspects of art teaching in prison. In M. Liebmann (Ed), *Art Therapy with Offenders* (77-101). London, England: Jessica Kingsley Publishers Ltd.
- Ryff, C.D. (1995). Psychological well-being in adult life. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 4(4), 99-104.
- Scheff, T.J., Retzinger, S. & Ryan, M.T. (1989). Crime, violence and self-esteem: Review and proposals. In A.M. Mecca, N.J. Smelser & J. Vasconcellos (Eds), *The Social Importance of Self-Esteem* (165-99). Los Angeles, USA: University of California Press.
- Singer, J.K. (2010). *Creativity in Confinement*. In D.H. Cropley, A.J. Cropley, J.C. Kaufman & M. Runco (Eds), *The Dark Side of Creativity* (177-203). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Sun, K. (2008). *Correctional Counseling: a Cognitive Growth Perspective* (2nd ed.). Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning, LLC.
- Sundt, J., Cullen, F., Applegate, B. & Turner, M. (1998) The tenacity of the rehabilitative ideal revisited: Have attitudes toward offender treatment changed? *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 25(4), 426-42.

- Ward, T. & Brown, M. (2004). The good lives model and conceptual issues in offender rehabilitation. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 10(3), 243-57.
- Ward, T., Mann, R. & Gannon, T. (2007). The good lives model of offender rehabilitation: Clinical implications. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 12(1), 87-107.
- Wartna, B.S.J., Tollenaar, N., Blom, M., Alma, S.M., Bregman, I.J & Essers, A.A.M. (2011). Recedivebericht 2002-2008. Retrieved from <http://www.dji.nl/Organisatie/Publicaties/index.aspx>.
- Welch, R. (1991). Tapping Inmates Creativity Offers Hope, Improves Security. *Corrections Today*, 53, 146-52.
- Wilson, D., Caulfield, L. & Atherton, S. (2008). Promoting positive change: Assessing the long-term psychological, emotional and behavioral effects of the Good Vibrations Gameplan in Prisons Project, November, good-vibrations.org.uk.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A- Research Proposal Sent to Custodial Institutions Agency (Dienst Justitiële Inrichtingen)

Introduction:

The Department of Justice and Security in the Netherlands has created a Prison System Modernization Program which involves a person-oriented approach to better promote re-integration. This person-oriented approach hopes to ultimately reduce recidivism rates through engaging inmates' sense of responsibility. This can be achieved through encouraging self-discovery, increasing self-reliance and self-motivation (Krabbendam & Nelissen, 2012). There are many steps and procedures used in this program to create such an environment. A unique part of the program is the involvement of creative activities, such as art classes, as an element in the personal program of inmates.

Purpose of Study:

This study aims to discover and describe the effects of art activities in de Geerhorst, a prison in Sittard, the Netherlands. In a brief literature review of art in prison, it is clear that although there have been studies of art therapy in prisons (Gussak, 2006; Gussak, 2007; Gussak, 2009), there has been little research detailing the experience, motivations and effects of the opportunity to create art in prisons. In light of the coming changes from the Prison System Modernization Program it would be beneficial to analyze the art program for Dutch inmates/detainees in Sittard. Furthermore it would be valuable to have more details about the experiences, motivations and impact the opportunity to create art in a prison has had in the behavior, attitudes and psychological well-being of the inmates/detainees.

Research Question:

Does the art program in de Geerhorst prison have a positive effect on the behaviors, attitudes and psychological well being for the inmates/detainees? If so, what effect has been observed?

Methods:

This research would comprise of a summative evaluation, which considers the overall impact of the art program in De Geerhorst. This would best be done through interviews since it allows for further questioning and clarification, if/when needed. This research would aim towards interviewing 10-20 detainees/inmates who are currently in the art classes. The questions in the interviews would involve descriptions of the art classes, motivations for the classes, effects on attitudes about prison and re-integration, patterns of behavior and elements of psychological well-being (self-efficacy, mastery skills, self-reliance). Since the aim of the art classes in the Modernization Program are in strengthening motivation, self-efficacy and improving skills: reflection, perseverance, positive attitude, planning and cooperation (Krabbendam & Nelissen, 2012); there will be questions in the interviews concerning these. All participants will remain anonymous. All interviews will be recorded, transcribed and translated (since the thesis will be completed in English). Ideally the interview process will begin the week of March 11th.

About Researcher and Use of Research:

The research from this study will be used for Maria Messner's Bachelor Thesis at the University College Utrecht. She has majored in Psychology and Criminology and minored in Dutch Language and Culture in her three years at the University College Utrecht. She has some research experience since she conducted two quantitative studies at UCU and she has taken several Methods and Statistics courses. Her bachelor's thesis is coordinated through Christel Lutz, the head of the Psychology department. The thesis is supervised by criminologist Alexis Aronowitz. Furthermore, Peter Nelissen, criminologist and creative arts teacher, is contributing an integral role in the set-up of interviews and advisory role in the process of the research.

APPENDIX B – Letter to Inmates (English Version)

Dear Sir,

I'm Maria Messner and I study in Utrecht. For my thesis I would like to know more about the effects of creative arts programs in prison. These programs can mean a lot to inmates. It offers relaxation, an outlet for emotions, increase in artistic skills, etc. The creative arts program can also add to the skill of putting things in order for the future. That is why it is important that we

get to know more about what the creative arts programs mean for inmates. My question for you is if you would be interested in participating in my research which would be about your experience with the creative arts program. It is important that you have already participated for a while in the creative arts program (at least two months). The interviews would take place during one of your creative art classes or when you have free time. The interviews would last about one, to maximally, two hours. I will ask questions about your experience with the creative arts program and about the art pieces you have made. All of the information you share will stay anonymous. Your interview would be anonymously used in my thesis about the effects of creative arts programs in prison. If you are interested in helping me please let Peter Nelissen know, then we can plan in a time for your interview. I hope to hear more about your experience!

Thanks in advance,
Maria Messner

APPENDIX C – Interview Questions (English Version)

Introduction:

I'm Maria Messner and I'm studying at the University of Utrecht. I'm from the United States. I have a great interest in art programs in prisons. Therefore, I would like to talk with you about your experience in the creative arts program at De Geerhorst. Your interview will be used anonymously so that there is more information about the experience of inmates with the creative arts program. Before we begin, do you have any questions?

Since Dutch is my second language, it is good for me to record them so I can listen to them again later. Is that okay with you? Can you sign this form giving me permission to record our conversation?

Part One: Background of the Prisoner

- How long have you been a part of the creative arts program in this prison?
- Have you ever done any art courses or activities before you came to prison? If so, for how long did you do them?

- Can you tell me why you decided to participate in the creative arts program?

Part Two: the Effects of the Creative Arts Program

- Before you go to the art class, do you already know what you want to paint or make?
How often? Every time? Sometimes? Never?
- Do you think that you're creative abilities are better than they were in the beginning?
What changes have you noticed?
- Of the art pieces you've made thus far, which one was the most difficult? Did you learn anything during the process of making it? How satisfied were you with the end result?
- Do you use elements from your life in prison in your art? If so, in what way and how is that expressed?
- How important is it for you to experience new things in the creative arts program?
- Are there certain things you hope to reach with the creative arts program? Have you already reached them?
- If you are sad, angry or happy, how do you express that? Can you express that through your art?
- Have you ever shown your artwork to family or friends? How did they respond?
- Has the creative arts program helped relieve you of any stress or tension in prison? If so, can you give a concrete example?
- Have you ever been frustrated during the creative arts program? How did you deal with your frustration?
- Since you've started the creative arts program, have you noticed any changes in your behavior? If so, can you give a concrete example?
- What have you learned about yourself during the creative arts program?
- In terms of artistic ability, what do you think you are best at? What do you think you are the worst at?

Concluding Questions

We've talked about your experience with the creative arts program and I noticed that the creative arts program has had an effect on you. You mentioned.... Do you think these effects are due to your participation with the creative arts program?

Can you tell me what the most important reason is for you to continue going to the creative arts program?

After you are released, would you like to continue doing creative/artistic activities? Why?

Demographics:

How old are you?

How long is your sentence?

How long have you already been in prison?

Debrief:

I want to thank you very much for your participation in my research. I thought it was very interesting to hear about your experience in the art program. Do you have any questions about my research or about our conversation?