

## LIT CONVENING OUTCOME: ILLUSTRATIVE ACTION PLAN FOR LITERARY ORGANIZATIONS

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1. Develop of rationale for philanthropic and public support of literary organizations
2. Dissemination of case to stakeholder groups
  - a. Identify stakeholders
    - i. Foundations
    - ii. Public agencies
    - iii. Individuals
3. Support to individual organizations in developing bespoke rationales
  - a. Mostly 1, above, but supplemented by anecdotes / stories?
4. Affecting the climate of opinion
  - a. Identifying effective spoke-people and writers
    - i. Glitz – literary stars
    - ii. Gravitas – literary authorities
  - b. Securing their support
  - c. Identifying occasions and outlets –
    - i. print ;
    - ii. on-line and social media;
    - iii. spoken – conferences, public debates
    - iv. Personal meetings
5. Campaign co-ordination
  - a. Committee formation and leadership
  - b. Timetable
  - c. Metrics for success
  - d. Resourcing the effort



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**TO:** DEBORA, LAURIE  
**FROM:** ADRIAN  
**DATE:** APRIL 8, 2015  
**SUBJECT:** ARGUMENTS FOR THE SUPPORT OF LITERARY ORGANIZATIONS

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We need to rally the most compelling arguments that we can for the support of literary organizations – and we need a suite of them for different potential constituencies of support. The arguments for support of the arts in one form or another have become increasingly sophisticated over the past decade, with cruder ‘instrumental’ arguments about economic impact being supplemented by arguments about social and psychological dimensions of arts participation, and about the ‘public value’ of the arts, with empirical evidence brought to bear in support. A heroic one page synopsis by Americans for the Arts is attached and a compendium of supporting research can be found here<sup>1</sup>. A synopsis of two examples from the literary sphere is also attached below.

We need both to comb and cull these to find the subset that are most relevant to the distinctive character of literature as an art form, and for the support of organizations that in turn support literature.... Unless we do that, we are effectively disenfranchised in the on-going debate about the value of the arts.

These arguments are, however, often more effective at winning minds than hearts; and it is also important that we ensure that narrative play a part in our arguments for support - compelling examples of specific circumstances - so that analysis and anecdote complement one another. For this we need to collate and disseminate stories about our own experience of the transformational work we do, and why it is that support for the infrastructure of literature is important.

We recommend that we set ourselves the task of compiling a document similar to that referenced below, but selecting those studies and arguments that are most relevant to the distinctive features of literature as an art form.

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<sup>1</sup>[http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/pdf/Understanding\\_the\\_value\\_and\\_impacts\\_of\\_cultural\\_experiences.pdf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/pdf/Understanding_the_value_and_impacts_of_cultural_experiences.pdf)



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## 10 Reasons to Support the Arts – Americans for the Arts

1. *Arts promote true prosperity.* The arts are fundamental to our humanity. They ennoble and inspire us—fostering creativity, goodness, and beauty. The arts help us express our values, build bridges between cultures, and bring us together regardless of ethnicity, religion, or age. When times are tough, art is salve for the ache.

2. *Arts improve academic performance.* Students with an education rich in the arts have higher GPAs and standardized test scores, and lower drop-out rates—benefits reaped by students regardless of socio-economic status. Students with 4 years of arts or music in high school average 100 points better on their SAT scores than students with just one-half year of arts or music.

3. *Arts strengthen the economy.* The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that the arts and culture sector represents 3.25 percent of the nation's GDP—a larger share of the economy than tourism and agriculture. The nonprofit arts industry alone generates \$135 billion in economic activity annually (spending by organizations and their audiences) that supports 4.1 million jobs and generates \$22.3 billion in government revenue.

4. *Arts are good for local merchants.* Attendees at nonprofit arts events spend \$24.60 per person, per event, beyond the cost of admission on items such as meals, parking, and babysitters. Attendees who live outside the county in which the arts event takes place spend twice as much as their local counterparts (\$39.96 vs. \$17.42)—valuable revenue for local businesses and the community.

5. *Arts drive tourism.* Arts travelers are ideal tourists, staying longer and spending more to seek out authentic cultural experiences. The U.S. Department of Commerce reports that the percentage of international travelers including museum visits on their trip has grown steadily since 2003 (18 to 24 percent). The share attending concerts and theater performances has grown from 14 to 17 percent since 2003.

6. *Arts are an export industry.* U.S. exports of arts goods (e.g., movies, paintings, jewelry) grew to \$72 billion in 2011, while imports were just \$25 billion—a \$47 billion arts trade surplus.

7. *Arts spark creativity and innovation.* The Conference Board reports that creativity is among the top 5 applied skills sought by business leaders—with 72 percent saying creativity is of high importance when hiring. The biggest creativity indicator? A college arts degree. Their Ready to Innovate report concludes, “The arts—music, creative writing, drawing, dance—provide skills sought by employers of the 3rd millennium.” Nobel laureates in the sciences are 17 times more likely to be actively engaged in the arts than average scientists.

8. *Arts have social impact.* University of Pennsylvania researchers have demonstrated that a high concentration of the arts in a city leads to higher civic engagement, more social cohesion, higher child welfare, and lower poverty rates. A vibrant arts community ensures that young people are not left to be raised solely in a pop culture and tabloid marketplace.

9. *Arts improve healthcare.* Nearly one-half of the nation's healthcare institutions provide arts programming for patients, families, and even staff. 78 percent deliver these programs because of their healing benefits to patients—shorter hospital stays, better pain management, and less medication.



10. *Arts mean business.* The Creative Industries are arts businesses that range from nonprofit museums, symphonies, and theaters to for-profit film, architecture, and design companies. A 2014 analysis of Dun & Bradstreet data counts 750,453 businesses in the U.S. involved in the creation or distribution of the arts that employ 3.1 million people—representing 4.2 percent of all businesses and 2.2 percent of all employees, respectively. (Download a free Creative Industry report for your local community.)

## Two illustrative academic studies of the impact of fiction

Title	Reading literary fiction improves theory of mind
Author(s)	Kidd, D. C. & Castano, E.
Publication date	2013
Source	Science, Vol 342, pp 377-380
Link	<a href="http://www.sciencemag.org/content/342/6156/377">http://www.sciencemag.org/content/342/6156/377</a>
Author email	kidd305@newschool.edu

### Summary

*This paper reports the results of five experiments designed to test whether reading literary fiction can improve people's theory of mind. People with an effective theory of mind have an emotional literacy that allows them to form complex social relationships and a developed sense of empathy. The experiment found that after reading literary fiction, people have an improved theory of mind in a way that does not occur after reading non-fiction, popular fiction, or not reading at all.*

They define literary fiction as a genre that is designed to destabilise and provoke the reader.

By contrast, popular fiction tends to simply entertain and reinforces people's image of the world. By offering up a multiplicity of possible meanings literary fiction forces the reader to consider the world anew by using their theory of mind. The books chosen to represent literary fiction in the experiment had all won literary prizes and were broadly considered to be part of the canon.

### The five experiments

In the first experiment 86 people were randomly assigned to read three short pieces of literary fiction or three short non-fiction pieces. All were then subjected to a range of validated tests for theory of mind development. The second experiment randomly assigned 114 people to read three excerpts from literary fiction or three excerpts of popular fiction, or to read nothing. The third and fourth experiments replicated the second one but with different source material and a different set of tests for theory of mind, respectively. The fifth experiment replicated the fourth but with a much larger group of people (356). The final experiment also allowed the researchers to control for factors such as age, gender, education, literary knowledge and the affect of the work.

Title	How does fiction reading influence empathy? An experimental investigation on the role of e
Author(s)	Bal, P. M. & Veltkamp, M.
Publication date	2013
Source	PLoS ONE Vol 8, Iss 1, e55341
Link	<a href="http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0055341">http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0055341</a>
Open access link	<a href="http://opus.bath.ac.uk/41120/">http://opus.bath.ac.uk/41120/</a>
Author email	p.m.bal@vu.nl

## Summary

This study reports two experiments designed to measure changes in readers' empathic skills over one week by getting participants to read either fiction or non-fiction writing. In the fiction groups, students were randomly allocated to read excerpts from work by either Arthur Conan Doyle or José Saramago. The two non-fiction groups were given newspaper articles to read. Immediately after reading the texts, subjects were assessed for emotional transportation. Empathy was measured directly before and after the experiment as well as one week later. Personal change was more likely to occur when becoming emotionally involved in the fictional story, and non-fiction readers were not similarly affected.

Fiction reading is related to empathic skills that develop over time

Results from the Conan Doyle study showed that fiction readers became more empathic over the course of a week than non-fiction readers, regardless of text difficulty, but only if they reported high emotional transportation into the story. Low transportation for fiction readers led to lower empathy but this was not observed in the non-fiction readers.

Lack of emotional transportation might have negative effects on fiction readers

The Saramago study replicated findings whereby absence of transportation was associated with decrease in empathy for fiction readers even after controlling for a number of factors. Surprisingly, non-fiction readers with high transportation reported a decrease in empathy. Also, women on average read more fictional books than men, as well as tending to report their empathic skills as being higher than their male counterparts. The authors suggest that it is not reading *per se* that affects empathic skills but the emotional involvement in the story.

Also of interest:

'The Slow Death of the University', Terry Eagleton, The Chronicle of Higher Education, April 2015.

<http://chronicle.com/article/The-Slow-Death-of-the/228991/>

'Creative Writing Programs: Is the MFA System Corrupt and Undemocratic?', Anis Shivani, Huffington Post, 2010.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/anis-shivani/creative-writing-programs-corrupt\\_b\\_757653.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/anis-shivani/creative-writing-programs-corrupt_b_757653.html)

'Amazon Vs. Book Publishers, By The Numbers', Jeff Bercovici, Forbes, Oct. 2014.

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<http://www.nybooks.com/blogs/nyrblog/2015/apr/16/too-many-books/>

'Reading Literature Makes Us Smarter and Nicer', TIME, Annie Murphy Paul, June 2013.

<http://ideas.time.com/2013/06/03/why-we-should-read-literature/>

'Listen Up! The Audiobook Revolution', Jen Donovan, [www.publishingtrends.com](http://www.publishingtrends.com), Jan. 2015.

<http://www.publishingtrends.com/2015/01/listen-audiobook-revolution/>

'Serial' success: What are its clues for publishing?', Julia Kingsford, The Bookseller, Dec. 2014.

<http://www.thebookseller.com/futurebook/serial-success-what-are-its-clues-publishing>

'Serial podcast smashes iTunes records, but success brings family backlash', Andrew Griffin, The Independent, Nov. 2014.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/news/serial-podcast-smashes-itunes-records-but-success-brings-family-backlash-9868604.html>