

Round Pegs in Square Holes:

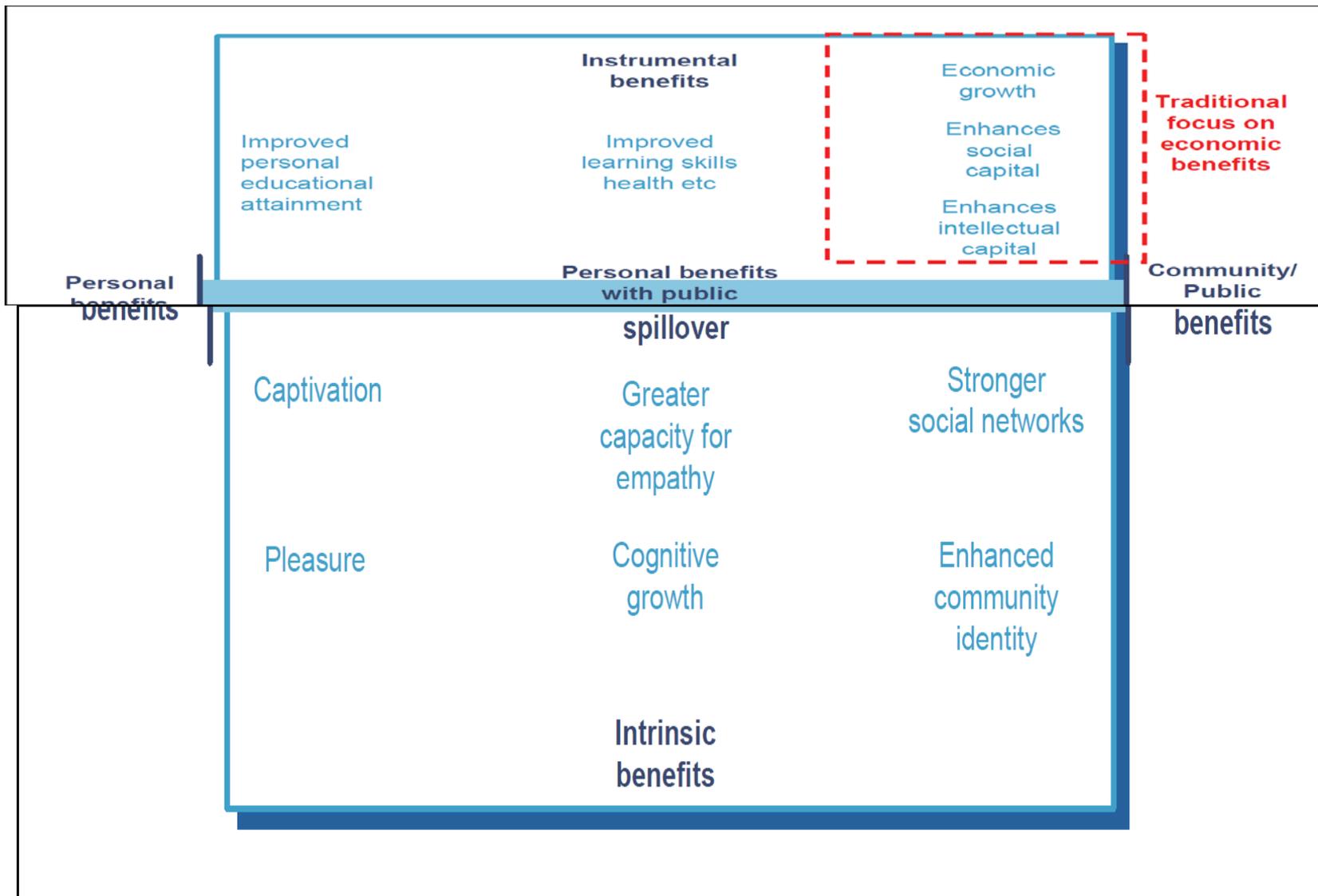
The Place of the Humanities in
Reform Policy

Assessing the Impact of Humanities Research

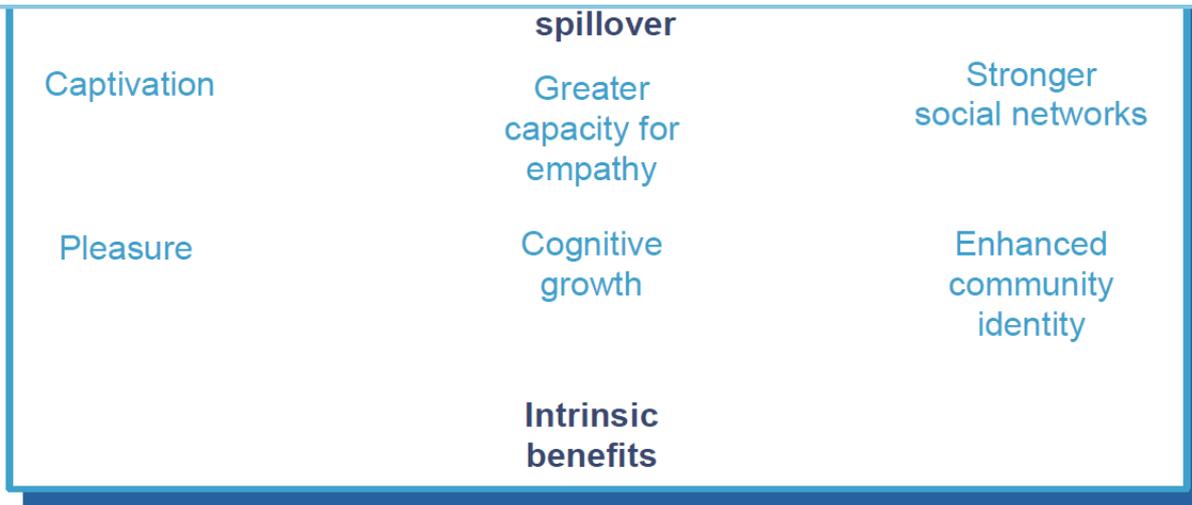
- An action or activity has an economic impact when it affects the welfare of consumers, the
- profits of firms and/or the revenue of government. Economic impacts range from those that are readily quantifiable, in terms of greater wealth, cheaper prices and more revenue, to those less easily quantifiable, such as effects on the environment, public health and quality of life.

Cambridge Impact Report

- Public knowledge creation is a key non-academic impact of arts and humanities
- research



benefits



benefits

The NAIL disciplines

- Narrative – the ‘set of values and frames that have broad exposure in society is what ultimately influences individual and collective behaviour’ (Castells)
- Analysis – the ability to paraphrase and reduce information, assess it for logical coherence and ideological bias –
- Interpretation – move from assessment to judgement necessary for shifting info into knowledge
- Literacy/ies – the advanced literacies that form the basis of the above, just as math forms the basis for STEM disciplines

The Information Society/Economy

- ‘a knowledge-driven and knowledge-dependent society’
- ‘The technocratic version of a “clean”, “purely scientific” or “purely professional university is just an historical vision sentenced to be constantly betrayed by historical reality... The key issue is to understand that the most important infrastructure in the economy of our age is the human brain and the collective capacity of a given society to link up all its brains with the brains of the world.’ (Castells)

OECD 1993 Report

- Sophisticated generic skills in the areas of communication, interpersonal relations, and critical thinking such as can be acquired through the study of H/SS;
- Contextual understanding of their activities requiring appropriate elements of the humanities and social sciences;
- The capability of dealing with complexity and ambiguity by ways of knowing that differ from the traditional scientific model

Public Knowledge: TAC

- TAC is a relatively small organization when compared with major political parties... At our peak we had in the region of 17,000 members. Yet we have successfully changed government policy.
- What distinguished TAC's position was a realization that we had to convince ANC supporters that the state was wrong about AIDS... Key to this was a multi-pronged approach. We had to have a well-run campaign that made effective use of the media and the courts. Good research was essential...[plus] our treatment education programme...

TAC

- Achmat suggested I read A Theory of Justice by John Rawls, which put forward a compelling argument consistent with liberal philosophy that there are occasions when civil disobedience is justified in a democracy... it paid off. (Geffen)

