

<b>Institution: University of South Wales</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: D35</b>
<b>Title of case study:</b> Analysing and Developing Creative Industries in Small Nations (Case study 2)
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>Until the Centre for Media and Culture in Small Nations was established in 2006, there was no coherent, multidisciplinary programme of research examining the creative industries through the distinct framework of small nations, including Wales. By drawing together researchers from diverse arts and media disciplines, the Centre has provided a thorough analysis of the creative industries in Wales and informed public debate on their artistic, social and economic contribution to the nation's civic life. Our original research has delivered new insights for organisations, and their users, including BBC Wales, National Theatre Wales, the Welsh Music Foundation and community radio.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>Since its establishment, the Centre has been researching the cultural and economic role of the creative industries in Wales through the global framework of small nations. Small nations face distinct challenges and possibilities in their artistic production and creative industries. For Wales - a recently devolved nation - the vitality of its creative industries and their capacity to provide distinctive forms of information, education, entertainment and national imagery is a matter of live public interest and concern. Our extensive programme of research asks the following research questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What role do the creative industries in Wales play in representing the nation and its diverse cultural identities?</li> <li>• How do the structures and strategies of the creative industries in Wales support practitioners and communities in contributing to sustainable Welsh creative ecology?</li> <li>• What contemporary and historical challenges face the creative industries in Wales and what strategies and principles might enable them to be met successfully?</li> </ul> <p>The research employs established research methods including audience and other stakeholder focus groups, surveys, textual analysis, historical analysis, policy analysis and interviews with key industry personnel. It demonstrates that whilst small nations face particular challenges (e.g. limited resources, a restricted market and vulnerability to foreign and dominant-language penetration), they also possess certain advantages over their larger neighbours. Blandford's (2007) research on theatre and performance in Wales and Scotland (see REF2), for example, shows how small nations are often more willing to challenge established models and offer instead alternative approaches to national theatre.</p> <p>Both Centre directors (Barlow 2006-2008; Blandford 2009-) have steered this research, drawing on the range of expertise within the Centre to collaborate on specific elements of the work. For example, Barlow was a joint recipient with Philip Mitchell in 2001 of an ESRC award to investigate independent radio in Wales which, in turn, supported the Centre's subsequent research on community radio in Wales and Traynor's application of it in Laos. The latter also exemplifies the Centre's mission to apply research from Wales to small nation contexts across the world. The Centre's research also entails commissioned reports and applied research interventions such as industry-academic research symposia which have made a tangible contribution to the research's impact, examples of which are the Live Music Exchange event detailed below and BBC Wales and <i>The Story of Wales</i> which brought together commissioners and programme makers to discuss the making of a major BBC history series (details at <a href="http://tinyurl.com/o4lyqtp">http://tinyurl.com/o4lyqtp</a>)</p> <p>Elements of the research were commissioned by external organizations. Blandford's work on film</p>

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and television in Wales, together with McElroy's on Welsh-language television, led the BBC Audience Council Wales to commission the *Screening the Nation: Wales and Landmark Television* report in 2010. The research was led by Blandford, with McElroy and Lacey as Co-Investigators, and Williams providing Research Assistant support. Carr's academic and professional expertise (he is a former professional musician) led to his being approached by Welsh Music Foundation to evaluate the sustainability of the live music industry in Wales.

**3. References to the research**

- Barlow, D. M., Mitchell, P. and O'Malley, T. (2005) *The Media in Wales: Voices of a Small Nation*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press. ISBN 0-7083-1839-8.  
*Evidence of quality: This book emerges from a research project funded by an ESRC grant (ESRC Ref: R000223668) which ran from December 2001 to July 2003. It was submitted to RAE 2008 in then UoA 66.*
- Barlow, D. (2006) 'Reassessing Radio: Role, Scope and Accountability' *Contemporary Wales* 18 (1): 140-155.  
*Evidence of quality: This peer-reviewed article emerges from the ESRC-funded research project noted immediately above. It was also submitted to RAE 2008. .*
- Barlow, D. and Johnson, S. (2008) 'Finding a Voice. Community Radio: Role, Sustainability and Practice' *The Radio Journal: International Studies in Broadcast and Audio Media* 6 (2-3): 75-85, DOI: 10.1386/rajo.6.2&3.75/4  
*Evidence of quality: This peer-reviewed article appears in the leading radio journal.*
- Blandford, S. (2007) *Film, Drama and The Break-Up of Britain*. Bristol: Intellect. ISBN 978-1-84150-150-5  
*Evidence of quality: This monograph was submitted to RAE 2008 in UoA65.*
- Blandford, S., Lacey, S., McElroy, R. and Williams, R. (2010) *Screening the Nation: Wales and Landmark Television*, ISBN: 978-1-84054-248-6. Available at: <http://culture.research.glam.ac.uk/news/en/2010/mar/15/screening-nation-wales-and-landmark-television-rep>  
*Evidence of quality: This published report was commissioned by BBC Trust/Audience Council Wales. Hard copies may be provided on request.*
- Carr, P (2011). 'Investigating the Live Music Industry within Wales: A Critical Analysis: A Report for the Welsh Music Foundation', Welsh Music Foundation: Available at <http://crocodoc.com/YIqOZCR>  
*Evidence of quality: This research was supported by a grant from the Welsh Music Foundation which ran from April 2010 to October 2010. Hard copies are available on request.*

**4. Details of the impact**

The Centre's research has achieved cultural, economic and policy impact by advising broadcasters, theatre companies, music professionals and community radio stations on their creative strategy and cultural role. Our contribution to public debate has improved the understanding of both policymakers and the public of the challenges and contribution of creative industries in Wales. Our research has made an impact by contributing to the establishment of National Theatre Wales; the BBC's increased emphasis on drama production in the nations and regions (including the opening of Roath Lock Studios in Cardiff Bay); and the Welsh Government's mapping of the live music industry in Wales. The international reach of our impact is evidenced by Traynor's work on community radio production in Laos where her methodology has now been adopted by Community Radio/UNDP as a tool for development.

**Reach and significance of the impact**

Blandford et al's *Screening the Nation* (2010) report provided the BBC Trust with insights on how

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well the BBC is serving its audience and delivering its public purpose (see 5.1 and 5.6). The report's findings were used by ACW members in their discussion with other Audience Councils at a joint meeting in Salford in October 2009, where ACW provided a lead on issues of portrayal and identity. Janet Lewis-Jones (then BBC National Trustee for Wales), commented that the 'report offers a perspective which will contribute to the work of the ACW and the Trust during the months and years to come'. (<http://tinyurl.com/nhzkif8>). Its significance to the BBC was indicated by the presence at its launch of the BBC Trust vice-chair, Chitra Bharucha (see <http://tinyurl.com/q76htkf>). The report's longer-term impact has been to contribute to regions and nations agenda-building within the BBC which is exemplified by the public lecture given by Jana Bennett (then Director of BBC Vision) in July 2010 (<http://tinyurl.com/plwndpd>) and which has now been made manifest through the opening of Roath Lock Studios. The report's impact on Welsh Government policy on broadcasting is evidenced by the Centre Director being invited to provide evidence to the National Assembly's Task and Finish Group on the Future Outlook of the Media in Wales in November 2011 (see 5.5).

Blandford's research, and his advocacy for national theatres in the devolved UK nations, contributed to the formation of National Theatre Wales (NTW) in 2008. It led to his appointment as one of NTW's inaugural Trustees. The thinking represented by his research on progressive models of national theatre has been central in helping NTW set its core mission. Blandford's research has had a significant artistic impact by helping NTW achieve a reputation as one of the most important new companies in Britain and Europe, providing what the Chair of the Board of NTW calls 'an excellent example of academic work contributing to the formation of a company whose impact on theatre in the UK and internationally has been very profound' (see 5.2).

Carr's report, *Live Music in Wales* (2011), has been widely reported in the Welsh press and its findings have been discussed at several industry and policy events hosted by the Hay Festival, the Brecon Jazz Festival and the Institute of Welsh Affairs (see 5.9 and 5.10). Carr's call for a mapping exercise on the live music industry in Wales is now being implemented as part of the Welsh Government's creative industries strategy, while the other problems highlighted by the report are currently being addressed by the Welsh Music Foundation as part of its on-going work to assist in the development of the music industry in Wales (see 5.3).

Carr's subsequent report for the Higher Education Academy on *Higher Education and the Live Music in Wales* (2012) has informed policy debates about the training needs of the live music industry in Wales. His call for more flexible, distance-learning courses and strategic work placements within the industry was discussed with representatives from Creative and Cultural Skills, the Arts Council of Wales, the Welsh Music Foundation and the Welsh Government at an AHRC Knowledge Transfer event organised by the Live Music Exchange at Atrium in November 2012 (<http://tinyurl.com/p38wqus>).

Barlow, Johnson and Traynor's research on independent radio has provided extensive benefits for community radio stations, their workers and volunteers. The models of community participation established by the members of the Centre, contributed to the development of Wales' first community radio station, GTFM. Building on this experience, members of the Centre have taken a lead in establishing, with support from the Welsh Government, the Welsh Community Radio Stations Network (see 5.4 and 5.8), through which to share expertise and best practice throughout Wales and the UK. They have also helped develop community radio stations in other small nations, such as Laos (see 5.5).

## 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

### Confidential letters from beneficiaries (including brief quotations relating to the thrust of the evidence that they provide):

1. Letter from Head of Governance and Accountability, BBC Cymru Wales, October 2013  
*"It can be seen therefore that the impact of the report was not insignificant in adding momentum to Audience Council Wales' work, to the BBC Trust and the BBC Executive's thinking on issues relating to portrayal and indeed to the BBC's strategy to move television*

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*production Out of London.”*

2. Letter from Chair of the Board of Trustees of National Theatre Wales, April 2013  
*“The thinking represented by this book and by others who have written about models of national theatres that are not building based, pluralistic in their approach to questions of national identity and innovative in their approach to questions of community and engagement has been central to the thinking behind National Theatre Wales’ core mission.”*
3. Letter from Director of the Welsh Music Foundation, May 2013.  
*“The report called for improving the mapping of the live music sector in Wales. I am pleased to report this is something which the Welsh Government, through its Creative Industries strategy is currently working on.”*
4. Letter from Director Advisers in Media/ former Head of Broadcasting and Telecommunications, Ofcom in Wales, November 2013.  
*“The University has acted as an important source of research and support for the development of radio in Wales over many years...our strategic partnership has directly informed the development of the Welsh Community Radio Stations Network and enhanced our ability to lever support from Welsh Government for this important initiative. It was also very valuable in forming a strategic view of the developing community radio sector in Wales, which has helped to influence policy in this area. I am delighted to be able to commend this excellent example of academic work contributing to the development of community radio and to the many benefits such models of media participation can bring for citizens and communities in our society”*
5. Letter/email from UNDP-funded Laos Community Radio Support Project. March 2011 and May 2012  
*“The Lao PDR government and the UNDP [United Nations Development Programme] is expanding its support for community radio and hopes to establish community radio stations in all 47 of Laos’ poorest districts. This radio drama method is very important and will allow us to use radio drama for development in all the new radio stations in Laos.”*

**Reviews and reports in the public domain:**

6. National Assembly for Wales: Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee Report (2012) by the Task and Finish Group on the Future Outlook of the Media in Wales. Note direct reference to the Centre on p.50. Available at: <http://tinyurl.com/ooq3vwc>
7. BBC Audience Council Wales Annual Review 2009-10 – reference to report on p.6. Available online at: <http://tinyurl.com/o93lekt>
8. First Online Community Network Launched, Media Academy Wales. Available at: <https://www.mediaacademywales.org/first-online-community-radio-network-launched-for-wales>

**Indicative media coverage and public debate:**

9. “Live music must do or die”, Jonathan Brooks Jones, Click On Wales, July 17, 2011. Available online: <http://tinyurl.com/ovybpm6>
10. “The Changing Music Industry”, Hay Festival, May 27, 2011. Available online: <http://tinyurl.com/3gdxcce>