

<b>Institution: University of Lincoln</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 35 Music, Drama, Dance &amp; Performing Arts</b>
<b>Title of case study: Changing lives and empowering communities through applied performance practice as research</b>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>This case study draws together the project-based work of a number of researchers within the UoA 35 based in the Lincoln School of Performing Arts. The thematic link that unites this work is that it has all benefitted marginalized and disempowered communities locally, regionally and nationally by using performance to facilitate dialogue, participation, intervention, and empowerment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘HMP Drake Hall’, ‘Lace Housing’ and ‘Artist in Residence’ have each had direct impact, building esteem, creating community cohesion, nurturing shared remembrance and enabling civic inclusion. Together the research has allowed communities to articulate identity through performance.</li> <li>• ‘It Happened Here’ and ‘Dambusters 70’ have enabled organizations to develop methods for communal engagement and expression. This has generated further commissions (BBC; RAF; Skegness SO Festival), projects (Lincolnshire Social Services), and successful funding bids from Heritage Lottery and European sources (Hoxton Hall; STORM).</li> <li>• ‘Hepatitis C’ and ‘LOV Venues’ have gained national recognition for developing health awareness and cultural engagement. ‘Hepatitis C’ is shortlisted for a national <i>Nursing Times</i> award for its impact; ‘LOV Venues’ has been recognized by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation as good practice to be rolled out nationally; meanwhile, two academic outputs (from ‘HMP Drake Hall’) have won prestigious prizes from the IFTR and TAPRA.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>This case study involves a group of projects that examined the use of performance by, with and for marginalized and disempowered communities. Researchers, including <b>Walsh, Lawrence, Bowtell, O’Thomas, Gaughan</b> and <b>Morrow</b>, explored ideas of empowerment, dialogue, participation and intervention. The concept of community-as-producer/participant-as-producer was central, leading to associated enquiries into the notions of cultural identity and the authorship of personal/community narratives. Projects worked with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• female prisoners (HMP Drake Hall: <b>Walsh</b>);</li> <li>• social service users and providers (Lincolnshire Social Services: <b>O’Thomas/Gaughan</b>);</li> <li>• elderly nursing home residents (Lace Housing: <b>Lawrence</b>; Artist in Residence: <b>Bowtell</b>);</li> <li>• sufferers of chronic illness, their nursing providers and families (Hepatitis C: <b>Walsh</b>);</li> <li>• military personnel living with local Lincolnshire communities (Dambusters 70: <b>Lawrence</b>);</li> <li>• diverse ethnic and cultural youth communities in London (It Happened Here: <b>Lawrence</b>);</li> <li>• cross-cultural communities in the UK and Europe (STORM: <b>O’Thomas, Lawrence</b>);</li> <li>• youth communities as cultural participants and producers (LOV Venues: <b>Morrow</b>).</li> </ul> <p>The underpinning research considered three principal areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1) The degree to which marginalised and dispossessed communities can be empowered through performance (HMP Drake Hall; Artist in Residence; LOV Venues);</li> <li>• 2) The ways in which practical experiential performance can facilitate healthcare and training in the hospital and social services sectors (Hepatitis C; Lincolnshire Social Services; Lace Housing; Artist in Residence);</li> <li>• 3) The degree to which site-specific performance can work as a tool for community dialogue and memory (It Happened here, STORM, Dambusters 70).</li> </ul>

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1a) Research by **Walsh** (HMP Drake Hall) centred on the experiences of women prisoners, considering how incarcerated individuals might transcend the reduced horizons of the prison environment through the embodied voice of performance. It developed through radical performance pedagogies and feminist approaches to inclusive methodologies. Whilst necessarily small in scope (for security reasons), the research explored how performance tactics can be adopted as 'resistance' or 'compliance'. This dovetails with **Walsh's** wider exploration of how Greek protestors have performed their circumstances throughout the recent crisis with similar strategies of resistance.

1b) Meanwhile, a different community of marginalised participants has been the focus of research by **Bowtell** (The Artist in Residence), funded by the Centre for Educational Research and Development with support from East Lindsey District Council, into how diverse dance techniques can be used by elderly participants to enable an embodied sense of self and an ownership of their identity. The project led to further initiatives, 'The Companions of Skegness' and 'Full Bloom', which continue to work with this community.

1c) The collaboration of the **LOV Venues (Morrow)** has empowered youth audiences to become producers, engaging proactively with cultural provision throughout Lincolnshire in a project set to expand nationwide. Work in this area has benefitted from collaboration with social scientists within the University (School of Sport and Exercise Science) to evaluate and process data related to the project.

2a) The **Hepatitis C Interactive Theatre** process (**Walsh**) collaborated with healthcare professionals and service users in a verbatim theatre exploration of issues affecting Hepatitis C carriers, their families and partners. This built on practical work, such as Mark Storer's *For the Best*, exploring the dynamics of participation and performance in the understanding and treatment of chronic health conditions by patients, healthcare providers and families. It has been shortlisted for a prestigious national award for raising awareness about Hepatitis C.

2b) This also intersected with a separate project (**Lincolnshire Social Services**) in which researchers **O'Thomas** and **Gaughan** worked with social services providers to design and establish a training house for the delivery of training through role play. Rigged with cameras and audio equipment, the house offers a simulated environment in which child protection trainees can engage with actors performing as social service users; footage of their handling of user characters can then be fed back and discussed in the classroom environment.

2c) **Lace Housing (Lawrence)** involved student producers in a two month interactive performance process in a Lincoln nursing home. In dialogue with elderly service users with Alzheimer's, the process explored memories of travel, friendship and time. Benefits included increased self-esteem through physical embodiment of experience (service users), exposure to a methodology for exercising and performing memory (carers), and experience of professional practice (student producers as Dramatherapists).

3a) **It Happened Here (Lawrence)** explored the memory of a specific place and its cultural dialogue with local communities. The practical process involved fifty 12 to 19 year old Hackney residents exploring five heritage sites for their performance potential. Developing a performance methodology to stimulate young people's engagement with and narrative routes through museums, theatres and churches led to two guided performance tours, a film, and two heritage-informed performances. Participants spanned inner London's mix of ethnic, religious and social backgrounds.

3b) **Dambusters 70 (Lawrence)** used verbatim theatre to explore the effects on individual memory of a major national narrative affecting local communities and military personnel in Lincolnshire (the retrospective of the Dambusters raid).

3c) **STORM (Lawrence; O'Thomas)** (funded by the European Union, Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency: €109,888) was a pan-European project relating to cultural production, translation, dissemination and movement in the performance and heritage sectors. In collaboration with Theatre Companies *Fatias de Cá* (Tomar, Portugal) and *Teatr im Aleksandra Sewruka* (Elblag, Poland), **STORM** explored the collaborative development of a multi-language performance model for non multi-lingual audiences.

### Key findings that inform the stated impact:

The principal research insights stemming from the collected projects within this case study were:

- that the empowerment of communities is qualitatively improved by focusing on lived experience, remembering, and the archiving of struggle and celebration;
- that positive effects of performance are emphasised in framing individual and community participation in local, regional and national narratives;
- that establishing site as a locus for performance-through-discourse strengthens bonds between identity, commonality and creative productivity.

**3. References to the research** (indicative maximum of six references)

- Walsh, Alwyn (2012) ‘Space-making in Women’s Prisons: Personal Performance Testimonies of “Doing Bird”’ (conference paper), Personal and Political Symposium, 14<sup>th</sup> September 2012, University of Northampton. IFTR Helsinki Prize, 2013.
- Walsh, Alwyn (2013) ‘(En)gendering Habitus: Women, Prison, Re-orientation’, *Contemporary Theatre Review* (forthcoming). TaPRA PG Essay Prize, 2012.
- Bowtell, Kayla Dougan (2012) ‘Ethics and Principles Informing Dance Work with Older People’ (conference paper), Lincolnshire Dance, 19 April 2012.
- Lawrence, Conan (2010) *Performing the Archive: Reflections from an Archive-aware performance process* (conference paper), Archiving the Future Symposium, 19 May 2010, University of East London.
- Lawrence, Conan (2013) *After Me The Flood*. Performance collaboration with BBC Radio Lincolnshire and Royal Air Force marking the 70th anniversary of 617 Squadron and the Dambusters Raid, adapted and broadcast by BBC Radio Lincolnshire (May, 2013).
- Brown, Chloe (2013) ‘Lincolnshire One Venues Young People’s Programme One Year In’, <http://www.lincolnshireonevenues.com/admin/resources/lovypprogrammeannualreport1213.pdf>

**4. Details of the impact**

1a) The **HMP Drake Hall** project (**Walsh**: February – August 2012), in collaboration with the charity Women in Prison, the Arts Alliance and Clean Break Theatre Company, involved practical theatre workshops with women at HMP Drake Hall in Staffordshire. The project engaged a core performance group of 15 prisoners, developed a research focus group of 10 further prisoners, and had an audience of 45 prisoners and staff. Coverage targeted the UK female prison population through Women in Prison’s *Ready Steady Go* magazine, enabling a ‘remote’ creative process to all women’s prisons in the UK of up to 8,000 readers. The process was discussed in an issue of *Total Theatre Magazine* and was the subject of two prize-winning academic essays (**Walsh** 2012; **Walsh** 2013).

1c) The **LOV project (Morrow)** has had significant impact on arts provision for young people in Lincolnshire: 854 young people have been involved as audience members, 637 as workshop participants, 112 as artists and performers and 137 as decision makers. Forty new artist commissions are in place, 23 new events for young people have been organized, 4 ongoing regional/national partnerships forged, 7 regular groups established as commissioning artists and 3 new jobs created. An evaluation of the Lincolnshire One Venue ‘X-Change’ programme is being led by the School of Sport and Exercise Science in the University. The Paul Hamlyn Foundation has recognised this as a benchmark project for future similar initiatives around the country, and is rolling out similar schemes in rural areas nationwide.

2a) The **Hepatitis C Interactive Theatre** process (**Walsh**: January – April, 2013), in collaboration with United Lincolnshire Hospitals, culminated in a performance to over 50 sector professionals and users. The process was shortlisted for the Nursing Times Award for Team of the Year 2013 for promoting awareness of the Hepatitis C Virus. **Walsh** is producing a DVD of performed materials aimed at service providers and users.

2b) Our engagement with **Lincolnshire Social Services** Training House was piloted in 2011 with 8 social workers, 4 social work trainers and 2 performers in role play scenarios around child protection issues. The Learning and Development Officer for Lincolnshire County Council stressed

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how the initiative had 'impacted on the quality of training in Lincolnshire Social Services'. The project was further developed through 2013 and is expanding to encompass training scenarios relating to domestic abuse, substance abuse and neglect.

2c) **Lace Housing (Lawrence: 2012)** involved 3 students, 20 service users and 3 carers and is being considered as a component of the University's Performance Enterprise Initiative to offer graduates professional employment.

3a) Participant feedback from **It Happened Here (Lawrence: 2009)** detailed the increased cultural ownership and confidence participants felt as a result of the project, leading to several volunteering as tour guides. Following the project, Hoxton Hall (lead partner) attracted significant Heritage Lottery funding for related projects, and has since received £3 million capital funding, partly to develop an archive of its cultural role for and with the community.

3b) **Dambusters 70 (Lawrence: March-May 2013)** was performed at RAF Scampton on 16 May 2013 as part of the national commemoration. Revisiting personal experience through performance impacted participants (performers), observers (audiences) and communities (local, regional, national), and dissemination allowed this impact to be part of a national memorialisation of historic achievements. It played to an audience of 500 and was adapted for BBC Radio Lincolnshire audience of 30,000 listeners. BBC North also tracked the process, reaching a TV audience of 100,000. The work was seen as audience building for both Radio Lincolnshire and BBC North and offered positive publicity for the RAF. Its impact on enhancing the cultural capital of listeners is evidenced by ongoing/repeat commissions from the BBC.

3c) **STORM (Lawrence, O'Thomas: May 2011 – April 2012)** provided an effective template for collaborating with multi-language partners, offering audiences a new performance methodology and an awareness of how performance can reflect cultural dialogue. Our collaboration with East Lindsey District Council directly influenced a successful application for Arts Council Catalyst funding to further performance collaborations between partners.

In addition to the discrete impacts noted, this case study has had significant tacit impact on participants, audiences and communities. This has contributed to the building of self-esteem; the bringing together of communities; the shared remembrance of communally-significant events; the civic inclusion of marginalized groups (the elderly, the incarcerated); and the empowering and empowering of marginalised communities.

##### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

Shortlist for Nursing Times Team of the Year award (Walsh: Hepatitis C Interactive Theatre)  
<http://www.ntawards.co.uk/799326>

Press release for Nursing Times Team of the Year award (Walsh: Hepatitis C Interactive Theatre)  
<http://www.lincoln.ac.uk/news/2013/10/788.asp>

Lincolnshire One Venues (LOV) annual report (Craig Morrow: LOV)  
<http://www.lincolnshireonevenues.com/admin/resources/lovypprogrammeannualreport1213.pdf>

"It Happened Here" promotional film (Lawrence: It Happened Here)  
<http://www.hoxtonhall.co.uk/youth/news/detail/it-happened-here-film/>

Dambusters 70 press release (Lawrence: Dambusters 70)  
<http://www.raf.mod.uk/news/archive/moving-tribute-at-scampton-17062013>