Impact template (REF3a): GOLDSMITHS – Anthropology (UoA24)



Institution: GOLDSMITHS UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Unit of Assessment: 24: Anthropology & Development

a. Context

Anthropology at Goldsmiths has been committed to public engagement since its foundation in the 1980s; the two founders of the Department, Caplan and Morris, continue to contribute to our impact profile. We have extended both the remit and forms of critical engagement with issues of social inequality, justice and inclusion in comparative perspective, in conversation with variously constituted local and international publics. Our research – as detailed in REF 5 - is organized around the politics of: the economy; cultures, including the visual and material and creative industries; and the body. These three clusters are not discrete, and the substantive research and impact areas overlap. We have developed a comparative framework in our research projects, such as those on the global steel industry and on transitional justice, to highlight the complexity of scales and uneven trajectories of development manifested in any one locale.

We have a proven record of contributing to public anthropology and, with the articulation of a research impact strategy and new methods of engagement, we now work with a wider range of beneficiaries including third sector entities, workers' organizations, social movements, and public sector initiatives. For example, we have worked closely with industry and commerce beneficiaries in relation to gambling and horse racing, and to the steel industry, with service providers in the delivery of health care and justice, and with heritage and creative industries in the rescue and repatriation of research results, objects and materials. We have engaged with policy makers around deindustrialising landscapes, including questions about the future of work and resources, addressing notions of risk, safety, social exchange and the complex outcomes of policy. Such engagements probe notions of inclusion, citizenship, activism and civil society associated with affirmative action, justice, safety and governance through a range of participatory methods including film, photography and audio, to promote dissemination and maximize impact. We also explore alternative media (new social media, comic books), as well as producing more conventional text-based accounts.

b. Approach to impact

Anthropological research has the advantage of close engagement with diverse publics. Our approach to impact reflects this in our critical, as well as positive, engagement processes. From the first stages of research design, we interrogate the potential impact of the project, so as both to specify benefits and consider unintended consequences, through the Dept Research Committee. For example, despite the difficulties associated with a lack of regulation in fields as diverse as road safety standards, waste management, gambling and employment, we ask at the design stage whom and what new regulation would benefit. At later stages we make a particular effort to work with stakeholders in discussing, analysing, and disseminating the findings. This may consist in returning material artefacts (Day), advising on United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) policy (Wastell), salvaging perishable material and immaterial heritage (Joy) or developing innovative ways of engaging school children with history (Pine and Tarlo). Our main research clusters engage with a range of diverse beneficiaries including: commerce and industry, service providers, and people working in the heritage and creative sectors, visual culture, and policy making and regulation.

Commerce and Industry: In response to the gambling industry's recent growth and diversification, impact was built into Cassidy's research design with a view to reframing public debates. By engaging industry representatives, policy makers, 'addiction' treatment providers, representatives and operators, Cassidy shows that the 'field' is unequally structured, allowing the reproduction of stereotypes about good and bad gamblers. We have examined similar effects of regulation and deregulation in relation to waste management (Alexander and Reno), skills and industrial work (Pine, Mollona, Goddard), and public data (Day). Bryer's project (also Mollona, Goddard) on critical accounting entailed discussion with business and industry regarding alternative economies. Graeber's work instigated intense public debate on the nature of debt, in both mainstream and alternative media, in bodies such as the WB and the IMF, and across various concerned publics.

Service providers: Through research on sex work and health since 1993, Day (with Ward, Imperial) developed an integrated epidemiological, public health and anthropological methodology, the impact

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of which is evident in her secondment to develop a Patient Experience Research Centre, supported by the NIHR Imperial Biomedical Research Centre. The project's key strategy of public and patient engagement recognizes the significance of both Day's specific approach and Goldsmiths' wider expertise in practice-based research for understanding experiences, engaging different stakeholders and generating data to design and introduce service redevelopments. De Zordo's research with health professionals and other stakeholders provides policy makers with advice on negotiating the contested terrain of abortion service delivery in the UK and Italy on the part of gynaecologists and obstetricians. Joy's community anthropology outreach programme at the Horniman Museum enrolled carers and their patients. Cuch's work on organ transplantation was disseminated through public exhibition, conference and photographic volume (in collaboration with Wright).

The heritage and creative sectors: Joy's research on a UNESCO site in Mali draws attention to heritage endangered as a result of economic collapse and war, and informs UNESCO's plan to create long-term sustainable solutions to the challenges facing Djenné. Further impact has been secured through exchange programmes, reciprocal exhibitions and collaborations between London and Mali, supported by the British Library and the British Museum (e.g. capacity building of local tourist guides). High's collaboration with the Waorani (Ecuadorian Amazonia) also responds to local interest in documenting and preserving culture, by transcribing and translating video recordings of traditional ceremonies and practices and everyday conversation, building a preliminary lexical database and grammatical sketch. Using visual methodologies, Sansi-Roca and Wright engage with artists and the creative sector, including collaborative exhibitions. Visual methods have also been central to the department's investment in the return of images and objects to their place of origin in India, Africa and Europe. Through Pine and Tarlo's collaboration with the Horniman Museum, images of objects from the Horniman collection were returned to Romania to elicit narratives about changing political contexts.

Visual cultures: The visual and material culture perspectives in the Department, including work on film making (Nugent, Leizaola, Mollona, Marrero-Guillamón) and photography (Wright, Leizaola, Day) take anthropological impact to a wider public. Visual techniques and data are now used in all our research to make anthropological findings more accessible to non-expert audiences. Mollona's participatory filmmaking in a Brazilian steel-town, in collaboration with Augusto Boal's Centre for the Theatre of the Oppressed, generated a film script that was screened locally and internationally (e.g. Serpentine Gallery, London). Tarlo's research on modest dress and fashion relies on visual techniques both for analysis and dissemination. Goddard's MEDEA project combined text and image in stakeholder workshops with trade unionists, government officials, teachers and students associated with the steel industry in Europe and South America.

Policy makers and regulators: Wastell's research in Bosnia and Spain had impact on legal and criminal justice professionals, policy-makers, and practitioners working in the area of international criminal and transitional justice. She has collaborated closely with the UNDP to overview knowledge transfer from the research and produced a database and analysis of over 5,000 initiatives in the transitional justice sector. This project reflects the Department's commitment to making a contribution to policy design and implementation and all our large-scale research projects include the production of substantive policy briefs and recommendations. More broadly, the dissemination of Departmental research and impact is achieved through various media including Goldsmiths Anthropology Uncut, Radio 4, the Guardian, Chronicle of Higher Education and diverse other public media in Europe, India and South America.

c. Strategy and plans

We have in this assessment cycle encouraged both large-scale projects which enhanced our impact through interdisciplinary collaboration (Gambling in Europe (GAMSOC, Cassidy PI); Bosnian Bones and Spanish Ghosts (BBSG, Wastell PI); Models and their Effects on Development Paths (MEDEA, Goddard PI) and small-scale ones that took us out of the academy into the wider community (Pine and Tarlo's collaboration with the Anne Frank Trust's 'Thirteen in 13', which elicited diary entries from 13 year olds, encouraging them to engage with personal and public history and memory). The department supports a wide range of formats for public engagement, including exhibitions, film festivals and public workshops.

The explicit focus on impact has been a useful catalyst to refine our collective commitment to a

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critical public anthropology, defining our potential beneficiaries more clearly and assessing impact more effectively. The Departmental Research Committee has supported efforts to assess potential impact from the early stages of the design of research and identify staff development needs through the annual Personal Development Review. We will continue to support dissemination and impact through social media platforms and other forms of public engagement such as websites, Facebook, departmental and project twitter accounts and blogs, and Goldsmiths' podcast programme. The rapid development of a robust procedure for promoting and evaluating research with significant impact across Goldsmiths will increase our practice-based and interdisciplinary collaborations with art, computing, design, media, music and theatre and performance. Departmental work of significant impact, including that of Graeber, Shah, Alexander and High, was integral to our departmental strategy but, strong new replacement appointments feed directly into these strategies: von Hellermann (environment), Joy (heritage), Weston (post-conflict, vigilantism), Swift (seamen's welfare), Marrero-Guillamón (urban redevelopment, activism) and Webb (activism) carry out exciting research that meshes with existing impact agendas.

Concretely, we are developing a research strategy that is based on three major themes that will enhance impact and enable a more critical and richer dialogue with the beneficiaries described above. First, we address issues of scale associated with the 'Human Economy' (Hart) approach, which spans meta-level processes to commensurate practices at the human level. Our strong record of research in this area is intended to encourage policy makers and other stakeholders to redirect their attention to this human scale. Scale is also central to our second theme regarding the production of cultural artefacts in relation to the politics of local and global relations, encompassing material and immaterial labour, creative industries and heritage. Thirdly, our research on violence highlights the ways economic factors intersect with the cultural and the symbolic. Through this research we aim to highlight alternative imaginaries in collaboration with civil society players concerned with a range of issues (road safety, vigilantism, heritage and transitional justice, livelihoods, activism). In our work falling under these themes we will continue to explore visual cultures and develop participatory methods as significant mechanisms for impact delivery. Simultaneously we evaluate the variety of contexts in which anthropological methods have greatest impact by reassessing and reconceptualising ethnography's potential reach and significance.

d. Relationship to case studies

Our two case studies illustrate the strengths of the ethnographic method, which in both cases has been able to incorporate developments with social media, material culture, participatory methods, practice-based research and visual methods. They provide vivid examples of anthropological impact, revealing the structured way in which cultural representation is articulated in diverse social and historical contexts. In this regard, they illustrate our wider approach that uses particular and particularistic research results to illuminate more general features of social life. The relevance of the work of both Tarlo and Graeber is reflected in the enthusiasm with which their anthropological arguments have been seized upon by commentators who suggest they have altered general perceptions of the current economic crisis and debates about multiculturalism.

With regard to the 'Politics of the Economy', Graeber's work develops anthropology's critical perspective on the economy, using anthropological arguments to cast light on the current economic crisis. His work offers a forceful demonstration of the way that comparison across space and time permits insight into "our" condition by drawing on the experiences of the "other". In addition to a wide range of civil society actors, Graeber's work on the nature of debt has had great impact on debates about commerce and regulation (in particular banking and financial services and their accountability). In regard to the 'Politics of Culture' and the 'Politics of the Body,' Tarlo changes the terms of debate about veiling, modest fashion and religious and cultural identities by building an ethnographic account of women's practices and aesthetic choices. In addition to the intense debates that Tarlo's work promoted among a range of civil society groups, her research has had particular impact on organizations in the creative sectors and visual culture. The impact is multi-layered and resonates throughout a wide non-academic public to an extent that is rarely credited to anthropological work and demonstrates how cultural and political identities are created through production of and reaction to representation. As such, the work has been recognised across a wide range of interest groups, from mainstream press to community organisations.