

Impact case study (REF3b)

<p>Institution: University of Cambridge</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: UoA30</p>
<p>Title of case study: World War Two: 1941 and the Man of Steel</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>As a result of Professor David Reynolds’ research on Stalin, Churchill and the war on the Eastern Front, 1941-2, he was invited by the BBC to write and present a 90-minute history documentary. This was first shown on BBC4 (13 June 2011) and repeated on four subsequent occasions, in addition to several late-night repeats. Total audience figure was in excess of two million.</p> <p>This work led to Reynolds receiving a judges’ nomination (2012) for the Grierson Prize, awarded for the best historical documentary screened in 2011-12. Nominations are for the four finalists. Reynolds was invited to write articles about the film for the <i>Daily Telegraph</i>, 13 June 2011 and <i>BBC History Magazine</i>, June 2011, and the film has subsequently been sold to and screened in seven foreign countries.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The research was carried out by Professor David Reynolds (Professor of International History, University of Cambridge, 2002 to present).</p> <p>Reynolds’ research on Churchill and Stalin was embodied in his book <i>In Command of History: Churchill Fighting and Writing the Second World War</i> (London: Penguin, 2004), which was awarded the Wolfson History Prize, and in related essays such as ‘Churchill, Roosevelt and the Stalin Enigma’ published in his book <i>From World War to Cold War</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 235-48.</p> <p>It also drew on an ongoing collaborative research project headed by Reynolds and Prof. Vladimir Pechatnov (Director of European and American Studies, Moscow State Institute of International Relations – MGIMO) to publish a complete critical edition of Stalin’s correspondence with Churchill and Roosevelt. Pechatnov and his team have accumulated a digitized database from the Stalin correspondence in the Russian State Archives and related material from the Foreign Ministry Archives. Reynolds’ collaboration has enabled the Russian team to integrate this with material from the National Archives at Kew, the Churchill Archives Centre in Cambridge and the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library at Hyde Park, New York. Reynolds also secured a British Academy grant of £7,500 (SG 100185) to assist with the costs of travel, research and translation. The work will be published in Russian in 2014 and subsequently in an English translation.</p> <p>Research themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reynolds has conducted a detailed examination of the historiography of WW2. British accounts of WW2 centre on ‘our finest hour’ in 1940 and other British-centred moments such as Alamein and D-Day. The magnitude of the struggle on the Eastern Front is still little known in Britain – 27-28 million Soviet war dead compared with 400,000 British. Between June 1941 and June 1944 90% of the German army’s battle casualties (killed, wounded, prisoners or missing) were inflicted by the Red Army. Reynolds’ research was intended to open up the Eastern Front to a general British audience and to show the importance of Soviet survival in 1941-2 in distracting Hitler away from Britain. • Reynolds’ research has shown that, if the Soviet war effort is noted in the West, it is usually because of Stalingrad (end 1942). Reynolds’ work emphasizes the magnitude of the crisis facing the USSR in both 1941 and 1942 and demonstrates the profound impact of Stalin’s initially disastrous war leadership.

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- Churchill has usually been seen in Britain as an ardent Cold Warrior, far-sightedly discerning the threat from the Soviet Union. Reynolds' research has demonstrated that Churchill's attitude to the USSR oscillated during the war. In particular, he placed enormous (and unwarranted) faith in Stalin personally, an attitudinal pattern established by his visit to Moscow in August 1942.
- The Anglo-American failure to mount a Second Front in France in 1942 and 1943 meant that the land war against Germany would be decided on the Eastern Front. Stalin's victory guaranteed him a position in the heart of Europe. Reynolds' research examines the moral complexities of how overcoming one evil helped build up another.

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

David Reynolds, *In Command of History: Churchill Fighting and Writing the Second World War* (London: Penguin, 2004), pp. xxvi + 646, which was awarded the Wolfson History Prize in 2005.

David Reynolds, *From World War to Cold War; Churchill, Roosevelt and the International History of the 1940s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), especially chapters entitled

- 'Churchill the Appeaser? Between Hitler, Roosevelt and Stalin, 1940-1944' (pp. 99-120),
- 'Churchill, Roosevelt and the Stalin Enigma' (pp. 235-48)
- 'Churchill, Stalin and the "Iron Curtain"' (pp. 249-66).

'Stalin's Correspondence with Churchill and Roosevelt in World War Two: An Annotated Edition'. British Academy grant of £7,490 (SG 100185) awarded June 2010: duration 1 Sept. 2010 to 31 Aug. 2012.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Reynolds wrote and presented a 90-minute historical documentary '1941 and the Man of Steel', about Stalin, Churchill and the war on the Eastern Front, 1941-2, which was first shown on BBC4 on 13 June 2011 **(5a)**. The audience figure of 557,000 was exceptional for BBC4, being one-third of the number watching 'Terry Pratchett: Choosing to Die' at the same time on BBC 2. Reynolds' film was repeated at prime time (9pm or 10pm) on four more occasions (22 Sept. and 13 Nov. 2011, 10 April 2012 and 9 Jan. 2013), in the last two cases still attracting 447,000 viewers (1.9% audience share) and 286,000 (2.4%). On these five primetime showings alone, the film reached nearly two million viewers **(5c)**.

There are no recorded figures for those who watched the film in late-night viewings, on i-player or via pirated downloaded versions on youtube, e.g. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRIOt-wqFHY> But that site alone had received 161,763 hits up to 23 Sept. 2013.

The film set out for a wider audience leading themes of Reynolds' research, such as the importance of Soviet resistance in 1941-2 for Britain's eventual victory in WW2 and also the excessive faith that Churchill placed in building a personal relationship with Stalin.

The film earned a judges' nomination (25 Sept. 2012) for the Grierson Prize, awarded for the best historical documentary screened in 2011-12. Nominations are for four finalists in the competition **(5b)**.

Reynolds wrote spin-off articles published in the *Daily Telegraph*, 13 June 2011, p. 30, and *BBC History Magazine*, June 2011, pp. 50-4 **(5e, 5f)**.

As a result of this film's impact, Reynolds was commissioned by the BBC to write and present a follow-up film also based on his research about World War Two ('1942 and Hitler's Soft-Underbelly') which was first shown in October 2012.

The production company (Clearstory) sold the film to SBS (Special Broadcasting System) –

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Australia's leading public broadcasting network – who aired it in April 2013. Clearstory subsequently arranged deals in Poland (TVN 24), New Zealand (Foxtel), Turkey, Hungary, Georgia and Estonia (BBC Worldwide) **(5d)**.

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

a. BBC4 website links to WW2: 1941 and the Man of Steel

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b011wh1g/broadcasts>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b011wh1g>

b. Grierson Prize, 2012, website <http://www.griersontrust.org/grierson-awards-the-british-documentary-awards/nominations.html>

c. Viewing figures supplied in a statement from person 1 (director of the film).

d. Clearstory Ltd – contracts report 262, 2 July 2013

e. *Daily Telegraph*, 13 June 2011, p. 30:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/8568430/David-Reynolds-Stalins-weakness-almost-cost-him-the-War.html>

f. BBC History Magazine, June 2011, pp. 50-4 (pdf)