

Institution: Manchester Metropolitan University
Unit of Assessment: D34 Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory
Title of case study: Visual Culture, Conflict and Social change (VCC)
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Since 1993, the Visual Culture Research Centre has established an international reputation for interdisciplinary research. Historical, theoretical and practice-based research is applied in collaborations and partnerships with outside public-facing organisations, events, markets and professionals in the creative arts. This case study articulates significant social and cultural impacts epitomised by the exhibitions <i>Weapons of Mass Communication</i> 2007-8 and <i>Archiving Place and Time</i> 2009-10 and accompanying publications. The case study demonstrates how the researchers from within the unit have effectively engaged with the public, participants, practitioners, interpreters, writers, and critics to promote understanding of how images of conflict work: that they are neither natural nor real, but sites of contestation.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>MMU has researched the role of the visual representation of conflict and social change in the print media and the creative arts since 1986. Professor Jim Aulich's (MMU 1986 – present) <i>Europe without Walls</i>, (1993) [1] with Manchester Art Gallery (MAG) focussed on the visual culture of the collapse of communism in Europe, it also provided an early opportunity for practitioners and professionals from Eastern Europe to publish and exhibit in the UK.</p> <p><i>Posters in Eastern And Central Europe 1945-2000 PEACE</i> (1993-1999) was led by Aulich with partners from the Moravian Gallery (MG), Brno and the Poster Museum, Wilanow, Warsaw [2]. Over sixty private and public collections and archives in sixteen countries participated. The exhibition at the Moravian Gallery celebrated the 10th Anniversary of the Velvet Revolution and featured widely in the Czech media. When PEACE was housed at London's Imperial War Museum (IWM) it became the first major exhibition of postwar European communist political posters in the UK. The book is a standard work. Symposia in Brno and Manchester included presentations from professionals from the MG; National Gallery, Prague; Museum of Decorative Arts, Prague; Croatian Historical Museum, Zagreb; V&A, London; National Gallery, Budapest; IWM; academics; artists, designers, critics, photographers and collectors from Eastern Europe.</p> <p>Between 2003 and 2006, Aulich led the <i>Posters of Conflict: The Visual Culture of Public Information and Counter Information</i> research project in which he catalogued and digitised 8000 war posters from the Imperial War Museum collection and made them accessible as a database on the IWM and VADS websites [3]. This database led to further research through <i>Seduction or Instruction? First World War Posters in Britain and Europe</i>, (Manchester University Press, 2007) and <i>Weapons of Mass Communication</i> at the IWM (2007/2008) [3]. <i>Weapons of Mass Communication</i> was the first large-scale international exhibition of the Imperial War Museum poster collection since 1978.</p> <p>Fionna Barber's contribution interrogates the visual discourses of conflict in Northern Ireland. Questions of representation, censorship, identity, memory and gender are addressed in the essay for the exhibition <i>Hygiene</i> at the Ikon Gallery, Birmingham (1993); the catalogue essay on Rita Duffy (Ulster Museum Belfast 2005) and in an essay for Wolverhampton Art Gallery which reviewed the politics of representation in art and photography in its permanent collection of 'Troubles – based' work (2007). This led to the editorship of a special issue of <i>Visual Culture in Britain</i> (2009) where articles were supplemented by artists' pages and interview with photographer Willie Doherty [4]; The exhibition <i>Archiving Place and Time</i> took place in 2009-10; followed by the monograph <i>Art in Ireland</i> in 2013 [5].</p> <p>Simon Faulkner's research investigates the visual culture of occupation and resistance in Israel/Palestine. This work extends the theoretical reach of the unit beyond image theory and the role visual culture plays in the construction of identity to embrace the distribution of the sensible in the politics of the region [6].</p>

The Visual Culture Research Centre has supported 10 PhD students including two AHRC CDAs. Important contributions have been made by Reuben Fowkes researching art in Eastern Europe and Angus Bolton (AHRC Research Fellow) who explores practice-led photographic and film-based investigations into the archaeology of the Cold War. All submitted relevant research to RAE 2008.

2. References to the research

- [1] Aulich & Wilcox (eds), (1993), *Europe without Walls: Art, Posters Revolution 1988-93*, Manchester City Art Galleries; First Edition. ISBN: 978-0901673442
- [2] Aulich & Sylvestrova, (1999), *Political Posters in Central and Eastern Europe 1945-1995*, Manchester University Press, ISBN: 978-0719054198
- [3] Aulich, James <http://www.vads.ac.uk/collections/IWMPC.html> Imperial War Museum Posters of Conflict and <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/> Posters and Aulich (2007) *War Posters. Weapons of Mass Communication*, Thames & Hudson, ISBN: 9780500251416
- [4] Barber, (2009) 'After the War: visual culture in Northern Ireland since the Ceasefires' a special issue of the journal *Visual Culture in Britain*, vol. 10, issue 2, pp. 117-123
DOI: 10.1080/14714780902924351
- [5] Barber, (2013), *Art in Ireland since 1910*, Reaktion Books, ISBN: 9781780230368
- [6] Faulkner, (2012), 'The Most Photographed Wall in the World', in *Photographies* peer-reviewed journal, Routledge; vol. 5, issue 2, DOI: 10.1080/17540763.2012.703622

Key grants to indicate research quality

1993 SOROS 10K, Manchester City Council (PI: Aulich) £19K
 1996-99 EU Raphael Programme (PI: Aulich) £30K
 Central European University 1997 (PI: Aulich) £17K
 Imperial War Museum commission (PI: Aulich) £12K
 2001-02 AHRB Research Leave Scheme (PI: Barber) £23K
 2003-06 AHRC Resource Enhancement Programme (PI: Aulich) £310K
 (<http://www.ahds.ac.uk/collections/ahrc-resource-enhancement-winners.htm>)
 2009 Arts Council of Northern Ireland National Lottery Funding (PI: Barber) £10.5K
 2010 British Academy Small Research Grant (PI: Barber) £7.5K (SG102290)

3. Details of the impact

Impact from War Posters: Weapons of Mass Communication

Staff in the Visual Cultures Research Centre undertake applied research in collaborations and partnerships with public-facing organisations and professionals through exhibitions, editorial projects, publications, archives, web-based material and events. The research addresses and confronts issues raised by the visual discourses of conflict and enhances public understanding and professional awareness. In 2007, Aulich was commissioned to curate a major international exhibition *War Posters: Weapons of Mass Communication (WMC)* at the Imperial War Museum (10.07-04.08) that received 47,000 visitors (25,000 in 2008 [A]). The exhibition was a direct result

Impact case study (REF3b)

of the AHRC resource enhancement project *Posters of Conflict* (2003-06) <http://vads.ahds.ac.uk/collections/IWMPC.html> [B]. The accompanying database enabled the collection to be interrogated without the physical manipulation of originals. As testimony from the Imperial War Museum attests, 'The lead curator was Professor James Aulich ... his approaches to the material had an important effect on our museological practices in relation to the understanding and display of the posters. The associated book sold 100 copies per week (1 in 18 visitors) with 1,400 sold at the museum in 2008. This new accessibility to the collection through the searchable database enabled popular publications such as Richard Slocombe's *British Posters of the Second World War*, IWM Publications, 2010' (Full testimonial on file [C]).

A *Weapons of Mass Communication* public seminar hosted at the IWM featured practitioners Peter Kennard and David Gentleman, publicity analysts Nicholas O'Shaugnessey, and a representative from the advertising industry. In his opening speech, Sir Martin Sorrell emphasised the affiliations that were brought out by the research between propaganda, publicity and advertising. These affiliations were further underlined through a public display of some of the posters from *Weapons of Mass Communication* organised at Liverpool St Underground by CBS Outdoor, Kinetic, Ogilvy Group and the IWM. Underground passengers were exposed to the posters in a way that emulated their original use.

Overall impact for *Weapons of Mass Communication* grew out of international media coverage. The exhibition was featured in the *Times Online* 08.11.08; *Campaign*; *The European Journal of Communication*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* 18.06.11; *H&SS Newsletter*, Queen Mary University, London, 06.08; *Independent on Sunday* 06.08; *Museum's Journal* 02.08:50-1; *Guardian Guide* 12.07-04.01.08; *Mail Online* 19.03.09; *Times Literary Supplement* 21.01.2011:32; *The Times Magazine* 08.11.08: 64-71; ww2poster.co.uk 04.01.10 and on over 30 Websites, Blogs and Forums. The exhibition was reviewed by Joseph Heller in the *New York Times Book Review*, on *Front Row* (BBC R4); *Night Waves* (BBC R3); in the *Socialist Worker*; *Culture 24*; *Eye magazine*; *Time Out London*; *History Today*. In *The Daily Mail*; *The Daily Telegraph*; *The Independent*; *The Observer Review*; *The Times*; *Mail on Sunday*; *Sunday Express*. Secondary impacts were created within national media as stories and features appeared on posters in wartime; Enquiries continue to follow from the media [D] resulting in features in *Daily Mail Online* (19 March 2009); *Newsweek*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and local radio stations. The exhibition also stimulated wider general interest. The raised profile of the MMU research team led to membership of the Arts Council England Subject Specialist Poster Network [E] and an invitation to contribute to "1914-1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War", The German Research Foundation, Freie Universität Berlin and the Bavarian State Library with free access for scholars and the public to high-quality information.

Impact of Art in Ireland (Barber)

The book *Art in Ireland Since 1910* (2013) and the exhibition *Archiving Place and Time (APT)* (2009-2010) has established Barber as the pre-eminent international expert in the field. APT was jointly curated with Megan Johnston, Director of the Millennium Court Arts Centre (MCAC), Portadown, Northern Ireland (NI). It challenged stereotypical representations of NI through art and photography. Funded by the Arts Council of NI National Lottery Fund, APT received favourable reviews in the *Guardian* and *AN* magazine [F,G]. The Manchester launch, funded by the Irish Embassy, took place at Manchester Art Gallery and was opened by the Northern Irish Minister for Culture.

Art in Ireland has been applauded as a 'landmark publication' by *Choice* [H] and acknowledged as an 'overview for the common reader...a starting point for further critical debate' in *Apollo* [I]. Barber's work has also had an impact through the NI Prison Memory Archive (PMA) at Queens University, Belfast, where she contributed to two films, *Inside Stories* (2007) and *We Were There: The Women Of Long Kesh / The Maze* (2013) providing contributions to cross-community debate around memories of the conflict. These films have been screened publically in venues ranging from art galleries to community centres creating interest and discussion.

Ongoing Impact

Impact by staff within the Visual Cultures Research Centre goes beyond analytical interpretation and takes the form of knowledge exchange and collaboration with artists where visual culture theory feeds creative practice and vice versa. Faulkner's 'Between States' (Black Dog, forthcoming, 2014) in partnership with the Israeli artist David Reeb juxtaposes image and text to address local and global political and cultural issues. Beginning in 2010, the project has received support from the Israeli Center for Digital Art in Holon (near Tel Aviv) [J].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

[A] Taken from the Imperial War Museum Annual Report and Accounts 2007/08 (available on request) - increase in visitors 43,000; increase in income £414K; increase in web visits 265,000

[B]. <http://www.vads.ac.uk/collections/IWMPC.html> VADS is a UK national service aiding the discovery, creation and preservation of digital resources for research, teaching and learning in the arts and humanities. Between 2003 and 2006, Aulich catalogued the Imperial War Museum posters of conflict collection on the IWM and VADS websites.

[C] Full testimonial available from senior curator corroborating cultural and audience development impacts of the work as well as impacts on the curatorial practice of the Imperial War Museum.

[D] BBC Religion and Ethics: Flavia Di Consiglio: The re-birth of an icon "We Can Do It": <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/0/21381059> 11 February 2013

[E] <http://www.vam.ac.uk/whatson/event/2216/posters-creation-collection-and-context-3490/> The network includes V&A, London; IWM London; London Transport Museum; British Film Institute; Shell Archive; Reading University; University of Brighton Design Archives; People's History Museum; Central St Martins; Museum of London; National Railway Museum; MMU's Special Collections and the Working Class Movement Library, Salford.

[F] Robert Clark, *Guardian* preview of Archiving Place and Time on 14 August 2010 archived at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2010/aug/14/art-ambulation-fourth-plinth>

[G] Review of Archiving Place and Time exhibition by Jenine McGaughan *A N Magazine* October 2010, archived at <http://www.a-n.co.uk/interface/reviews/single/705045>

[H] Review of 'Art in Ireland' by K. Rhodes, *Choice; current reviews for academic libraries*, September 2013, 51:1, p.385

[I] Review of 'Art in Ireland' by Tom Walker, *Apollo*, June 2013, p.123
http://www.reaktionbooks.co.uk/browse/article_detail/art_in_ireland_reviewed_in_apollo//NEWS

[J] Faulkner writer in residence Israeli Center for Digital Art in Holon (near Tel Aviv) 2010 and 2011. <http://www.davidreeb.com/doc.php?doc=48> (example of Simon's work)