

Institution: Brunel University
Unit of Assessment: 24 – Anthropology
<p>a. Context</p> <p>The department's two research centres and two research groupings undertake research and generate impact with diverse non-academic user groups and audiences at local, national and international levels, including government departments, NGOs, UN agencies, village health workers and education officials, and audiences accessed through the media and public lectures.</p> <p>The Centre for Research in International Medical Anthropology (CRIMA) coordinates research addressing global health issues. Our multi-sited ethnographic research informs and shapes public policies that address health inequalities. Working with NGOs, health departments, and hospitals, our research is used to develop solutions to complex public health problems, assisting politically and economically marginal populations. Staples' research on leprosy, for example, has led Indian NGOs to recognise the limits of 'rights-based approaches' and to adopt strategies to assist those affected by leprosy.</p> <p>The Centre for Anthropological Research in Childhood, Youth and Education (CARCYE) coordinates research on young people and education. Much of this work engages with public policy and practice and seeks to diminish social inequalities. Argenti's work on youth in West Africa has shaped debates between a national coalition of child-focused NGOs and the UK Department for International Development. Froerer's research on education among marginalised communities in central India has expedited the state-sponsored construction of local schools. Rollason's research in Rwanda has highlighted the importance of informal economic activities and the value of the motorcycle taxi sector for alleviating youth poverty. Working with the World Bank, local authorities and co-operatives, his work led to beneficial changes in municipal policy.</p> <p>The two research groups – Performance, Politics and Violence (PPV) and Histories and Concepts of Anthropological Knowledge (HCAK) – are committed to informing the public understanding of contemporary issues and contributing to cultural life through public lectures, media appearances, exhibitions and film. HCAK members have pioneered new, accessible forms of ethnographic writing and reached diverse non-academic audiences. Beatty's narrative ethnography (Faber 2009) has stimulated debate in Indonesia on conflict resolution and the challenge of Islamic militancy to pluralism and tolerance. Ethnographic biographies by Niehaus (CUP 2012) and Staples (Lexington, in press) further develop this outreach initiative. Kuper's critique of the category of 'indigenous people', presented in journals and public fora, has been debated in a volume of dialogues between indigenous rights activists and academics (2011), a World Bank report (2010) and publications by indigenous rights organizations.</p> <p>Combining local knowledge with a grasp of broader systems, Brunel's anthropologists make contributions at multiple levels, from international fora down to grass roots organisations. Our active engagement with journalists also helps shape debate and policy. The reach and intensity of our impact depends on this multi-level engagement, achieved through long-term fieldwork.</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>The University's Royal Charter of 1966 promotes research for the benefit of individuals and society. Developing impact is a component of Brunel's core mission and strategic plan. A variety of approaches facilitates impact. These include:</p> <p>Institutional approaches: Staff are encouraged to engage with contemporary issues and communicate findings to those with a mandate to ameliorate inequalities. We are routinely exposed to the needs of non-academic groups through fieldwork and the University's work placement scheme ('Best University Placement /Careers Service' 2010, 2012.) Through this scheme we develop links with NGOs, UN agencies, and government departments, while the partner non-academic supervisors are encouraged to identify their own priority areas of research. The scheme effectively facilitates collaboration with policy makers and end users (e.g. Froerer and Rollason's work in Newham Council, London). Wider University support consolidates links and fosters impact. Research Centres are required to demonstrate potential impact and user-group engagement. University funding of the Centres enables new research and dissemination to users through workshops (Froerer, Parker, Staples). Other mechanisms include a research leave scheme, with impact a prerequisite (Argenti, Beatty, Froerer, Niehaus, Parker and Staples); awards to younger</p>

scholars, with potential impact a priority (Rollason, Chua: BRIEF awards); an impact officer in the Research Support and Development Office (RSDO) who advises on non-academic partners; advice from RSDO on funding; and an institutional commitment to increasing the visibility of research. To this end, the University set up an online archive of research outputs in 2007, an Open Access Mandate in 2010 and an Open Access Publishing Fund in 2011 (used by Parker and Niehaus). These measures support free access to our research by users and promote impact.

Working with Governments and NGOs on the design and implementation of public policies:

Staff working in CRIMA and CARCYE recognise that long-term collaborations with policy makers, practitioners and end users are vital for impact. Parker's work on neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) illustrates our approach. From the outset, she discussed core issues affecting the design and implementation of National Control Programmes with senior staff in the Ministries of Health in Uganda (2004) and Tanzania (2007). Some of these staff have acted as advisors to CRIMA, and their ideas informed her fieldwork. Relationships established with them also enabled key findings emerging from fieldwork at village and district levels to be fed back to them, with direct impacts on implementation. A similar approach has been taken with those funding and guiding the design and implementation of NTD policies in London (Imperial College) and Seattle (Gates Foundation). With entrenched, competing interests at stake, this way of working can be controversial. However, it has also created a critical space for those running control programmes in other parts of Africa to develop a more holistic approach. In 2013, a workshop organised under the auspices of CRIMA, LSE and the Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp brought together leading figures from across Africa to discuss with academics and staff from the WHO and NGOs (including The End Fund) a new biosocial approach to NTD control.

Staples has developed long-standing collaborations with NGOs in India. These include Bethany Colony Leprosy Association (BCLA; 1999-present) and its UK partner Bethany Village Leprosy Society (BVLS) – of which Staples is trustee and Secretary; Maximising Employment to Serve the Handicapped in New Delhi; the Network of (dis)Ability Organisations in Hyderabad; and Friends of Association of People with Disability in Bangalore, of which Staples is a trustee (from 2007). He shares his findings with these NGOs, shaping policy and influencing the allocation of funds. BVLS has consequently shifted its focus from funding welfare to vocational and higher education of the children of leprosy-affected people. Staples' work on suicide led BCLA to organise workshops for young villagers, and helped to reduce the number of youths attempting suicide.

Rollason's work with Newham Council's Scrutiny Unit brings together CARCYE and local authority policy makers to investigate youth disengagement. Drawing upon his expertise on youth livelihoods, the project seeks to understand the causes of disengagement among marginalized young people as they make the transition to adulthood and the labour market. A University-funded workshop in 2014 will extend this project to involve other London Councils.

Working with UN agencies to shape public policies: Staff recognise the important role UN agencies play in shaping debate and designing public policies. In 2007, 2008 and 2011, the World Bank and international aid agencies such as CARITAS drew on Beatty's ethnographic expertise to devise culturally appropriate ways to rebuild the shattered infrastructure of Nias, an Indonesian island devastated by the tsunami and earthquake of 2004/2005. Parker helped review the role of social sciences in NTD control for the Special Programme for Research and Training on Tropical Diseases, which is executed by WHO and co-sponsored by UNICEF, UNDP and the World Bank (<http://www.who.int/tdr/news/2011/social-science-ntd/en/index.html>).

Developing evidence-based training resources: Brunel anthropologists have developed training resources that draw on research to enhance clinical practice and public health. The late Professor Helman's textbook, 'Culture, Health and Illness' (2007), has sold over 67,000 copies and has been translated into many languages. It has been used as a textbook in 40 countries and is a set book in 120 college/university courses in North America. Niehaus's research on HIV/AIDS has also influenced clinical practice. In 2009 he co-wrote a manual widely used by health care workers responsible for distributing anti-retroviral therapies in South Africa.

Working with the media and disseminating findings widely: Staff working in the research centres and groups, recognise that media play a vital part in facilitating impact. Key research findings have been disseminated through film (Froerer's film 'Village Lives, Distant Powers' on YouTube; Rollason's co-produced film on Rwandan television), television (Beatty, BBC4, BBC World; Hirsch, BBC4), radio (Argenti, Radio France; Beatty, Radio Ulster; Kuper, BBC Radio 4;

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Niehaus, South African FM), articles in newspapers/magazines (Kuper, London Review of Books; Parker, Guardian, Times Higher Supplement), museum exhibits (post-doctoral fellow, Portisch, Victoria and Albert Museum, Brunei Gallery, Greenwich Picture Gallery); literary festivals (Beatty, Dartington Hall); and public lectures (Beatty, Chua, Parker, Staples.)

c. Strategy and plans

A central component of the 2012-2017 research strategy for the department, and the School of Social Sciences more generally, is to enhance impact. The centre directors and head of department continue to work with the Deputy Head of School (Research) to co-ordinate the implementation of impact strategy which will be promoted by:

Sustaining and developing links with policy makers and practitioners: CRIMA and CARCYE will support research that addresses inequalities and marginalisation. Mindful of the complex (and sometimes absent) relationships between evidence, policy and practice, these Centres will facilitate discussion with policy-makers and practitioners, whilst maintaining academic independence. Five initiatives comprise this strategy. Parker is designing a biosocial approach for controlling NTDs with academics from the Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp, colleagues from the WHO and practitioners from Rwanda, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Niehaus will work with clinicians to develop new culturally-informed HIV prevention and treatment programmes in South Africa. Staples plans to explore ethnographically the impact of UK government policy on how disability is experienced in Britain, and to feed back his findings to policymakers and NGOs to bring about positive change. Froerer will develop her research on educational inequalities in light of India's 'Right to Education' legislation, and will host a conference with Indian policy advisors (affiliated to the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies) on the impact of legislation on marginalised children's access to education. With Rollason, she will build on contacts established with local authorities in London through the work placement scheme to address youth disengagement.

Facilitating the translation of research findings into policy and practice: CRIMA and CARYCE continue to draw on the University's Knowledge Transfer funds to connect staff with academics from other disciplines as well as with policy makers and practitioners. New Centre projects on the relationships between evidence, policy and practice in the arenas of disability, education, social mobility, and youth disengagement will place user groups at their core. In so doing, the Centres' workshops will be well positioned to exert influence through public debate, publications and digital media, using our expertise to challenge received wisdom.

Participating in public debate: Staff will draw upon their expertise to contribute to the public understanding of complex social and political issues. Our strategy for the future will include participation at literary festivals and round table debates, feature articles in newspapers, and use of film and digital media. For example, Chua's research on transnational orangutan conservation, organised under the auspices of PPV, will be disseminated through film and digital media. Beatty and Argenti's HCAK conference on 'new approaches to anthropological writing' (narrative ethnography, biographical ethnography, memoir) will involve literary critics and novelists.

d. Relationship to case studies

Our case studies - facilitated with the institutional support of CRIMA - exemplify our approach to impact. Niehaus's research on HIV/AIDS and on witchcraft and Parker's research on NTDs evidence long-term, ongoing engagement with contemporary problems affecting some of the world's most marginalised people. Niehaus's work benefitted from research leave and collaboration with the Centre for the Study of AIDS in Pretoria. His research has contributed to the production of evidence-based training resources for biomedical and public health practitioners and has informed public debate on treating persons living with AIDS. It has also enabled him to contribute to the training and work of legal professionals. Parker's work, supported by research leave and University-funded workshops, has facilitated collaborative links with NTD policy makers, practitioners and other academics (with specialisms in vector biology, parasitology and epidemiology). Working closely with the media, UN agencies, Ministries of Health and parliamentary committees, her research has been disseminated widely and shaped debate on appropriate strategies to reduce health inequalities among disadvantaged populations in East Africa. Her work has also fostered practical solutions to complex health problems.