

Institution: University of Sussex

Unit of Assessment: UoA 24 Anthropology and Development

1. Context

Sussex Anthropology delivers research impact in contexts ranging from global policy deliberations on human rights, the environment, international development and health, to focused interventions when providing expert evidence on specific technologies, asylum appeals, famines or conflicts. Our continuous aim to deliver an engaged anthropology enriched within interdisciplinary collaborations has long distinguished us as a Department. Thus we have longstanding practices of formulating and conducting research in articulation with users, whether in collaboration, critique or, more usually, in an unfolding mix of critical engagement, always retaining an uncompromising independence. This ensures that impact is achieved across all our research themes.

2. Approach to impact

- Our key approach to impact is to *embed users throughout the research process*.

First, we build sustainable relationships with users. For example:

- Sleeboom-Faulkner's 'bionetworking' linked biological scientists, policy-makers, ethicists and social-science researchers in research and policy activities (www.centreforbionetworking.org)
- Cornwall brought together a network of researchers, policy-practitioners and activists in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and South Asia to seek critical understanding of gender-policy issues, and policy changes in governments and development agencies to support 'pathways of women's empowerment' (www.pathwaysofempowerment.org);
- De Neve's research on the Indian garment industry networked UK and European industry policy-makers and NGOs to understand and influence how Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives play out on the ground, by shaping their campaigning and interventions around labour conditions in the textile industry;
- Harrison worked with older people's forums to co-produce research mitigating the 'reduced horizons' associated with ageing;
- Rajak's ethnography of CSR in the mining industry networked with activists and local policy-makers in South Africa to improve planning.

Our networks usually involve *long-term relationships*. Both De Neve and Boyce have developed networks with civil-society organisations in India over several research cycles. Cornwall's networked research builds on more than a decade of collaboration.

Second, we often *partner with 'users' in our research*. Research in health arenas especially is the most effective in collaborative research *with* health organisations. Thus, Boyce researched men's same-sex sexualities and HIV with the Indian National Aids Council, Unnithan partnered with the National Rural Health Mission (Government of Rajasthan) when researching rights-based approaches to maternal health, and Fairhead partnered with Guinea's Ministry of Health in researching immunisation practice. Often research-users become co-investigators (Fairhead's case study) and co-authors (Environment statement). In other forms of partnership, our informants double as users in more 'action research' modes of enquiry, as in Sleeboom-Faulker's work that supports the ethical deliberations of the Chinese stem-cell scientists who are themselves the subject of research. An innovative characteristic of our work is to *treat research 'users' as part of the social worlds we study*. Researching their perspectives and operation is important for developing pathways to impact. Sussex anthropologists have pioneered ethnographies of science and policy in the contexts of international development in the ESRC STEPS Centre and our collaborations with it (Fairhead's case study).

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- *Changing terms of debate*

Our collaborative approach enables us to address questions of central importance to users in which anthropological research and theorisation can reframe the way in which problems are understood and practices envisaged, ensuring wide reach as well as significance. This approach has enabled us to reframe the terms of debate in international development policy across all our research themes. Our sustained work in 'Politics and Activism' has shaped the way in which gender inequalities are conceived and addressed (Whitehead, Harrison, Cornwall in collaboration with the IDS; Whitehead's case study), and in the way in which participation is conceived and practiced (Stirrat, Cornwall). Our work in 'Economy and Ecology' has reframed how environments are problematised and anthropogenic landscapes envisaged (Fairhead case study). More recently our work in 'Ethics and Morality' addresses how Corporate Social Responsibility and fair trade are framed and delivered (Rajak, De Neve, Luetchford). Our research in 'Health, Science and the Body' has reframed how rights-based approaches to reproductive health are envisaged (Unnithan) and how policy-makers conceptualise sexualities in HIV policy delivery in West Bengal. Our pioneering ethnographic research on rights has led the policy world to appreciate their local meanings (e.g. Cowan, Eltringham and McLean-Hilker on rights, ethnicity and reconciliation). This has helped to transform organisational practices. Cowan's book, *Culture and Rights*, has now shaped a new generation of human-rights practitioners after its adoption by International Human Rights Policy (New York) in their training of practitioners.

- *Transforming public understanding through cultural practices*

Our approach to impact extends, when appropriate, to addressing the wider public as 'users'. For example, Kaur's research on cultural hybridity and the South Asian Diaspora in the UK questioned prevalent social stereotypes and, to address this, she contributed to the Mayor of London's 'Delivering Shared Heritage' and a consultancy for the Museum of London/English Heritage that reshaped their collection practices to reflect diversity. This helped to correct the material embodiment of stereotype in public culture for generations to come. Similarly, Gardner's participatory research with London's 'Museum of Childhood' collaborated with artists and children to create an exhibition that challenged conventional understandings of 'home and away', and enhanced Bangladeshi diaspora involvement in museum practices. Such engagements with popular culture also inform our impact in international development. Mitchell's commissioned research capturing links between motivation, self-transformation in sport and charitable giving was profiled in an exhibition shown in Brighton and at Gatwick during the 2012 Olympics. Cornwall contributed, as an executive producer, to a series of films about female activists and workers in Brazil, Egypt and India. Fairhead's documentary 'Second Nature' has been broadcast on Guinean TV annually on World Environment Day.

- *Consultancy (including commissioned reports, expert advice and evidence to government committees)*

These activities take our research insights to the heart of user organisations. For example, McLean-Hilker and Eltringham (case study) advised on transitional justice in the Rwanda/DR Congo; McLean-Hilker advised on gender and violence for DfID, USAID, UN Women, UNESCO, the OECD, International Rescue Committee, the Gender and Development Network, and International Development Committee (IDC) at the House of Commons. Boyce co-wrote guidelines for UNDP HIV prevention work in Africa. Cornwall participated in the UN-Women Expert Group Meeting on the post-2015 development agenda. Many of us provide expert witness testimony in asylum cases.

- *Timely, proactive or responsive communications*

Our research communications include advocacy, lobbying and critique in the form of policy briefings (e.g. our 'Global Insights' by De Neve and Fechter); blogs (e.g. Cornwall's in *The Guardian* and *openDemocracy*); research-project websites; TV documentaries and popular

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journalism (e.g. Fairhead case study).

3. Strategy and plans

Our strategy is to continue with these longstanding approaches but to further institutionalise them. Each is now being supported by emerging strategic activities in the University, our School and Department. Concerning the embedding of user impact in research design and building enduring user-networks, our School now supports a dedicated HEIF-funded Research Communications Manager (RCM) responsible for building further links with non-academic research-users. The RCM recently developed our links with leading NGO 'International Alert' in a series of high-profile, non-academic events in London and supported a research agenda-setting event on 'Humanitarian Futures'.

The University also has a strong media unit that supports the making of short films to profile research of high potential impact (e.g. Fairhead on *Dark Earths*), and provides media training and points of contact. Our new *Pathways to Global Impact* scheme supports professional communication including our '*Global Insights*' policy briefings, and funds academic time dedicated to impact. Research collaborations on campus (e.g. with the ESRC STEPS Centre linking SPRU and IDS) give access to their major international development communication services. Concerning consultancy, the University has established institutional policies that support and encourage academics to conduct associated consultancy, enabling us to develop research-led, University-endorsed links with the policy and business world, and establish research-led knowledge partnerships (e.g. McLean-Hilker's consultancy for the House of Commons).

Going forward, as we move onward from 2013, we will further innovate in order to embed 'impact' in School and Departmental activities. We have plans to:

- improve our external profile and internal communications to generate and improve response to user requests and needs;
- improve our use and targeting of online methods of research dissemination;
- enhance our collaborative relationships through visiting and associate researchers and facilitate secondments of academics to policy institutions to enhance user networks; and
- institutionalise impact into all elements of Departmental activities, profiling impact in research seminars, incorporate impact into annual appraisal (including 'personal pathways to impact'), mentoring and promotion, strategising research and addressing areas of potential impact (e.g. developing research into business). We will continue to deliver impact through research-led teaching to educate the next generation.

4. Relationship to case studies

Our case studies exemplify our impact in relation to different themes, and our approaches at different levels of reach. Impact under the 'Politics and Activism' theme is represented by Whitehead's *Improving Access to Land Rights Through Research on Gender and Property*, which exemplifies impact arising from long-term research collaborations, our critical engagement with international organisations, and the reach and significance of impact when analysis reframes debates. Impact under the 'Economy and Ecology' theme is represented by Fairhead's case on *Green Grabbing*. This exemplifies how our interdisciplinary and co-produced research with users can not only shift terms of policy debate through critique but can also support the development of practical (technological) alternatives. Impact under the 'Rights, Justice and Violence' theme is represented by Eltringham: *Genocide Prevention In the Great Lakes Region of Africa*. This case study illustrates how we work with governmental agencies to influence foreign policy, and how we use our research for knowledge exchange and training – in this case with government officials in the prevention of genocide.