

Institution: University of York
Unit of Assessment: 32, Philosophy
Title of case study: Highlighting and advancing analytic methods in the philosophy of art
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Impact arises from two books that have helped reshape and give new focus to the teaching of philosophy of art and, in particular, the philosophy of literature by giving wide acceptance to analytic methods and producing an alternative paradigm to previously dominant 'continental' approaches to philosophy of literature and critical theory. The beneficiaries of this research were Higher Education Institutions involved in the teaching of literature, critical theory and philosophy. The books are having a significant impact on the way both these subjects are taught and conceived.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>While philosophical reflection on literary works is of long standing, there has been little systematic philosophical investigation of the subject itself. Analytic philosophers have discussed topics related to literature before—e.g. the so-called paradox of fiction, the intentional fallacy in criticism, the distinction between fiction / non-fiction, the cognitive values of literary fiction, and the relation between ethical and aesthetic value—but (a) there has been little attempt to integrate these discussions into a comprehensive philosophical approach to literature, (b) the focus has been less on specifically literary applications, more on their relation to the wider contexts of philosophy of language, philosophy of mind or value theory from which they arise, and as a result, (c), these enquiries have rarely been given much attention by literary theorists or critics. What is distinctive about Lamarque's <i>Philosophy of Literature</i> (2008) is that it provides comprehensive interlinked coverage of all central aspects of literature, viewed through the analytical lens. It draws on a wealth of examples from literature itself and from literary criticism in exploring fundamental features of a practice which, so it is argued, makes possible the very existence of literary works and reveals their role and significance in human lives.</p> <p>This book and his co-edited anthology <i>Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art: The Analytic Tradition: An Anthology</i> (2004) display how a certain approach to the problems discussed under the heading of philosophy of art or literature could make substantial progress. In the anthology, the selected papers in aesthetics employ only analytical methods, dating from the early 1950s to the present, and such a selection, for use as a teaching textbook in aesthetics, is unique. Analytic philosophers have taught aesthetics courses before but the analytical methodology is seldom highlighted as such and it is common in such courses to have a large element from the history of the subject or draw upon non-analytic approaches to philosophical engagement with literature (this is notable in the standard teaching anthologies on aesthetics: A. Neill and A. Ridley, eds. <i>The Philosophy of Art: Readings Ancient and Modern</i>, McGraw-Hill, 1994, and S. Cahn and A. Meskin, eds. <i>Aesthetics: A Comprehensive Anthology</i>, Wiley-Blackwell, 2008). In contrast the Lamarque & Olsen anthology focuses on the analytic approach and reveals both its depth and its range. The monograph <i>The Philosophy of Literature</i> is also unique in essentially defining a new branch of analytic philosophy and illustrating how analytical methods can illuminate philosophical issues about literature (long thought of as the province of Continental philosophy and literary theory). These books contribute substantially to the analytic conception of the philosophy of art (and aesthetics) wherever they are used as texts.</p> <p>Peter Lamarque, Professor of Philosophy at the University of York since 2000, was sole author of <i>Philosophy of Literature</i> and co-editor of the anthology produced in the period of his employment with York. These works were closely connected to undergraduate and PGT teaching in the Philosophy Department at the University of York, from 2000. Lamarque regularly taught a third year "bridge" module on Philosophy of Literature, as well as a related MA module, from which the monograph grew, and also devised Analytic Aesthetics modules, at u/g and PGT levels, which helped inform the contents of the anthology.</p>

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

Relevant outputs:

- (1) The Philosophy of Literature by Peter Lamarque (Blackwell, 2008):
- (2) Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art: The Analytic Tradition: An Anthology, eds. Peter Lamarque & Stein Haugom Olsen (Blackwell, 2004)

Outputs available on request

Evidence of quality:

Clear evidence that these outputs meet the threshold quality level of “at least equivalent to two star” comes from peer reviews as follows:

On The Philosophy of Literature by Peter Lamarque (Blackwell, 2008):

Lamarque's book ... [is] among the most sophisticated and intelligent contributions to contemporary philosophical aesthetics. The real value of the book is, again, the vision of the field it offers. ... The image Lamarque offers is an extremely attractive one, and it reminds us of why this is such an exciting and important field. The Philosophy of Literature is a smart, original, and erudite book, and it deserves to be widely read. Philosophers of literature will not be able to live without it.
John Gibson, Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, Vol 68, No. 1, 2010

Peter Lamarque's splendid and informative book, The Philosophy of Literature ... is brimful with insights into the nature of literature, and into the debates between philosophers interested in literature, and I cannot imagine anyone failing to learn from it.

Simon Blackburn, British Journal of Aesthetics, Vol. 50, No. 1, 2010

Unusually, the book was the subject of a symposium in the British Journal of Aesthetics (2010), one of the contributors being Derek Attridge, a literary theorist whose work is primarily influenced by Derrida and Levinas..

On Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art: The Analytic Tradition: An Anthology, eds. Peter Lamarque & Stein Haugom Olsen (Blackwell, 2004).

Lamarque and Olsen never lose sight of their analytic premise, and they do an excellent job of explaining concisely and clearly, in their General Introduction, how they conceive of the 'analytic' philosophy and how it contrasts with 'continental' philosophy.

Anna Ribeiro, Newsletter for the American Society for Aesthetics, 2004

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

The impact noted in this case study is on the way that philosophy of literature is being taught and conceived. Analytic philosophers have dealt piecemeal with loosely related issues but these have seemed marginal in literary circles and have never been consolidated into a coherent 'philosophy of literature' grounded in analytical methods. The anthology provides a package of material that would be appropriate to an integrated course on analytic approaches to both art and literature. Lamarque's monograph goes further, advancing a highly distinctive analytic treatment of the philosophy of literature, representing a radical departure; which has at its core the idea of literature as an 'institution' governed by conventions and concepts with deep historical roots, although seldom given explicit analysis, helping to explain the underlying values in both the creation and reception of literary works. Furthermore, given the supremacy of analytic philosophy in Anglophone Philosophy Departments, this refocusing has also helped to bring aesthetics and the philosophy of literature into the mainstream of philosophy.

The impact of the books is, thus, revealed, first, by the spread of straight philosophy of literature courses now available in Higher Education Institutions that use these books as preliminary reading or reading around which a course is structured and, second, the recognition of the significance of these books, or their use, in courses in related disciplines, or by leading figures in these disciplines.

In the UK, Philosophy Departments at universities including Bristol, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Heythrop, Lancaster, Leeds, Sheffield, St Andrews, Warwick, and others, use one or both of the cited books as texts. Outside the UK, Universities in Continental Europe (notably Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Scandinavia), Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada, and South Africa (see below) use these texts. Prof. Dr. Tilmann Köppe at the University of Goettingen, Germany writes: “I have had the opportunity to use your excellent books for teaching purposes in literary studies several times. Most recently, I have taught a course on “Problems of Literary Theory” (fall semester 2011/2012)”.

The monograph is also used for courses addressed at the general public, for example, the Department of Continuing Education, Oxford, suggested reading, also link to Lamarque’s website. And it is being translated into Persian and Chinese despite only having been available since 2008.

Currently standard approaches to literature—at least those recognized by theorists and critics—have been based on the work of Continental philosophers (such as Derrida, Levinas, Foucault, Kristeva and Irigaray). Evidence that Lamarque’s approach is making its mark even on literary theory comes from Terry Eagleton’s book *The Event of Literature* (2012), which is a close engagement with analytical philosophy of literature, and with Lamarque’s book in particular. Eagleton is one of the most prominent literary theorists in the world and has up to now shown virtually no interest in the work of analytic philosophers in this field. However, in this new book, his approach has radically changed. He writes: “the rigour and technical expertise of the best philosophy of literature contrasts favourably with the intellectual looseness of some literary theory, and has addressed questions ... left mostly unexamined by those in the other camp” (p.ix). There are references throughout the book to Lamarque’s work: e.g. pp.21-23, 47-56, 63-66, 80-1, etc. as well as his work with Olsen, more so than to any other analytic philosophers.

Thus, the significance of the impact of these two books can be summed up as follows: (a) 30 years ago the term ‘philosophy of literature’ was barely used, and unified analytical approaches to the topics virtually non-existent, either in aesthetics or literary theory, but now there are courses on this aspect of literary study in HE institutions across the world (see below); (b) this branch of aesthetics, informed by analytical philosophy, has acquired an identity and a focus largely through the work of Lamarque; (c) this is having a growing influence on the way that the theory of literature is conceived, taught and disseminated; (d) being grounded in analytic philosophy, which is mainstream philosophy at least across the English-speaking world, this approach to the theory of literature shows its strong intellectual credentials; (e) it not only introduces rigour into the articulation of the problems, but it offers genuine insight and illumination into the very foundations of literary study; (f) it gives students across the humanities and even in the social sciences a radically new perspective through which to think about the arts and literature in particular; and (g), above all, it establishes deep intellectual links between the disciplines of literary criticism and philosophy, as well as showing where inter-disciplinary boundaries are justifiable and where they are porous or unfounded.

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

The following is a selection of universities and other institutions where the books are cited and given prominence in teaching materials.

UK universities (selection)

University of Bristol -- Modl M2044 European Literature of Ideas:

Philosophy in/of Literature:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/gradschool/docs/reading-lists/modernlanguages.pdf>

Cambridge University: <http://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/curr-students/II/II-outlines-reading-lists/paper11-aesthetics>

Heythrop College: http://www.heythrop.ac.uk/fileadmin/documents/official/Module_Outlines/2013-14/Undergraduate/PH350_module_Outline_-_Philosophy_of_Literature_-_Stacie_Friend_June_2013.pdf

Impact case study (REF3b)

Lancaster University: <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/depts/philosophy/awaymave/407/biblio.htm>

University of Sheffield: Philosophy of Art and Literature
<http://www.shef.ac.uk/philosophy/modules/ug/level2/phi212>

St Andrews: PY4645 Philosophy and Literature
http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/philosophy/docs/advising_1314.pdf

University of Warwick – preliminary reading list for Philosophy and Literature degree:
<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/philosophy/undergraduate/degrees/phillit/offerholders/>

USA

Northwestern University—Philosophy 370: Philosophy and Literature Literature, Drama, and Ethics ("The Philosophy of Literature, by Peter Lamarque, will serve as our general orientation to the field"):
<http://www.philosophy.northwestern.edu/courses/documents/PHIL370.pdf>

Trinity University: core text in Philosophy of Literature course, Fall 2013
<http://www.trinity.edu/cbrown/literature/literatureF13.html>

Bates College—Philosophy of Art, Philosophy 227a/b, Fall 2010 (using anthology):
<http://abacus.bates.edu/~wseeley/PhilArtF10.pdf>

Canada

University of Lethbridge: PHILOSOPHY 2150A: Philosophy of Art (the anthology is the required text):
http://people.uleth.ca/~peter.alward/courses/aesthetics/art_sp12/art_sp12_syl.pdf

Carleton University (Ottawa): Philosophy of Art (the anthology is the core text)
<http://www2.carleton.ca/philosophy/ccms/wp-content/ccms-files/Phil-2807-F.13-Contessa.pdf>

South Africa

University of Cape Town – Issues in Aesthetics 2005 and Philosophy of Art and Literature 2009 (run by Dr Elisa Galgut): uses anthology

Continental Europe

University of Vaasa, Finland:
https://weboodi.uwasa.fi/oodi/opintjakstied.jsp?MD5avain=&Kieli=1&OpinKohd=12538905&OnkollmKelp=1&takaisin=vi_kehys.jsp&vi_tila=3&Opas=253&haettuOpas=253&ooo_SortJarj=3&Org=10003

University of Lisbon, Portugal: <http://www.redefilosofiaeliteratura.org/workshop-definies-de-arte/>

Friedrich-Schiller University of Jena, Germany: courses using PL's books: "Modernisierung des Erzählens" ("Modernisation of narration", winter term 2011/12); "Einführung in die Textanalyse" ("Introduction to textual analysis", summer term 2012); "Grundfragen der Literaturwissenschaft" ("Key questions of literary studies", winter term 2012/13); "Fiktionstheorien" ("Theories of fiction", winter term 2012/13)

University of Goettingen (email confirmation from Prof. Dr. Tilmann Köppe)"

Central European University, Budapest, Hungary : core text Philosophy and Literature, MA level Fall 2013. <http://philosophy.ceu.hu/courses/20132014/philosophy-and-literature>

Outside universities and academia

Philosophy of Literature mentioned in a blog by Ali Nazifpour, an Iranian video game commentator:
<http://www.gamingsymmetry.com/the-philosophy-of-video-games-an-introduction/>