

Impact case study (REF3b)

<p>Institution: University of Hull</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: D29: English Language and Literature</p>
<p>Title of case study: Ellen Terry and Edith Craig: Theatrical Lives and Letters</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Research findings on the lives and work of Edith Craig (1869-1947), lesbian theatre director and suffragette, and her mother, Ellen Terry (1847-1928), internationally celebrated Shakespearean actor have been shared with members of the public, family history researchers and members of Equity (the actors' union) through talks, a conference and documented use of the AHRC Ellen Terry and Edith Craig database (20,000 records). This online database has had a significant impact on the preservation and worldwide accessibility of one of the most significant theatre archives in the UK. It has assisted members of the public in genealogical research, raised awareness of women's enfranchisement, promoted citizenship and inspired public performance of original drama.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The underpinning research on women's suffrage and theatre history focusing on Ellen Terry and Edith Craig was undertaken by Cockin as Lecturer (1998-2002), Senior Lecturer (2002-2008), Reader (2008-2011) and Professor (2011- present) at Hull from January 1998.</p> <p>One of the central outputs of the research is the AHRC-funded Ellen Terry and Edith Craig Database (2006-2008), an online catalogue of over 20,000 documents providing research-informed item-level description.</p> <p>The database project relied on Cockin's sustained collaboration with the National Trust, facilitating the long-term loan of the majority of the papers with the British Library Manuscripts Department. It was launched at an international conference at Hull in 2009, which in turn resulted in Cockin's edited collection, <i>Ellen Terry, Spheres of Influence</i> (2011).</p> <p>Cockin's monograph <i>Women and Theatre in the Age of Suffrage: The Pioneer Players 1911-25</i> (2001) was the first study of this London-based theatre society. Playing a key role in the production of women's suffrage plays and responding unconventionally to World War I and feminism, the Pioneer Players theatre society has a significant place in theatre history. With Terry as President and Craig as Director, the Pioneer Players strove to establish an art theatre in London comparable with similar establishments in Europe, introducing the British public to plays by Nikolai Evreinov, Torahiko Kori and Paul Claudel.</p> <p>Cockin's research led to further work on women's suffrage literature, Edith Craig and her mother Ellen Terry, and was supported by a number of grants awarded by the Society for Theatre Research (2001, 2008, 2009: total of £1,250), the AHRC (Small Grant in the Performing Arts, 2004: £1,007), and the British Academy (Small Grant, 2005: £4,000; 2008: £7,500).</p> <p>The online database describes a major theatre archive; it is freely available to genealogists and the general public and has aided the dissemination of research on women's suffrage drama, notably Cicely Hamilton's innovative historical play <i>A Pageant of Great Women</i> (1909), and has facilitated Cockin's scholarly edition of Ellen Terry's letters (2010-17). With the exception of a one-volume correspondence with George Bernard Shaw published in 1932, Terry's letters were previously unavailable in print. The British Academy-funded critical edition runs to eight volumes and will include over 3,000 letters.</p> <p>The underpinning research has reassessed the performances, plays and cultural significance of Ellen Terry and Edith Craig, highlighting the extent to which these women have been hidden from history. Terry was more than a 'charming' performer; she was the financial backer of the Lyceum Theatre during its heyday. Craig was the most significant British director of early twentieth-century theatre, bringing world theatre to a London stage during the First World War.</p>

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3. References to the researchKey research outputs:

- (i) Authored book:
- *Women and Theatre in the Age of Suffrage: The Pioneer Players*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001. ISBN 033 3 68969.
- (ii) Database:
- AHRC Ellen Terry and Edith Craig database <http://www.ellenterryarchive.hull.ac.uk>
- (iii) Critical edition:
- Ed., *Ellen Terry: The Collected Letters*, Vols 1-4 (of 8), London: Pickering & Chatto, 2010-13. 288pp., 232pp., 389 pp., 374, pp. 416. ISBN 978 1 85196 145 0, 978 1 85196 146 7, 978 1 85196 147 4, 978 185 196 1481.
- (iv) Anthology:
- Ed. *Ellen Terry: Lives of Shakespearian Actors*, Part V, London: Pickering & Chatto, 2012. ISBN 978 1 85196 931 9
- (v) Essay collection:
- Ed. *Ellen Terry: Spheres of Influence*, London: Pickering & Chatto, March 2011. 256pp. ISBN. 978 1 84893 112 1
http://www.pickeringchatto.com/monographs/ellen_terry_spheres_of_influence
With author's introduction and two chapters (one co-authored), pp.1-12, pp.133-48, pp.149-60. This collection consists of the proceedings of the conference to launch the database.
- (vi) Key grant:
- AHRC Resource Enhancement Grant (2006-2008): £85,720 (total project cost £101,000; completed October 2008). Awarded for AHRC Ellen Terry and Edith Craig database.

4. Details of the impact

Cockin's research into women's theatre history has been disseminated through the Ellen Terry and Edith Craig database, and through books and papers, public talks and a conference which have brought academic and general audiences together. This has resulted in impacts for members of the public (especially those researching family histories), HE college students and professional actors, from the launch of the database in 2008 to the present.

International reach is indicated by Google Analytics data on the usage of the online database. Since its launch, from 2008-13, the resource has had **9776 visitors from more than 97 different countries**, achieving 70-74% new visits each year. The international reach is evidenced by visits to the website from 29 countries in 2008 and 58 to 75 countries in 2009-11. A key use of the database is by members of the public researching their family history.

National reach:

- Google Analytics data show 447 UK visits to the Ellen Terry and Edith Craig online database in 2008, rising to between 1026 and 1533 in the period 2009-11.
- Links refer users to the database from websites such as the Irving Society, British Library Manuscripts Department, National Trust Smallhythe Place, Bristol University Theatre Collection.
- Cockin was invited to present on Edith Craig to the actors' union Equity (Phoenix Theatre Club, London, 12 February 2010) as part of Lesbian History Month and, as a result, an audience member took part in the performance of *A Pageant of Great Women* at Cockin's Pioneer Players conference (see below; DVD available).
- Regionally, Cockin presented to the Historical Association at Hull (18 November 2010) and Grimsby (16 September 2011); and at the Family History Centre Hull (17 February 2011).

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Added evidence of the **significance** of the impact and the **interconnectedness of original, internationally excellent research and public engagement** is demonstrated by the ripple effect of Cockin's research. For example, following a lecture by Cockin on 7 January 2011 at Hull College, a play *Suffragette* was written and performed by BTEC Performing Arts students from the College. It represented key episodes in the women's suffrage movement, including a scene in which Edith Craig directs actors in Cicely Hamilton's *A Pageant of Great Women*. *Suffragette* had a profound effect on many of the students who were involved or who watched it. The play was then performed at The Pioneer Players: Politics and the Art of Theatre, a conference to mark the centenary of the Pioneer Players, organised by Cockin at the University of Hull on 7-8 May 2011.

The conference also included an interactive performance of *A Pageant of Great Women*, directed by Dr Anna Birch (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland). The delegates at the conference and invited non-academic members of the public (specifically members of Hull Historical Association, Hull College BTEC Performing Arts students, members of Equity) as well as University of Hull students were invited to take part as 'great women' in the production. *A Pageant of Great Women* was filmed and is available on DVD with photographs of scenes available at <http://www2.hull.ac.uk/fass/english/our-staff/cockin,-prof-katharine/inaugural-lecture-downloads.aspx>

Supported by iHull (the University's Institute for Creativity and Innovation), the filming of the play facilitated the archiving of the performance and ensures the longevity of the project.

Media reach is evidenced by non-academic articles and interviews:

- Article by Simon Stabler in *Family History Monthly* magazine (international distribution, Family History News: The Family History Profile, January 2010; issue 178, p.16). Cockin was subsequently contacted by members of the public tracing their family history.
- Cover story article by Jane Connolly in *Kent on Saturday's* colour supplement article ('Actress Back in Limelight: Online Archive Reveals a Remarkable Life' (13 June 2009, p. 3).
- Article by Cockin on the regional significance of the Ellen Terry and Edith Craig archive for *Kent Life* ('Queen of the Theatre', September 2009, pp. 47-49).
- Cockin was interviewed by Aaysa Lodhi in two episodes of 'Open Book', introduced by Mariella Frostrup, Radio 4, 10 July 2011 (10,555,000 listeners to Radio 4 for the quarter ending September 2011).
- Cockin provided background information to Jude Kelly for the Radio 4 programme 'Leading Ladies' marking the 350th anniversary of the first English professional actress, 26 Oct 2010) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00vhg2z> (10,319,000 listeners to Radio 4 for the quarter ending December 2010).

Cultural Heritage and Preservation

The AHRC Ellen Terry and Edith Craig Database has had a significant impact on the National Trust property Smallhythe Place in its custodianship of the Ellen Terry and Edith Craig archive.

The database is, according to the House Steward, 'immensely valuable to both researchers and staff connected to Smallhythe Place and is used 'on a daily basis; as a basic tool it tells me what material is housed at the British Library but it is invaluable when staff and volunteers are carrying out research.' (see Source 9)

Research enquiries come from a diverse international community, as the House Steward reports: 'There is an increased interest in Ellen Terry and Edith Craig and I always refer researchers to the database; the fact that it provides concise descriptions of each item saves me answering endless emails.' (see Source 9)

Furthermore, the online database has facilitated an improvement in access and preservation of the majority of the papers, as confirmed by the House Steward: 'The database has made possible the removal to the British Library of a large part of our archive, making it more accessible, being in London, and better housed in terms of conservation conditions' (see Source 9).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

1. Google Analytics User Statistics (summarised above; full data available on request) – corroborating the reach (UK and international) of the impact from use of the database from

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October 2008-July 2013.

2. Emails from database users (available on request) – corroborating the database's role in genealogical research by members of the public.
3. <http://www.diversityinfilm.org.uk/events/16/> corroborating the talk to Equity members (testimonial available)
4. Feedback from Hull College students who participated in and watched the play *Suffragette* (available online at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0vIIG5CQkUo> corroborating the educational and societal impact on the students.
5. *Suffragette*, a play devised by students from Hull College – testimonial corroborating the influence that Professor Cockin's lecture to Performing Arts students had on their producing the play.
6. Press release (available online at <http://www2.hull.ac.uk/newsandevents-1/newsarchive/2011newsarchive/may/100yearsofsuffragetheatre.aspx>) – corroborating that the *The Pioneer Players: Politics and the Art of Theatre* conference took place, and particularly the active involvement of non-academic members of the audience and Hull College students
7. RAJAR listener figures (available online at http://www.rajar.co.uk/listening/quarterly_listening.php) – corroborating the audience for and reach of radio interviews
Ballot on great women of the past following public lecture on 11 February 2013
Votes were invited from the audience after the public lecture (in person and online) on Ellen Terry and Edith Craig on great women to include in a possible production of *A Pageant of Great Women*. A programme for the event directed audience members to access the website for downloadable information about the research and to online voting. See <http://www2.hull.ac.uk/fass/english/our-staff/cockin,-prof-katharine/inaugural-lecture-downloads.aspx>
8. Smallhythe Place, the National Trust (testimonial available; see also link corroborating the use made of the resource made by the National Trust, available at: <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/smallhythe-place/history/>