

<p>Institution: University of Oxford</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 28</p>
<p>Title of case study: Bringing the French Enlightenment debates to new audiences</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact Tunstall and Warman bring the debates of the French Enlightenment to the public, and make them accessible and meaningful through lively and enjoyable discussion on radio, television, and public lecture. By so doing, they significantly enhance and enrich the public understanding of modern society, its roots, its failings and tensions, and of the experience of the individual within it. They have impacted on civil society, illuminating and challenging cultural values and social assumptions, and enhancing public discourse about human rights. They have contributed significantly to enriching the cultural lives of their beneficiaries. Whether through listening to their programmes or attending one of their lectures, they have extended education about the Enlightenment to these groups.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research Tunstall and Warman work on the French Enlightenment. They share two key insights: firstly, that French thinkers provocatively extend and test John Locke’s famous theory that knowledge comes from the senses and from experience (<i>An Essay concerning human understanding</i>, 1689), and secondly, that the literary forms these tests take are as important as their philosophical content.</p> <p>Their research focuses on the way French Enlightenment writers use individual points of view to assess the nature of an individual’s sensory and experiential knowledge. They are interested in how French empiricists probe empiricism from within. Denis Diderot, writer and editor of the <i>Encyclopédie</i>, looks at what it means for a blind person to receive knowledge through only four senses^[1], what it means for a celebrated geometer who is thinking so hard he isn’t paying attention to any sensory stimuli^[2], or what the implications for this theory of knowledge are for someone physiologically identical but culturally completely different^[3]. He also looks at what it means for those in authority to spy on individual experience^[4] to extend their own knowledge. Isabelle de Charrière uses fiction to explore the point of view of women, in possession of their senses as much as their brothers, and therefore with as much knowledge, and yet with many fewer ways of reaching fulfilment^[5]. The shocking pornographer Sade takes the premise that knowledge comes from the senses and restates that the sensation itself is the knowledge, and that therefore the more intense the sensation is, the more knowledge it provides. The result is unacceptable morally and socially, but is as tightly related to Lockean theories of sensory-based knowledge as anything Diderot or Charrière wrote^[6], and indeed much of what they wrote was also too challenging to be accepted. Tunstall and Warman are interested in pursuing why this was so, and in charting the forms taken by challenges to established thinking.</p> <p>In contrast to much Enlightenment scholarship that is best characterized as history of ideas, Tunstall and Warman place as much emphasis on questions of style, genre and format as on the ideas that the texts contain. How do the various Enlightenment conceptions of the relationship between truth, knowledge and the human body find themselves represented in texts? And how do the texts themselves mobilize particular forms and formats to instruct their readers? Tunstall and Warman offer an in-depth analysis of these texts, to see how these writers, Diderot especially, use writing, its blind spots, and extravagant claims, to look at the limitations of any particular perspective, in particular any claim to superiority. This research has led them to ask what, if anything, is left of the Enlightenment phrase ‘rights of man’ in modern human rights discourse, and to ask what might be gained for the public understanding of that discourse by retrieving its Enlightenment heritage more fully. These questions are explicitly asked in Tunstall’s edited collection <i>Self-Evident Truths?</i> (2012).</p> <p>They have been engaged in research on the literature and thought of the French Enlightenment since their appointments at Oxford (Tunstall at Worcester College in 1997, and Warman at Jesus College in 2005). Their intellectual and geographical proximity, and the support provided by their institutions and by the Maison Française d’Oxford, combine to give much added impetus to their work. Both contribute to the Voltaire Foundation’s Besterman Centre for Research on the Enlightenment; Tunstall was its Programme Director from 2008 to 2011.</p>

Impact case study (REF3b)

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

All outputs listed below have been peer-reviewed.

1. Kate Tunstall, *Blindness and Enlightenment, an essay, with new translations of Diderot's Letter on the Blind and La Mothe Le Vayer's 'Of a Man Born Blind'* (New York: Bloomsbury-Continuum, 2011).
Output listed in REF2. This study carries powerful endorsements from prominent academics in the field (Anderson, Cave, and Moriarty), and has been extensively and favourably reviewed in the *London Review of Books* by Julian Bell (*LRB* 34.12, pp.25-26) and on H-France (<http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=36470>).
2. Kate Tunstall, 'Eyes Wide Shut: Diderot's *Rêve de d'Alembert*', in *New Essays on Diderot*, ed. J. Fowler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp.141-157.
Output listed in REF2.
3. Kate Tunstall, 'Sexe, mensonge et colonies: les discours de l'amour dans le *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville* de Diderot', *Littératures classiques* 69 (2009), pp. 17-34.
Output listed in REF2.
4. Caroline Warman, "Intimate, deprived, uncivilised: Diderot and the publication of the private moment" in *Representing private lives of the Enlightenment*, ed. Andrew Kahn, SVEC Series (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2010), pp.35-51.
Output listed in REF2.
5. Isabelle de Charrière, *The Nobleman and Other Romances*, trans. by Caroline Warman (London: Penguin Classics, 2012).
Intro and footnotes are listed in REF2 as an output.
6. Caroline Warman, *Sade: from materialism to pornography* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2002).
Output listed in RAE 2007. It was favourably reviewed in specialist journals *Modern Language Review* (98.4 (2003), pp.992-993), *French Studies* (57.3 (2003), pp.398-399), *Dix-huitième siècle* (35 (2003), p.648), *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* (17.2, pp.298-300), *Eighteenth-Century Studies* (37.3 (2004), pp.469-474), and the Swedish newspaper *Kristiansbladet* (9 November 2002, p.5).

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

For Tunstall and Warman the radical Enlightenment agenda was always about reaching beyond an elite group of highly-educated, highly-privileged individuals to bring education, awareness, and self-determination to as many people as possible, in as many different ways as possible. They reflect this essential agenda in their work outside of academia and for them it is a natural and necessary extension of their jobs as researchers and educators.

Based on their innovative perspectives on Enlightenment writing, Tunstall and Warman have contributed to enriching the lives and imaginations of the wider non-academic public by bringing the debates of the French Enlightenment to them, making the topic accessible and meaningful to a non-specialist audience through a broad range of lively and enjoyable public engagement activities.

Kate Tunstall was interviewed for the BBC2 series 'Fry's Planet Word' (30 December 2011, 4/5) on the *Encyclopédie*, Diderot and the Enlightenment. The series had viewing figures of 1.5 million. Tunstall was quoted in the book to accompany the series *Planet Word: The Story of Language from the Earliest Grunts to Twitter and Beyond* (Davidson, 2011). One reader review on Amazon said 'I've been watching the series on the BBC and have been thoroughly enjoying it - Stephen relays so much information and meets so many fascinating people. The book takes the discussions even further - and there are lots of other areas covered too.' (Comment by 'miss reader', 5 October 2011).^[1]

Caroline Warman received an invitation, based on her research, to be a guest on Melvyn Bragg's series 'In Our Time' aired on BBC Radio 4. The series discusses the history of ideas and Warman contributed to programmes on 'Materialism' (24 April 2008) and 'Voltaire's *Candide*' (3 May 2012). Live listening figures were 2.1 million, and the programmes remain accessible on the BBC Radio

iPlayer. The BBC public enjoyed and were stimulated by her contribution: 'it was great listening to your take of randomness and complexities!!! Absolutely incredible!'. By communicating in a lively and enthusiastic way, Dr Warman sparked the interest of listeners unfamiliar with the topic: 'Caroline Warman [...] was absolutely sparkling, speaking with wonderful excitement in her voice!'; 'My question is prompted by a discussion colleague's comment below. We are both untrained in philosophy' ^[i]

Warman and Tunstall co-wrote and co-presented four programmes exploring the life and work of Diderot for the Radio 3 series 'The Essay: Enlightenment Voices' (broadcast Radio 3, 19-22 January 2010, with listening figures of 202,000^[1]). Enlightenment Voices was a mini-series introducing the great scientists, thinkers and activists of the European Enlightenment. The Oxford researchers not only introduced Diderot and his work to the listeners but 'playfully challenged the listener to grapple with this quintessentially Enlightenment subject themselves' according to the BBC website description. One listener commented: 'Elucidators of the Enlightenment were never so informative and so chirpy all at once'. Regular radio listeners were enthused and inspired by the programmes 'We overhear a lot of radio, particularly since the advent of the iPlayer, but we can hardly recall any previous programmes of such infectious enthusiasm...' ^[iii] Invitations to broadcast or to give public lectures provide further proof that producers and organisers consider their contribution to be reliably entertaining and instructive.

Tunstall and Warman widely communicate their research on the debates of the French Enlightenment to enhance and enrich the public discourse on modern society, its roots, its failings and tensions, and of the experience of the individual within it. Dr Warman has spoken at various non-academic events in recent years. This has allowed her to share ideas and engage with participants about Enlightenment figures and debates. She spoke about Charrière in Jane Austen's home at Chawton^[iv] as part of a public lecture series (attendance 40, Jan 2010), and about Sade to the Last Tuesday Society in Hackney (attendance 40, October 2012).

Tunstall's work has also impacted on people with or involved with sensory disabilities and those engaged in human rights issues. Based on her book *Blindness and Enlightenment: An Essay*, Kate Tunstall discussed Diderot's *Letter on the Blind for the Use of Those who can See* at a multi-media performance, 'Land of Silence and Darkness: Four Days of Talk and Action connecting Movies, Blindness, Drawing, Perception and Neuroscience', organised by the artist, Anna Lucas (Oxford, various locations, 14-17 May 2008).^[v] Her talk engaged the audience in questions of art, science and cognitive deprivation (attendance 40). The event encouraged participation by people with sensory impairments and Kate's talk was sign-language interpreted for the deaf. Tunstall's work has influenced the understanding of those working with visually impaired people. For example she was contacted by a dancer, who teaches tango to people with visual impairment and is interested in the relationship between vision and touch in dancing. She had read *Blindness and Enlightenment* and felt compelled to write "I often had ideas that somehow could not provide evidence for, but your book is giving me so many [...] I am not an academic, I like to back my artistic process with lots of reading..." ^[2]

Tunstall's research and its communication has impacted on civil society, in relation to illuminating and challenging cultural values and social assumptions relating to human rights. Tunstall is a Director of Oxford Amnesty Lectures (OAL), created to sustain debate about human rights through annual lectures by international speakers. Average attendance figures are 150-200 per lecture. Based on her Enlightenment research Tunstall developed the 2010 series, on Human Rights and the Enlightenment, with speakers exploring the historical contexts from which human rights emerged, and their status as truths, today^[vi]. All profits from Oxford Amnesty Lectures ticket sales and book sales are donated to Amnesty International. To date, since 1992 OAL has raised over £108,000 for Amnesty International UK Charitable Trust.

Through a determination to publish their research in popular presses (e.g. Penguin, Bloomsbury) and their extensive translation of key French texts from and about the Enlightenment, Warman and Tunstall have provided non-academic audiences with unique opportunities for cultural enrichment through increased accessibility. Tunstall conceptualised and edited the book, *Self-Evident Truths* (Bloomsbury 2012), which brought together texts by an unusual range of interdisciplinary academics and non-academics (a poet, a journalist, and a psychoanalyst) based on the OAL 2010 lecture series. She selected Bloomsbury as the publisher, to market the book to a wider public

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audience. On the back cover Chris Bertram, Professor of Social and Political Philosophy, University of Bristol, UK says: 'This volume exemplifies how the Oxford Amnesty Lectures not only reflect but also enrich the debate on human rights in the contemporary world. This is a sparkling set of essays that illuminate the problematic and ambiguous legacy of the Enlightenment and the enduring tensions between slogans of universal liberty and the lived human experience of its pursuit and enforcement, between securing the conditions of democratic conversation and upholding individual rights.' *Blindness and Enlightenment* has also provoked eloquent testimonials from readers, one of whom was herself going blind: she emailed to say 'You made a subject that can often be heavy going and dreary into a wonderful read, and I almost yelled aloud in the reading room when I found it.'^[3]

New translations by Warman and Tunstall have enabled readers to discover literature on French Enlightenment, previously unreadable by non-francophone audiences. Tunstall's translation of Diderot's *Letter on the Blind* is the first since 1770 and of La Mothe Le Vayer's essay 'Of a Man Born Blind', the first translation ever; Warman's translation of 9 novellas by Charriere is the first wide-reaching translation since 1925 of 4 of the stories, and the first translation ever of 5 of them.

Tunstall and Warman selected, edited, and translated 11 articles written in French by the eminent Enlightenment scholar Marian Hobson, and their version is now being translated into Chinese.^[4] There is great demand for this type of material in China but it is difficult to translate from French. By translating the text into English, Warman and Tunstall have enabled this further translation and the inclusion of this work in the Chinese market. *The Nobleman and Other Romances*, translated by Warman has been widely publicised by the publisher, Penguin, with 2000 literature professors in the USA being offered free examination copies. The publisher anticipates the book will be incorporated in college reading lists within 2-3 semesters.^[5]

There is continuous evidence throughout the submission period of their continuing commitment to take their research beyond the academic sphere. The forms their contributions take are varied and inventive, and their translations and radio programmes look set to continue to provoke interest over the coming years.

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

Testimonial evidence:

- [1] Email statement from Producer, BBC Radio 4
- [2] Email feedback from a dance teacher, from Adagio con Brio dance school
- [3] Email feedback from partially sighted reader
- [4] Email statement from Chinese translator
- [5] Email statement from book publisher

Other sources of corroboration:

- [i] Planet Word information <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b016bsm2> and reader review http://www.amazon.co.uk/review/R2FYCCL9CDMBE5/ref=cm_cr_pr_viewpnt#R2FYCCL9CDMBE5
- [ii] In Our Time episodes <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b009ydlj>, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01gvthf> Emails from members of the public available on request
- [iii] The Essay <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00q2wf3/episodes/guide> Emails from members of the public available on request, BBC website episode introduction quote <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00ps40r>
- [iv] Chawton House lecture http://lecturelist.org/content/view_lecture/9178
- [v] Land of Silence and Darkness programme <http://www.kiraoreilly.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2008/05/land-of-silence-and-darkness-lo.pdf> and information about the project <https://www.dora.dmu.ac.uk/handle/2086/6406>
- [vi] Self-Evident Truths programme http://www.oxford-amnesty-lectures.org/images/OAL_2010.pdf and information about OAL <http://www.oxford-amnesty-lectures.org/>