

Institution:	Glasgow Caledonian University
Unit of Assessment:	Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management (UoA 36)
a. Context	
<p>The members of this Unit take the (broadly Gramscian) view that culture is the central arena in which dialogue relating to social values and their translation into institutional practices takes place. Their experience in this field shows that significant (in some cases life-changing) and far-reaching (for example both economic and clinical) impacts can be achieved above all at the level of public/media discourse and in the policy fields. Our impact-related research engagement follows two main strands:</p> <p>The beneficiaries of the first strand are those whose identities are in some way challenged or under threat from, for example, stigmatising social discourses (e.g. those experiencing poverty), historical neglect (minority-language speakers) or from combinations of both physiological and social-discursive factors (e.g. ageing or ailing identities). The research leading to impact here covers the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media culture – mainly (though not exclusively) news reporting and drama, including documentary drama – as a primary site for the circulation of social representations of both individuals and social issues • Sport in its many facets, but in particular grassroots health-oriented sporting activity and fan mobilisations of various kinds as sites where devalued identities (e.g. racial identities, ageing identities or the identities of those suffering from Alzheimer’s) are actively defended and promoted • Minority language rights and related social/national identities, specifically those of Gaelic speakers in Scotland, an area of increasing importance at the cultural, economic and political level <p>Our impact relates first and foremost to improvements in the discursive and policy environments as materially evidenced by changes in professional practices regarding, for example, the media representation of disadvantaged or neglected groups or in policy requirements regarding the linguistic landscape.</p> <p>The beneficiaries of the second strand are those living in economically failing areas. Our research here relates to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of Gaelic in the workplace and in the cultural economy more generally (as part of an EU Framework 6 Integrated Project but still very much ongoing – new funding was secured in May 2013) and its links with greater economic resilience • Working with local communities in economically marginalised areas promoting regeneration through culture and heritage: the Dennis Potter archive and museum in the Forest of Dean, in which we are centrally involved, is a clear example, bringing significant economic benefits to the region. <p>In both of these strands we have addressed a wide range of third-sector, policy-making, media/cultural and commercial audiences at a Scottish, UK and EU level. The main impacts have</p>	

included an improvement in the quality of life of those experiencing poverty through a decrease in stigmatising discourses, changes at policy level in relation to Gaelic and its link with economic prosperity, and increased pressure for a change in clinical practice towards non-pharmacological psychosocial forms of therapy in our work with football fans now suffering from dementia.

b. Approach to impact

The Unit's approach to impact has been primarily interdisciplinary in nature, which partly explains the composite nature of the Unit itself, bringing together as it does insights from media analysis, sociology, history and cultural geography. Its commitment to interdisciplinarity has allowed it to develop research projects leading to significant engagement with and impact on various external groups as listed above. It has also worked consistently to combine its own strengths with those of other fields such as Economics and Applied Health with a view to increasing and diversifying impact. For example we developed collaborative bids with colleagues from Applied Health for funding from the Medical Research Council for research on sedentary behaviour (one member of the Unit is also a member of the European Joint Programming Initiative on Determinants of Diet and Physical Activity with a specific focus on ageing), and from both the Marie Curie programme and the AHRC/SFC for projects dealing with football reminiscence as a form of psychosocial therapy for men suffering from dementia. The last of these was successful and led to the formation of an 18-month Knowledge Exchange Project (2011-12) involving the university, Alzheimer's Scotland, the Scottish Football Museum and the UK Former Football Players Association. New bids are in preparation building on the success of this project.

An essential element of our approach to impact is to disseminate the impact-related results of our research as widely as possible. The Alzheimer's-related KEP organised two conferences at Hampden (Scotland's national stadium and also home to the Scottish Football Museum) attended by and involving both family and institutional carers, the second also attended by colleagues from Spain who are now developing similar forms of psychosocial therapy (funded by the Spanish Veteran Players Association) in on-going collaboration with us. A highly innovative form of dissemination at this conference was a play written by a member of the KEP's Advisory Board on former Celtic player Charlie Tully (1924-1971) and staged at the Football Museum to the obvious delight of many of the elderly men present. In addition, recruitment of a highly experienced screenwriter to the Unit is already enabling more diversified dissemination to wider audiences through the presentation of research in the form of television documentaries.

c. Strategy and plans

The central element of our strategy for future impact is increased interdisciplinary work bringing together not only the strengths of our own various fields (media analysis, sociology, history, cultural geography) but also combining these with the strengths of others, particularly (though not exclusively) in Applied Health, to develop impacts which would not otherwise be possible.

Given our shared belief in the inseparable relationship between discourse and practice, we see our strategic focus developing along a number of lines:

1. The development of comprehensive Impact Roadmap Plans around areas of clear impact potential. These plans will develop measurable objectives with clear milestones and deliverables, will be appropriately resourced and subject to regular review and evaluation.
2. Collaboration with the Graduate School to extend training for early career researchers based on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework and promoting "engagement, influence and impact". At the same time the CREDO (Caledonian Research Excellence Development

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Opportunities) forum will continue to develop research impact training for contract researchers, principal investigators and research leaders.

3. Research involving direct engagement with practitioners in the media and policy-making making fields designed to further impact the media and public discursive environment relating both to pressing social issues such as the health of older people, the plight of those experiencing poverty or the difficulties faced by other disadvantaged groups such as those with learning difficulties or refugees, and to culture (specifically in terms of policy and practice)
4. Community-based research in the fields of physical activity and sport recreation in order to achieve a better understanding of their impact on lifelong wellbeing, and to improve the effectiveness of community-government communications in the formation of cultural policy related to sport and leisure
5. The strengthening of local communities through the cultural economy (in the case of Gaelic) or the media and cultural industries (for instance heritage) more generally in terms of their economic impact
6. Increased work with recognised health/clinical impact, taking forward and developing our work with those suffering from Alzheimer's
7. Collaboration with colleagues from History on developing a clearer public awareness of Scotland's role in and responsibility for the slave trade with a view to improved relationships with former British colonies (a secondary focus here will be on public debate on this issue around the Commonwealth Games to be held in Glasgow in 2014, in the design of whose opening ceremony one of our members is involved)

Further areas of possible future impact include collaborative research with colleagues in Engineering regarding the health and safety of migrant workers, and with colleagues in the field of Design Management and Practice with whom we already have links due to teaching research philosophies on one of their Masters courses, and with whom we can already identify clear synergies in, for example, urban design for ageing populations or assistive technology for dementia patients.

d. Relationship to case studies

The case studies have been chosen to exemplify the two main impact strands of our research activities to date:

The Media and Poverty project played a pioneering role in highlighting the value of interdisciplinary approaches to social issues such as stigmatised identities and in enabling previously unexplored synergies allowing forms and ranges of impact which would not have been possible by either of the groups in isolation. It likewise highlighted the possibilities for internationalising research projects with demonstrable impact.

The Gaelic case study exploited a different set of synergies, bringing together colleagues from Media with a background in Modern Languages and a colleague who had previously worked in the Department of Economics, and highlighted the significant impact which can be achieved going forward in relation to the economic impact of the cultural economy.