

Institution: University of Warwick
Unit of Assessment: 28 Modern Languages and Linguistics
Title of case study: Art, Education and Violence. The German Enlightenment and Its Legacy in the Long Nineteenth Century and Beyond.
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>The research traces the interrelated debates on art, education and violence from the German Enlightenment to the present day. It analyses how the Enlightenment has shaped discussions of ethics and aesthetics both in the nineteenth century and in post-war German culture. The research has been communicated to a wide range of audiences: students, adult learners, creative organisations and their audiences, resulting in enriched cultural experiences and a different perspective on contemporary issues through the introduction of new ideas, arguments and forms of expression.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The research conducted by Dr. Sean Allan (appointed 2001) focuses on two interconnected, albeit distinct areas: (a) the German Enlightenment and, in particular, the work of Heinrich von Kleist (1777-1812), and (b) post-war cinema in both East and West Germany. Research strand (a) analyses how Enlightenment debates on the role of education in curbing violence were received and modified during the nineteenth century. Research strand (b) develops this further by analysing the reception of Enlightenment and Romantic thought in post-war German film. In this regard, Allan's research on the representation of key figures from the European Enlightenment (including Goya, Beethoven, Humboldt, and Kleist) in the film culture of the GDR (DEFA) and the FRG (the New German Cinema) illuminates the continued importance of the European Enlightenment for an understanding of contemporary social and political issues.</p> <p>Allan's earlier research into Kleist's plays and stories [Items A & B] highlighted the ways in which supposedly 'transcendent' notions of perfection (such as 'perfect' justice, 'infallible' feminine virtue, and 'irredeemable' wickedness) are exposed as man-made conventions that reflect and maintain the interests of a dominant class (usually a male aristocratic elite). Kleist's work shows how this obsession with spurious notions of 'perfection' constitutes a formidable obstacle to the improvement of social institutions (including justice and the law). In his current (AHRC-funded) project 'Heinrich von Kleist. Violence and Education. The Transformation of Ethics and Aesthetics' [Item C] Allan focuses on two key issues. First, the ways in which eighteenth-century models of education are adapted by Kleist in his literary works and theoretical essays on art and morality; second, the ways in which violence is portrayed not simply as the result of a defective/misguided educational process, but in some instances as a means to a higher end. In contrast to Enlightenment thinkers such as Kant and Rousseau, Kleist portrays violence as an integral part of the modern state and, in his more nationalistic works, as the very goal of political education.</p> <p>Allan's research has also addressed the reception of Kleist (and other key figures from the European Enlightenment) in the post-war cinema of both West and East Germany [Item D]. Kleist's distinctive approach to the relationship between violence and ethics has prompted post-war filmmakers in the West to exploit his life and works as a means of reflecting on the violent clashes of the student protest movements of the late 1960s and the German government's attempts to justify the use of force to suppress them. In the cinema of the GDR, Kleist and his near contemporaries such as Goya, Humboldt, Beethoven have been mobilised to launch a critique of a society that, although constructed along rational 'enlightened' principles, appeared to neglect the claims of the imagination and the desire for a holistic concept of personality [Items E & F]. By tracing the reception of Enlightenment/Renaissance thought from the nineteenth century to the present day, Allan's research argues for a model of aesthetic change based not on an abrupt break with the past, but rather on a process of evolution and the development of our shared cultural heritage.</p>
<p>3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)</p> <p>Item A: Seán Allan, <i>The Plays of Heinrich von Kleist: Ideals and Illusions</i> (Cambridge: CUP, 1996). xi + 243pp. [Peer reviewed].</p>

Item B: Seán Allan, *The Stories of Heinrich von Kleist. Fictions of Security* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2001). xviii + 316pp. [Peer reviewed].

Item C: Ricarda Schmidt, Seán Allan and Steven Howe, eds., *Konstruktive und destruktive Funktionen von Gewalt im Werk Heinrich von Kleists*, Würzburg, Königshausen & Neumann, 2012, which includes Allan, ‘Ihn rüstest du mit dem Köcher der Rede...’: Kleist, literary creation, and the destruction of artistic idols’, pp. 175-93. [Peer reviewed]. [REF2]

Item D: Seán Allan, and Elystan Griffiths, eds., *Heinrich von Kleist. Performance and Performativity. German Life and Letters* (Special Number), 64 (2011) which includes Seán Allan, ‘Revolutionary Aesthetics? Kleist, 1968, and the New German Cinema’, pp. 472-87. [Peer reviewed]. [REF2]

Item E: “Der arge Weg der Erkenntnis”: Konrad Wolf’s *Goya* and its Relation to GDR Cultural Policy and the DEFA *Künstlerfilm*’ in *Feuchtwanger and Film*, ed. Ian Wallace (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009), pp. 21-39. [Peer reviewed]. [REF2]

Item F: ‘Kosmopolitische Fiktionen. DEFA und der Globalisierungsprozess der europäischen Aufklärung’, in: *Grenzen und Grenzüberschreitungen. Transnationale Filmbeziehungen der DEFA vor und nach dem Mauerbau*, ed. Skyler Arndt-Briggs, Barton Byg, Andy Raeder, Evan Torner, and Michael Edel, (Wiesbaden: Vs Verlag 2013), pp. 45-60. [Peer reviewed].

Evidence of research quality:

The Stories and *The Plays of Heinrich von Kleist* have been reviewed positively in *German Studies Review* 26:2 (2003), 398-9, *Modern Language Review* 98:4 (2003), 1045-7, *Modern Philology* 97:2 (1999), 292-4, and *The German Quarterly* 71:4 (1998), 397-400.

Allan was an invited keynote speaker at the following conferences: *Kleist Année en France: Heinrich von Kleist – Transgression, Soumission, Conciliation* (University of Metz; December 2012), *Kleistian Preoccupations* organised (California State University, Long Beach; October 2011), *Kleist und die Moderne* (University of Otago; Sept 2010). He was a co-organiser of, and keynote speaker at *Constructive and Destructive Functions of Violence in the Work of Heinrich von Kleist* (University of Exeter; July 2011).

Allan has been a panellist for a round-table discussion on Syberberg’s screen adaptations of Kleist (Goethe-Institut, London, 1995), and has also worked as a researcher and presenter for the Radio 3 documentary ‘The Tragical Adventure of Heinrich von Kleist’ (broadcast January 2007 for ‘The Sunday Feature’ and repeated August 2007).

In addition he was an invited keynote speaker at the following conferences focusing on East German cinema: *DEFA International*, the *Hochschule für Film und Fernsehen*, (Potsdam; November 2011), *Re-reading East Germany. The Literature and Film of the GDR*, (University of Oxford; July 2011), *After the Wall. Remembering and Reconstructing the GDR*, (University of Bangor; July 2009), *Film im Sozialismus*, Institut für Zeitgeschichte, (University of Vienna; November 2007) and *Feuchtwanger und Film*, (University of Southern California; November 2007).

In autumn 2012 Allan was a visiting scholar at Smith College (USA) and introduced a series of public screenings of East German Films at the Smith College Museum of Art in Northampton, MA. The critical success of Allan’s ground-breaking co-edited volume *DEFA. East German Cinema, 1946-1992* (Oxford: Berghahn, 1999) has prompted Berghahn Books to commission a new volume of essays on East German Cinema for publication in 2015.

Grants:

AHRC Standard Grant, ‘Kleist, Education and Violence: Transformation of Ethics and Aesthetics’,

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PI Schmidt, Co-I Allan, £362,667, October 2010- October 2013.
Defa-Stiftung grant for Research Project: The East German-*Künstlerfilm*, €4,000, August 2012
Defa-Stiftung grant as Visiting Scholar at Smith College, MA and University of Massachusetts, Amherst, £3,200, October 2011.
British Academy Travel Grant for 'Kleist und die Moderne', £900, September 2010.
British Academy Travel Grant for 'Feuchtwanger and Film', £500, November 2007.

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

Allan's research into the legacy of the German Enlightenment challenges preconceived ideas about justice, crime and punishment, and prompts critical reflection on the role of education, art and the physical environment in shaping the relationship between the individual and society. The research offers a different perspective on social and moral issues to A-Level students and adult learners leading them to formulate new arguments and forms of expression for understanding social and literary history, and ethics. The research has enriched the cultural experiences of creative organisations and their audiences, and the general public.

1a. Impact on Education (schools)

This research has been used to enhance learning in A-Level Law, History, Languages and Literature through two school symposia in November 2012 and March 2013. The first involved 50 students from 26 secondary schools and Sixth Form Colleges across the West Midlands. A film version of Kleist's 1811 novella *Michael Kohlhaas* (*The Jack Bull*, 1999) was shown to give students a platform for debating competing notions of fairness, justice and democracy with reference to the tension between universal ideals and changing historical settings. Students were introduced to new perspectives on key study topics and to new ways of learning including a university-style lecture, using film as a case study, and peer-to-peer learning through group discussion. Students learned about legal issues in historical context, and about the social and political influences that can affect judicial decision-making. Evaluation of the event showed that 91% of participants gained new perspectives on legal issues while for nearly half the group (46%) engaging with the story of *Michael Kohlhaas* changed their own ideas about crime and punishment. The event offered students an opportunity to gain a more in-depth appreciation for their subjects, to gain a broader range of evidence for understanding contemporary social, political and legal topics, and to develop critical thinking skills.

A follow-up event was advertised to schools nationwide and attracted students from Coventry, Birmingham, Liverpool and Greater London. Held in March 2013 it formed part of a 3-day event on European literature and culture in the 'Age of Austen' which offered new interpretations and understanding of Austen's *Pride & Prejudice*, one of the most important novels in English literary history, on the 200th anniversary of its publication. Allan presented on eighteenth-century understandings of education, violence and morality which were explored further in the group discussions. Discussion was stimulated by screening the 1976 film adaptation of *The Marquise von O* based on Kleist's novella of the same title published in 1808. The film and discussions allowed students to explore some of the key issues that troubled thinkers of the European Enlightenment, such as what are the causes of violence and how violent crimes should be dealt with, as well as exploring issues of class and gender. Evaluation of student learning objectives have showed that students learned about women in the age of Enlightenment and gained a better understanding of the social, cultural and political currents in the 'Age of Austen'. Some students also commented that the content was helpful for exams in 'both English and History, and [for making] connections between 18th century Germany, France and Britain.'

1b. Impact on education (adult learners)

Allan's research into the reception of the art and literature of the Enlightenment during the nineteenth century raises issues about the way in which aesthetics can be used to promote the concept of a rationally ordered society. Allan's public lecture on the art and architecture of nineteenth-century Berlin for the Victoria & Albert Museum (4 December 2012) enabled some 55 adult learners between the ages of 28 and 65 to develop an understanding of the ideological

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underpinning of the Enlightenment and enhanced their understanding of the cultural and architectural transformation of Berlin during the nineteenth century.

2. Impact on Cultural Life

The research has been used to create and interpret cultural capital in literature, theatre and film. Together with team members from the AHRC project 'Kleist, Education and Violence', Allan recorded a series of 6 podcasts about Kleist's life, the intellectual environment of the European Enlightenment and a selection of his writings (*Michael Kohlhaas*, *The Marquise von O*, *The Earthquake in Chili*, *The Betrothal in St. Domingo*) for the general listener. Available for download via the project website since July 2012, the podcasts have been accessed 12,383 times. 41% of users were new to the site, while 46% of all users were from outside the UK (until 31 July 2013).

The reach of Allan's research was extended by his appearance on the current affairs show *Reality Check* on Austria Radio's FM4 station. The programme on the Grimm Brothers' *Children's and Household Tales* (1812) was broadcast on 12 December 2012 for which Allan discussed representations of violence in their work in the context of the German Romantics' response to the universalising tendencies of the Enlightenment. The station is a subsidiary of Austrian national radio (ORF) and the station's website, which simulcasts and stores all programmes, is visited by 30,000 unique users every day.

Allan's research has also had an impact upon the performing arts. He was commissioned to write an introductory essay on Jürgen Böttcher's creative engagement with the Renaissance artists Paulus Potter, Giorgione, and Emanuel de Witte in *Verwandlungen* (1981) as a special bonus feature for the commercial DVD release of *Jürgen Böttcher – Artworks* (2011). The DEFA film library/ICESSTORM Inc. who produce these DVDs has said 'Jürgen Böttcher: A Brief Visit' represents the first detailed examination of Böttcher's short films on East German art and artists ever published. In addition to offering basic information not available to average viewers, it encourages new research into East German art and helps instructors use these films in their teaching.' The DVD was publicly screened at the *Goethe-Institut* in New York, Darkside Cinema in Oregon, and at the DEFA Film Library, Amherst, Mass., where it was introduced by Allan. Sales for the DVD to the end of July 2013 are 128 and have been sold to the British Film Institute, London, the Lindenau Museum, Altenburg, Germany, the International *Goethe-Institut* Network, and to universities, wholesalers and private users.

Allan's research on the reception of the Enlightenment in the twentieth century has also enhanced the ways in which professional artists engage with our shared cultural heritage. This research fed into the RSC's recent production of *A Life of Galileo* (Swan Theatre, Stratford, 31 Jan – 30 Mar 2013; 33 performances, 13,686 tickets sold). Allan's two-hour workshop with the director and 30-member cast (10 December 2012) sharpened their understanding of the historical significance of Enlightenment thought for Brecht's theatre, especially in regard to the Brechtian analysis of institutionalised power and class-based violence towards the oppressed. Allan also contributed an essay for the programme about the social and political context of the play which sold 3872 copies.

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

- [1a] Schools questionnaires and related data (attendance, feedback etc.).
- [1a] SurveyMonkey for student feedback Age of Austen event.
- [1b] Feedback from public lecture at the Victoria & Albert Museum (letter).
- [2] Download figures for Kleist podcasts provided by IT services.
- [2] Austrian Radio webpage: *Reality Check*.
- [2] Sales figures from DVD *Jürgen Böttcher – Artworks*.
- [3] Ticket and programme sales for *A Life of Galileo* from the RSC by email.