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Institution: University of Roehampton
Unit of Assessment: Panel D, UoA 29 English Language and Literature
<p>a. Context</p> <p>The unit has a strong tradition of innovative research with popular appeal and an impact on civil society and cultural life. The main beneficiaries of our research, which ranges from early modern literature through to experimental contemporary poetry, are broadly public organisations and their audiences. Examples of our impact and the main beneficiaries of our research include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Influencing the presentation of cultural and literary heritage at museums and galleries (e.g. McManus, with the National Maritime Museum). - Contributing to personal development through our work with libraries and local government (Peters, with Wandsworth Library Services). - Influencing pedagogic practice in schools and other educational organisations (Cotton's <i>European Picture Book Collection</i>). - Enriching cultural life and experience through our work with promoters of lectures and public poetry readings (Hilson, <i>Xing the Line</i>). - Informing service provision and practice in voluntary organisations and charities (Waller's work with U3A). - Enhancing appreciation of literature through community groups (Hartley and Turvey's reading group research, and Trower's recently funded AHRC project on reading groups and memory). - Improving the quality of life of prison communities through reading groups (Hartley and Turvey). - Raising public awareness of our research through our work with the media (Teltscher's work with the BBC).
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>Our approach has involved three mutually reinforcing strands, which have been pursued by researchers across the unit. Illustrative examples demonstrate the success of these approaches since 2008.</p> <p>(1) <i>Broadening the impact of individual scholarship and research through direct communication with public audiences:</i> A good example of the success of this approach would be Humble's work on the literature of food and the feminine middlebrow (see Case Study). But another is Teltscher's dissemination of her research through broadcast media. In 2011, she secured a research sabbatical in order to complete a proposal for a radio feature on <i>Hobson-Jobson</i> and become the main consultant and researcher for the production company Culture Wise while they were making it. The resultant highly-successful Radio 4 programme, 'A Very British Enterprise' (broadcast on 13 July 2012), generated a considerable degree of media and public interest, including a trailer article on the BBC News website on 12 July 2012 which received more than one million hits within 24 hours. As a consequence of the broadcast and its media exposure, different opportunities for the research to have an impact were created, including Teltscher's invitation onto a panel at the South Asian Literature Festival at the Bush Theatre, London, on 3 November 2012.</p> <p>(2) <i>Building links with institutions and venues through which research can impact on the wider public:</i> This approach has produced the Prisons Reading Group (see Case Study). Other initiatives include Hilson's and Jaeger's work with national and international poetry organizations and venues. In 2009 Simon Morris (curator of the book-art imprint Information as Material) invited Jaeger to participate in an exhibition of eleven poets and text-based artists at Shandy Hall in York, sponsored by the Laurence Sterne Trust (4000 visitors). In 2010 over 600 people attended Hilson's <i>Xing the Line</i>, where contemporary poetry audiences experience new work from the UK and overseas. In 2011 Jaeger showed his video "Nozomi" at the Bury Text Festival in Lancashire (attracting 9,800 visitors and 75,000 hits on its Facebook site and webpages). In the same year the independent art curator and editor Fatos Ustek funded him to read at the 12th Biennale of Contemporary Art in Istanbul (attracting over 200 visitors); and his research output <i>The Persons</i> was included in the Berlin Artist Book Fair and the Whitechapel Gallery's London Artist Book Fair (attracting 13,000 visitors). It is an indication of the reputation of our staff that Winning Words used an excerpt from Hilson's <i>In The Assarts</i> for display at the 2012 London Olympic Games.</p> <p>The developing partnership between McManus and The National Maritime Museum (NMM) also provides an example of how the unit has ensured that, at their inception, certain kinds of research projects include pathways to impact in their design. The relationship with the NMM was formalised through the securing of an AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award, which itself then led to</p>

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the organisation of a major conference, *The Queen's House Conference 2010: Renaissance Women's Performance and the Dramatic Canon* (funded by the British Academy), hosted by the Museum in the Queen's House. The CDA's research has deepened the Museum's understanding of the decorative scheme of the Queen's House when it was inhabited by the Stuart queens consort (Anna of Denmark and Henrietta Maria) and thus will inform the Senior Curator's plans for the House's 2016 anniversary, which aims to reinstate the Queen's House as a space of seventeenth-century queenship. During this period McManus had research leave to develop the relationship further. The work is now supported on an ongoing basis through a workload allowance.

(3) *Tracking, assessing and evidencing impact:* Since 2012 our unit has sought to make impact assessment part of the normal life cycle of a research project. We identify where follow-up is required and manage the process of tracking and evidencing impact locally within the department. Staff have been inducted into this process by the provision of university-wide training and one-to-one sessions with a University Impact Officer. A good example of the process in action is the follow-up to Cotton's *Picture Books Sans Frontières* (Trentham, 2000), a research output which led to the development of the Comenius-funded *European Picture Book Collection* -- a teaching and research resource, which has been trialled in European schools, changing teaching practice and inspiring second-generation projects in Europe and New Zealand (see www.ncrcl.ac.uk/epbc). The combination of *EPBC* materials and supporting websites offering free resources has enhanced the reach of Cotton's research, feeding into teaching practice and transforming the understanding of schoolchildren, parents and the wider public. Similarly, we have endeavoured to build the evaluation of impact into the design stage of research projects, including for Trower's 'Memories of Fiction' project. Our Research Facilitators and other appropriate support staff have enabled us to identify and collect key evidence of impact, and assess the data from the interactive website; while from now on they will continue to observe and help us evaluate the project's impact.

Support for impact: The University and the unit are working to ensure that we have the resources and capacity to maximise the impact of our research. The central University Impact Officer provides support and advice to all units, a Research Dissemination Coordinator works to raise the profile of research among specialised audiences, and a restructured Communications Department provides support for publicising our research through established channels. At unit level staff can rely on the expertise of a research mentor, who is experienced in the development of networks, partnerships and impact pathways, and who works closely with the Impact Officer. Our unit has also appointed a postdoctoral research fellow to support the Romantic Illustrations project, and two departmental Research Facilitators (one to support the ongoing development of the Prison Reading Group project, and the other to work with colleagues on developing external partnerships and impact). The Department offers provision for time and funding to be spent on impact related work, for example Humble has been supported to pursue publishing opportunities for popular audiences in this cycle, and staff are also able to draw on a central dedicated impact fund, which is overseen by an impact advisory group. We also offer targeted mentoring for bids and grants, including for bids to Creativeworks, a Knowledge Exchange Hub for the Creative Economy funded by the AHRC, and staff can access development programmes on building networks and partnerships, working with the media and establishing a public profile. Impact is now a criterion in our hiring strategy and one strand of evidence when staff apply for promotion.

c. Strategy and plans

The unit's top priority is the production of world-class research with strong potential for impact; our strategy reflects our commitment to ensuring effect and dynamic impact. Two key aspects of this strategy are to work effectively with the local community and to engage research users at the inception of key projects. We are particularly interested in identifying sustainable collaborative research projects, which may well be inter- or multidisciplinary, providing the opportunity for senior researchers and ECRs to work together to share expertise, leadership and skills in areas of emerging research strength. Projects with the potential for marked impact can be both energised and sustained through the use of visiting fellowships and impact sabbaticals more widely in the next assessment period. The unit will also benefit from the University's provision of a new central database to facilitate the effective evidencing of impact. We have identified a number of key projects, which illustrate key features of our evolving strategy:

(1) The National Maritime Museum Partnership (McManus): building on the success of the CDA, which established the viability of the partnership and relevance of the research, this project

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will now be extended by McManus. One strand will focus on the material and cultural networks of the Stuart queens' courts, using the Queen's House as a focus for an exploration of the Stuart queens as cultural agents. By tracing the movement of ideas, personnel, art, books and objects between palaces, the project will offer the Museum clear added value, increasing their understanding of the Queen's House as one of an intersecting network of royal palaces, and opening up the gender dynamics of courtly cultures. Deepening our established collaboration with the Museum will offer extensive impact opportunities based on new findings about gendered Stuart court cultures. McManus is being supported by our Research Facilitator.

(2) Two AHRC-funded projects, 'Memories of Fiction: An Oral History of Reader's Life Stories', led by Trower, and the Memory Network led Groes and Waller, extend the unit's research expertise into reading (cf., PRG ICS), offering new impact pathways. The recently AHRC-funded three-year 'Memories of Fiction' project will enhance our expertise in reading groups benefitting public libraries. Interviews and reading groups will encourage participants to reflect on reading experiences and memories. The creation of an archive will engage wider audiences in this reflective process. The Memory Network, on the other hand, is an international hub for experimental cross-disciplinary research in memory studies, developed from a Wellcome-funded pilot project. The network introduces a diverse set of high-profile intellectuals into the public sphere. The programme of activities benefits the various non-profit organisations, institutions and charitable trusts, such as the Museum of London, the BCLT, Greenwich Observatory and the Wellcome Trust, with which the network is forging relationships. Both projects seek to provoke media interest, stimulating inventive journalism and communicating ideas to the public about memory in particular.

(3) The Romantic Illustration project with Tate Britain is a two-year international research network designed to enhance the Tate's understanding of their collection of literary prints and paintings. The project sets out to change the Tate's presentation of the work of artists such as Thomas Stothard (which they hold in large quantities but seldom display) and thereby enhance visitors' understanding of key works. The principal investigator (Matthews) will be provided with teaching relief, and support from the University Research Office, in order to develop the project and manage its impact. A pilot, which took the form of a colloquium with the Tate, brought key partners together in order to share the research that feeds the project. Matthews has been given research leave to (a) work with the Research Office to secure external funds and (b) complete a key monograph. This publication will underpin the project's impact. Meanwhile the larger network will mount a small exhibition, publish a collection of research papers and build towards an expanded collaboration.

During the assessment period our staffing strategy has increasingly focussed on impact. At the same time, the unit has also developed its literary research strengths into new investigations of oral history (AHRC-funded) and craft and textiles. Humble, Haywood and Carroll share research expertise on textiles and material culture more broadly, including published research on 'Domestic Arts' and Victorian needlewomen. Their forthcoming work includes projects on children's literature and textiles, and a monograph on textiles (due 2015-16). Initial plans for a Texts and Textiles crafting and reading group involving staff, students and the local community in a twist on the nineteenth-century sewing circle draws both on the University's connection to the Arts and Crafts movement and on the craft elements in its Froebelian traditions. The project will impact on local communities by increasing public awareness of the history of textiles, research into Victorian material culture, and enhancing their engagement with the fascinating history of two of the Universities colleges, Froebel and Whitelands. Discussions with the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Museum of Childhood about further collaboration on this topic are under way.

d. Relationship to case studies

The case studies demonstrate the unit's record of meaningful impact across a range of research. The collaborative Prison Reading Group project (PRG) produces impact in health and welfare (enhancing quality of life), in areas of public policy, in the public sector (the Prison Service) and on voluntary organisations (the Prisoners' Learning Alliance). Humble's work on food literature and the culture of food has changed public understanding of 'middlebrow' cultural heritage by relating food literature (e.g. cookery books) to significant developments in middle-class lifestyles and cultures of leisure over the last three centuries.