

Impact case study (REF3b)

Institution:	University of Northumbria at Newcastle
Unit of Assessment:	29 - English Language and Literature
Title of case study: Eighteenth-Century Literature and Heritage Partnerships in the North East	
<p>1. Summary of the impact Northumbria University's research on the eighteenth-century novelist Laurence Sterne and on the literary significance of the Delaval family has had benefits for two arts and cultural organisations in the North East and Yorkshire. The research has secured new audiences and increased business activity and footfall for the Laurence Sterne Trust (LST), changed the emphasis of heritage interpretation at Seaton Delaval Hall (SDH) and expanded the range of activities offered by both organisations. We have developed long-term and sustainable relationships with both of our partners and are now co-designing collaborative projects with them.</p>	
<p>2. Underpinning research Northumbria is a leading centre for research in eighteenth-century literature and culture, with a focus on the experimental novelist Laurence Sterne. Five current members of staff have published on the author, a concentration of expertise probably unique to any English Department worldwide. There is also a tradition of doctoral students working successfully in the same field. Allan Ingram (Senior Lecturer 1980-88, Principal Lecturer 1988-93, Professor 1993-present) has concentrated on Sterne's representation of melancholy and his relation with the medical profession; Clark Lawlor (Lecturer/Senior lecturer 2000-06, Reader 2006-13, Professor 2013-present) has approached Sterne as part of a larger project on the eighteenth-century representation of consumption, the condition which ended Sterne's life in 1768; and Professor Stuart Sim (2010-present) has engaged with Sterne's writing through the lens of modern genetics theory and chaos theory.</p> <p>Building on this area of expertise, Terry and Williams have developed research specifically on Sterne's experimental practices in his fiction and letters. Professor Terry came to Northumbria in 2008 and in 2010 published a major monograph, funded by AHRC, on eighteenth-century allegations of plagiarism, a charge to which Sterne fell victim after his death. His study documents how Sterne's innovative fictional techniques involve a high level of borrowing from other authors (see <i>Plagiarism Allegation</i> 2010). More recently, Terry has explored the links between techniques of letter-writing and novelistic practice during the eighteenth century, looking at Sterne's own practice in the context of his contemporaries (see MLR 2014). Helen Williams began her PhD at Northumbria in 2009, funded through the AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award scheme and has since progressed to a lecturing role (2013-). The partner institution for her studentship was Shandy Hall (now owned by LST), the property in which Sterne resided in the final years of his life and which remains the 'literary house' associated with his career and legacy. Her research parallels Terry's in exploring how Sterne's fictional experimentation rests on covert appropriations from earlier literary works. For example, her article in JECS (2013) focuses on Sterne's innovative use in his novel <i>Tristram Shandy</i> of the old manuscript device of the marginal pointing hand, revealing how Sterne employs the device to represent his enthusiasm for, but also nostalgic resistance to, the opportunities of print.</p> <p>Terry and Williams are also involved in a collaborative project on the role of North East aristocratic patrons in supporting the activities of metropolitan writers. The project aims to show how a number of canonical eighteenth-century writers had strong ties with the region, the evidence for which has since been marginalised in conventional accounts. The research has initially centred on the Delaval family in South East Northumberland, revealing their association with major literary figures of the period: Sterne, Christopher Smart and John Cleland (see N&Q 2013; RES 2013).</p>	
<p>3. References to the research Lawlor C. (2007) <i>Consumption and Literature: The Making of the Romantic Disease</i>. Palgrave http://www.palgrave.com/products/title.aspx?PID=276759. Available from Northumbria University on request.</p>	

Impact case study (REF3b)

Terry, R. (2010) 'Sterne: The Plagiarist as Genius', in Terry R., *The Plagiarism Allegation in English Literature from Butler to Sterne*, pp. 152-68. Palgrave. See: <http://www.palgrave.com/products/title.aspx?PID=414931>. Output listed in REF2.

Terry R. (2014) 'P.S.: the Dangerous Logic of the Postscript in Eighteenth-Century Letters and Literature', forthcoming in *Modern Language Review*, January 2014. Available from Northumbria University on request.

Terry R. and Williams H. (2013) 'John Cleland and the Delavals', *Review of English Studies*. DOI: 10.1093/res/hgt009. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/res/hgt009>

Terry R. and Williams H. (2013) 'The Delaval Family's Patronage of Christopher Smart: New Evidence', *Notes & Queries*, 60, pp95-97. DOI: 10.1093/notesj/gjs246. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/notesj/gjs246>

Williams H. (2013) 'Sterne's Manicules: Hands, Handwriting and Authorial Property in Tristram Shandy', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 36, pp209-223. DOI: 10.1111/j.1754-0208.2012.00512.x. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1754-0208.2012.00512.x>

4. Details of the impact

Northumbria's research on Sterne and the Delavals has impacted upon the Laurence Sterne Trust at Shandy Hall, Coxwold and National Trust property Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland, home of the Delaval family. In addition we have worked with the Georgian theatre company HC Productions in making aspects of our research accessible to our partners' audiences. Specific benefits to LST and SDH have been in terms of increased footfall, new visitor narratives and also new resources or access to funding opportunities.

Laurence Sterne Trust

The relationship with the Laurence Sterne Trust (LST) began in 2009 with the AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award and has led to impact in three related areas: outreach, digital presence and income generation.

In April 2012 Williams contributed to the curation of an exhibition *Eliza Draper: An Absent Presence* (April 2012), which included an online counterpart, drawing on Williams and Terry's research and work-in-progress on Sterne's literary and epistolary style (JECS 2013; MLR 2014; *Plagiarism Allegation*). The exhibition attracted 500 visitors and the website 6561 page views since its launch in March 2011 (figure as of 31/7/13) (source 1). Because the museum does not usually attract young visitors, Williams also designed a schools' outreach programme including a visit to Shandy Hall, based on the letter-writing aspect of the exhibition (source 2). It was developed collaboratively with collections and education officer, Elinor Camille-Wood and primary school teacher, Fiona Robinson (Seaview Primary School, Seaham, Co. Durham) and reached three schools: Seaview (11/7/12); Riverside Community School, Tadcaster, Yorkshire (09/7/12); and Husthwaite CE School, Yorkshire (17/7/12) (source 1). These workshops taught schoolchildren about Sterne's distinctive writing style (JECS 2013). The children learned about conventions that structure writing, including pointers and signatures and had the opportunity to produce their own 'eighteenth-century' letters (source 2). The children's work has since been digitised and exhibited on a blog linked to the LST webpages: dearsterne.blogspot.co.uk, launched August 2012.

The outreach workshops enabled the LST to widen engagement in a particularly hard-to-reach demographic. Some children in Husthwaite School had never been to Shandy Hall, despite the school being only four miles from the museum. The impact of the workshops in enabling children to engage with their local heritage is evident from a letter by a child living in Coxwold itself: 'When I walked past your house, I wondered which room you wrote your books and letters in' (source 3). The school visits have been so popular that the LST are now planning annual events with Seaview and Husthwaite (source 4 and 1). Moreover, through working with Northumbria, the LST has adapted its business plan and begun to look outside of the Yorkshire area to schools (like

Seaview) located in the North East, showing an expansion in the geographical reach of the Trust's outreach programme (source 1). Building on the programme's success, Williams and Camille-Wood also co-designed a digital toolkit, downloadable from the main exhibition webpage and the Dear Sterne workshop blog, enabling teachers to reproduce the content of the workshops. The blog itself has benefited the LST with expanded online presence and visitor reach (2433 online visitors as of 31/7/13) (source 1). Furthermore, alongside Williams' contribution to increased digital content for the LST she also instigated a change in image and design. As a direct result of her research on Sterne's use of manicules, the curator now uses the pointing hand as part of the LST brand, employing it to frame exhibitions and websites (source 5).

Northumbria has been involved in other research-based activities designed to help the LST raise Sterne's profile during his tercentenary year, including a theatrical chat show and accompanying lecture delivered by Williams and HC Productions at Darlington Arts Festival (Café Create, 17/05/13). Recently we cemented our partnership with the LST by working together on a successful bid (£66,260) to the HLF for a project to commemorate the tercentenary: 'The Good Humour Club' (source 6). The Good Humour Club project is based on an eighteenth-century minute book recently identified in the LST collection, recording the meetings of a gentleman's club set up to promote laughter and comedy as a means of living a long and healthy life. The manuscript sheds light on Sterne's life and work through recording the lives of a group of people associated with him. Running from May 2013-May 2014, the project comprises an exhibition (June 30th-September 2013), a series of comedy nights and educational workshops, a period dramatisation, and a webapp on Sterne and eighteenth-century York.

Northumbria's research on Sterne has helped grow the LST's business capacity as the HLF award constitutes one third of its funding for 2013/14, allowing for an extra member of staff to assist with events management and the outreach programme (source 1). Establishing a residential position for Williams, the project will allow future research on the club to be co-designed between Williams and the LST. Northumbria and LST are already preparing another partnership bid (£125k) to the Nesta Digital R&D Fund for the Arts, for a digital edition of Tristram Shandy (source 6). The project aims to increase the LST's online audience through using innovative digital visualisation techniques to showcase some of Tristram Shandy's precursors uncovered in research by Williams and Terry on Sterne's literary borrowings (Plagiarism 2010; JECS 2013). A number of meetings and phone calls have already taken place (meeting at Shandy Hall, 18/3/13) ahead of submission of the bid, including with visualisation academic, Marian Dork (meeting at Northumbria University, 21/3/13).

Seaton Delaval Hall

Northumbria's more recent partnership with Seaton Delaval Hall is also leading to changes in curatorial presentation strategies, outreach plans and income streams.

Williams and Terry recently uncovered a major cache of letters by John Cleland, author of the scandalous novel Fanny Hill (RES, 2013), amongst the Delaval papers in Northumberland Archives. It reveals for the first time the Delavals' role as patrons of Cleland. Further collaborative research (N&Q, 2013), specifically on the poet Smart, substantiates the view that the Delavals cultivated literary connections. These findings have already been shared with the National Trust through a consultation with Andrew McLean, Curator of the NT Yorkshire and the North East Region and Julie Hawthorn, collections manager of SDH (meeting at SDH, 8/10/12). As a result of this research, SDH is now benefiting from greater understanding of the literary background of the house, with preparations currently under way on a workshop for room guides on the 'Literary Delavals' (source 7). This will be co-designed by Williams and a volunteer room guide from SDH, Sue Abrams (meeting at Northumbria, 31/5/13) and aims to change the current visitor narrative so that it recognises the literary aspects of the Delaval family.

Since August 2012 Northumbria began working with a consortium of partners (SDH, HC Productions, Newcastle Antiquaries Society and a range of schools and community groups) around a plan to stage an original eighteenth-century play accompanied by a range of heritage learning and participation activities based on research expertise at Northumbria on the Delavals, literary patronage and eighteenth-century literary culture (RES 2013; N&Q 2013). We are in the process of

Impact case study (REF3b)

re-submitting a bid to the HLF (ref. no. YH-12-06325; £33,200, first submitted 30/1/13) after receiving constructive feedback. The research-framed project aims to improve the business plan of SDH, whilst increasing audience numbers and footfall through underpinning SDH's outreach and interpretation projects. Our partnership with Seaton Delaval Hall contributes to the National Trust's growing awareness of the literary aspects of the Delaval family and their relevance to future visitor narratives and property interpretation and also the benefits of strategic alliance with a research organisation (source 7).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

1. **Testimonial:** from Collections and Education Officer at Shandy Hall, corroborates claims about the impact of Northumbria research on exhibitions at Shandy Hall.
2. **Photographs:** images of events at Shandy Hall and Darlington Arts Festival, available on request from Northumbria University.
3. **Questionnaires:** completed by pupils at Seaview and Husthwaite schools, revealing an increased interest in Sterne as part of their local heritage. Available on request from Northumbria University.
4. **Testimonial:** from teacher at Seaview school, on the benefits of working with Williams and Terry: impact upon children's knowledge of Sterne, their knowledge of the history of the manicule and the postscript and their engagement with eighteenth-century letter writing. Impact upon the teacher and the school's willingness to work with Northumbria University in the future.
5. **Testimonial:** from Curator of Shandy Hall, corroborates the impact on his curatorial practice as well as various benefits received by Shandy Hall; impact on the curatorial practice of the Laurence Sterne Trust; impact on the range of outreach workshops offered and of the types of exhibitions, events and community projects in which they engage.
6. **Testimonial:** from a Trustee of the Laurence Sterne Trust, confirming website hits, the success of the outreach programme, and the general impact of Northumbria research on the LST.
7. **Testimonial:** from Grants Officer at the National Trust, corroborates impact of Northumbria research on SDH's outreach and interpretation projects.