

Institution: Manchester Metropolitan University
Unit of Assessment: D29 English Language and Literature
Title of case study: Reviving a Literary Reputation: The Example of Anthony Burgess
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Andrew Biswell's research since 1995 has focused on the literature of Anthony Burgess. This work has brought about an international resurgence of public interest in Burgess's artistic legacies, with particular emphasis on his novels, short stories, letters and music. The underpinning research has generated demonstrable impacts in cultural life (enriching the lives and imagination of readers); school education (the creation of educational IT resources for school-age students); public discourse (contributing to a debate about crime and society); tourism (creating visitor experiences through a public exhibition); commercial activity (development of an innovative electronic resource); and commemoration and remembrance (concerts on BBC radio and at the Imperial War Museum North).</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The underpinning research is Professor Biswell's work on the life and writing of Anthony Burgess (1917-1993), including Burgess's collaborations with major film directors, such as Stanley Kubrick and Franco Zeffirelli. Biswell was appointed as a Lecturer in English and Creative Writing at MMU in September 2003 and as a Principal Lecturer in January 2006. In June 2013, he was promoted to Professor of Modern Literature.</p> <p>One of Biswell's first publications was a full-page review in the <i>Times Literary Supplement</i> of Burgess's posthumous novel-in-verse, <i>Byrne</i> (1995). Following the first conference solely dedicated to Burgess's work at the University of Angers in 2001, he contributed a chapter on the <i>Clockwork Orange</i> typescript to the conference proceedings, <i>Portraits of the Artist in A Clockwork Orange</i> [1]. This pioneering discussion of the novel's typescript drew attention for the first time to the extent of Burgess's manuscript revisions, and it initiated a new text-based approach to Burgess criticism. Another long essay about the history of the text, 'Fresh Juice from <i>A Clockwork Orange</i>', appeared in a book on the literary and cinematic versions of <i>A Clockwork Orange</i>, published in 2004 by Lindau, the foremost film studies press in Italy [2].</p> <p>The biographical strand of Biswell's research was originally motivated by the fact that there was no biography of Anthony Burgess. Biswell was one of the first researchers to spend time working with the substantial Burgess archive acquired from the author's widow by the University of Texas at Austin in 1998. This primary research was supplemented by further investigations into the archives of Burgess's publishers (William Heinemann, Hutchinson, Alfred A. Knopf, W.W. Norton) and interviews with more than 200 people who had known Burgess, including his friends, editors and fellow writers. Biswell's biography, <i>The Real Life of Anthony Burgess</i>, was published internationally by Picador in 2005 [3]. This comprehensive non-fiction study was awarded the Portico Prize in 2006 and selected by the novelist William Boyd in the <i>Guardian</i> as his Book of the Year. Further items from Burgess's unpublished correspondence with readers and editors formed the basis of a book chapter, 'The Letters of Anthony Burgess', published in an edited collection with a well-established French university press [4]. This has encouraged a more contextual approach to Burgess by subsequent critics, whereby discussions of his fiction have located themselves within the cultural politics of the years 1956-93.</p> <p>To celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of <i>A Clockwork Orange</i> in 2012, the publisher William Heinemann commissioned Biswell to edit a restored text, which includes a biographical introduction, notes on the text, a new Nadsat glossary and critical writings by Burgess and others. The introduction demonstrates the depth of Burgess's knowledge of the dystopian genre. The annotations illustrate, for the first time, the importance of military slang and quotations from Hopkins and Shakespeare in the novel's text. <i>A Clockwork Orange: The Restored Edition</i> was published in the United States by W.W. Norton [5].</p>

Biswell has authored numerous essays on other aspects of Burgess's creative work. A 6,000-word book chapter on Burgess and Christopher Marlowe [6] is the first article to quote from the notebook draft of Burgess's unpublished university dissertation on Marlowe (1940), his earliest piece of critical writing. This article establishes that Burgess's apprehension of Shakespeare and Marlowe was informed by his close reading of journal articles published in literary journals such as *Scrutiny* in the 1930s, which are cited in the notebook draft.

3. References to the research

[1] 'Editing and Publishing A Clockwork Orange' in *Portraits of the Artist in A Clockwork Orange*, edited by Emmanuel Vernadakis and Graham Woodroffe (Angers: Presses de l'Université d'Angers, 2003), pp. 15-26.

[2] 'Fresh Juice from A Clockwork Orange' in *Il Mondo Distopico di Anthony Burgess*, translated and edited by Flavio Gregori (Turin: Lindau, 2004), pp. 97-120. ISBN: 9788871805061

[3] Andrew Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess* (London: Picador, 2005). ISBN: 978-0330481717

[4] 'The Brides of Enderby' and 'The Letters of Anthony Burgess' in *Burgess and (Auto)Biography*, edited by Graham Woodroffe (Angers: Presses de l'Université d'Angers, 2006), pp. 81-92, 203-8.

[5] Anthony Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange: The Restored Edition*, edited with an introduction and notes by Andrew Biswell (London: William Heinemann; New York, W.W. Norton, 2012). Enhanced digital edition published by Random House. ISBN: 9780434021512

[6] Andrew Biswell, 'Anthony Burgess, Christopher Marlowe and Tamburlaine' in *Marlowe, Shakespeare, Burgess, Issue 3 of Anthony Burgess Centre series* edited by Graham Woodroffe (Angers: Presses de l'Université d'Angers, 2012), pp. 95-105, ISSN 1775-1462, ISBN: 9782915751482

The significance of Biswell's research is attested by prizes and accolades from reviewers. *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess* was awarded the Portico Prize in 2006 and was shortlisted for the Glen Dimplex New Writing Awards. Writing in the *New Statesman*, George Walden, the former Minister for Higher Education, stated that it was a 'truly excellent biography'; Gary Day in the *Times Higher* described the book as 'magnificent and meticulously researched'; and Hal Jensen in the *Times Literary Supplement* characterised it as 'balanced, lucid, good-humoured, packed full of information and written in an engaging style.'

4. Details of the impact

Cultural Life: Biswell's critical biography, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess* (<http://www.panmacmillan.com/book/andrewbiswell/thereallifeofanthonyburgess>), sold more than 3,000 copies in its month of publication, and an additional 3,000 copies were sold in hardback. Paperback sales have exceeded 10,000 copies, and the book was reprinted in 2012 (sales figures from Pan/Macmillan Books). It was reviewed by all of the national newspapers and literary journals in the UK and Ireland. There were other positive reviews from journals in Canada, Australia, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Argentina. Positive feedback from readers was received via personal letters, emails and online reader reviews at Amazon UK. Publication of the book led to invitations for Biswell to lecture at the Whitworth Art Gallery, Portico Library and John Rylands Library in Manchester; the Graham Greene Festival in Berkhamsted; the Edinburgh University International Summer School; and at the Toronto Public Library. Following the initial English-language publication of Biswell's restored edition of *A Clockwork Orange*, a Portuguese translation, with new illustrations by the graphic novelist Dave McKean, was published by Editora Aleph in Brazil.

Biswell's publications have played a central part in reviving Burgess's reputation, which had

declined sharply after his death in 1993. In the mid-1990s just two Burgess novels were available in the UK. As a consequence of Biswell's books, articles and other public interventions (including regular TV and radio appearances), more than 25 of Burgess's books are currently in print, and further reprints have been announced. Since the biography appeared, there is now a renewed interest in Burgess's short stories, one of which, 'Chance Would Be a Fine Thing', was broadcast on BBC Radio 3 on 22 October 2010. Two other 'forgotten' long essays by Burgess were published in the *Observer* and *New Yorker* in 2012.

Other contributions to cultural life include radio programmes in the United Kingdom, the United States, France and Russia. BBC Radio's *Archive on Four: A Clockwork Archive* (broadcast on 18 August 2012) was a 60-minute documentary, in which Biswell was interviewed at length about Burgess's life and works (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b011z7yk>). The estimated audience for this programme was 10.85 million, and the interview with Biswell was selected for re-broadcast as part of Radio 4's *Pick of the Week*. In the United States, Biswell was interviewed about Burgess on National Public Radio by Tom Ashbrook, whose *On Point* programme has 1.2 million listeners (NPR audience figures) [A]. Biswell has also been interviewed about his work by the BBC World Service, Channel 4 News, BBC Radio 3, BBC Radio 4, Radio 5 Live, Radio France and Radio Free Europe (in Russia) [B].

Biswell's edition of *A Clockwork Orange* was favourably reviewed by the *Independent on Sunday* [C] and the *Observer* [D], among other newspapers. The *Times Literary Supplement* made it their cover story on 28 September 2012 – an accolade never granted to Burgess during his lifetime [E].

School Education: As a result of Biswell's advocacy of Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange* is now one of the texts recommended for study on the A-level curriculum under the 'Dystopias' theme. For the International Anthony Burgess Foundation, Biswell has written and designed an educational resource about *A Clockwork Orange* and other dystopias for A-level students and their teachers [F].

Public Discourse: One of the results of Biswell's on-going work to revive Burgess's international reputation has been the publication in France of a best-selling non-fiction book by Laurent Obertone, *La France Orange Mécanique* (Paris: Editions Ring, 2013). The book has initiated a lively debate among criminologists about the social demographics of 'ultra-violent' crime. A report in the *Daily Telegraph* (19 March 2013) indicated that more than 55,000 copies of this book were in circulation [G]. Burgess's work is now attracting the attention of criminologists, sociologists and historians, some of whom are among the contributors to 'Day of the Droogs', a colloquium jointly organised by the IHSSR at MMU and the International Anthony Burgess Foundation (<http://www.hssr.mmu.ac.uk/hip/day-of-the-droogs/>).

Commercial Activity: Working with Random House Digital, Biswell curated an enhanced e-book version of the Restored Edition, featuring hypertext annotations and 12 hours of audio-visual content, for use on the iPhone and iPad (<http://www.randomhouse.co.uk/lp/aclockworkorangeapp>). According to Random House Digital, this electronic edition was downloaded more than 1,000 times in the first three months after its release. The app was shortlisted for the Bookseller's FutureBook Prize for digital innovation.

Contribution to Tourism: 'Fifty Years of *A Clockwork Orange*', co-curated by Biswell with the Anthony Burgess Foundation, was a major public exhibition at the John Rylands Library in Manchester (August 2012 to January 2013). The exhibition, which included items loaned by the Stanley Kubrick Archive and the Arts Council's permanent collection, was installed in the library's Historic Reading Room, and attracted more than 30,000 visitors over five months (John Rylands Library visitor figures). Feedback indicated that people travelled from all over the British Isles to view the exhibition [I].

Commemoration and Remembrance: Biswell was interviewed by *Channel 4 News* about the discovery and public performance of Burgess's music dedicated to the fallen of the Second World War, which formed part of a concert, attended by more than 300 people, at the Imperial War

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Museum North on 11 November 2012 [H]. Additionally, the European premiere of Burgess's *Manchester Overture* was broadcast on BBC Radio 3 on 1 October 2012.

Writing in the books pages of the *Boston Globe*, *Scotsman*, *Scotland on Sunday*, *New Statesman*, *Daily Telegraph* and *Literary Review*, Professor Biswell has produced a series of biographical articles about writers and film-makers who were associated with Burgess, such as Graham Greene, J.B. Priestley, Olivia Manning, Angela Carter, Stanley Kubrick and Ian Fleming [J]. This body of writing about Burgess in relation to those who knew him has been cited in commercial publications such as Deirdre David's new biography of Olivia Manning (2012) and Richard Greene's edition of the *Selected Letters of Graham Greene* (2007). These interventions, which involve writing Burgess into the life stories of his contemporaries, are part of an on-going project to reposition him within the canon of twentieth-century writing.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

[A] *On Point with Tom Ashbrook: A Clockwork Orange at 50*, National Public Radio, first broadcast 1 October 2012. Programme details and podcast are available online:

<http://onpoint.wbur.org/2012/10/01/a-clockwork-orange-at-50>

[B] See, for example, Biswell's interview with Mariella Frostrup, *Open Book*, BBC Radio 4, 16 September 2012. Podcast and programme details are online at

<http://podbay.fm/show/331296649/e/1347809400>

[C] Jonathan Owen, *Independent on Sunday*, 3 September 2012:

<http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/news/how-burgess-classic-a-clockwork-orange-was-tagged-enormous-flop-8100732.html>

[D] Anna Baddeley, 'A Clockwork Orange to Scare You All Over Again', *Observer*, 30 September 2012:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2012/sep/30/clockwork-orange-burgess-app-ipad>

Further information about the Heinemann printed edition is on the Random House website:

<http://www.randomhouse.co.uk/editions/a-clockwork-orange/9780434021512>

[E] *Times Literary Supplement*, 28 September 2012:

<http://www.the-tls.co.uk/tls/public/article1134254.ece>

[F] Accessible via the International Anthony Burgess Foundation: <http://www.anthonymburgess.org>

[G] Henry Samuel, 'Clockwork Orange: France a "Savage" Nation' in *Daily Telegraph*, 19 March 2013: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/9941044/Clockwork-Orange-France-a-savage-nation-book-claims.html>

See also the article in *L'Express*, 9 March 2013 by Eric Pelletier:

http://www.lexpress.fr/culture/la-france-orange-mecanique-ou-la-verite-si-je-mens_1230459.html

[H] *Channel 4 News*, 10 November 2012 (video online at YouTube):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YukO3FuDElw>

[I] Press release regarding the exhibition from the John Rylands Library, 24 August 2012:

<http://www.manchester.ac.uk/aboutus/news/archive/list/item/?id=8631&year=2012&month=08>

[J] See, for example, Andrew Biswell, 'Anthony Burgess and Stanley Kubrick's film of Napoleon', *Daily Telegraph*, 19 November 2012:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/bookreviews/9680168/Anthony-Burgess-and-Stanley-Kubricks-film-of-Napoleon.html> and Andrew Biswell, 'Unbreakable Bond: Anthony Burgess's 007

Obsession', *New Statesman*, 9 April 2013. Article available online at

<http://www.newstatesman.com/culture/2013/03/anthony-burgesss-007-obsession>