

<b>Institution:</b>	Goldsmiths, University of London
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b>	23: Sociology
<b>a. Context</b>	

Sociology at Goldsmiths is inventive and committed to proactive engagement with a wide range of non-academic user groups, beneficiaries, audiences and collaborators. We have a strong and on-going record of public sociology and excellent relations with: the public sector; the policy community; businesses; international organisations; the community and third sector; the media; and various 'publics'.

Examples include: Back with organisations involved in the UK immigration system (ICS#1); Bell with artists engaged in transitional justice in Argentina; Benson with members of the 'self-build' movement; Burrows with the geodemographics industry; Campbell with legal practitioners and INGOs in Bosnia (ICS#2); Coleman with the Expert Advisory Group for Body Confidence chaired by Jo Swinson, MP; Day as advisor to the 2011 UK National Census on questions of religion, ethnicity and identity; Fuller with the open source movement; Gabrys with *Weather Permitting*, a collaborative environmental design and research group on climate change; Greco with community and health organisations assisting people with medically unexplained symptoms; Guggenheim with organisations involved in disaster management; Gunaratnam with hospices; Imrie with architects, planners and building control regulators involved in disability and inclusive design; Jungnickel with cycling organisations; Kanngieser with the logistics industry; Kelly with the Association of Business Schools; Knowles with 'ex-pat' communities in Hong Kong; Krause with humanitarian NGOs; Lash as advisor to the Hong Kong cultural district master plan; Marres' development of methods of controversy analysis, issue mapping and formation of 'publics' in environmental debates; Mirza with English Heritage; Michael with community energy demand reduction organisations; Murthy with social media businesses; Nash with human rights organisations; Neyland with large infrastructure and security businesses; Odih with 'Occupy'; Oswald through the take up of his work on the sociology of childhood by Ofcom, the BBC and the Cabinet Office; Puwar with film makers, artists and photographers (ICS#3); Rooke's involvement in the critical evaluation of a large number of arts and housing projects and policy interventions across Europe; Rosengarten with scientists, clinicians, policy analysts, implementers and community groups working on HIV interventions (ICS#4); Ruppert with European government statisticians and organisations; Sassatelli with organisers of European urban cultural festivals; Simone with residents, social action groups and decision makers in Jakarta (ICS#5); Skeggs' on-going involvement with the women's movement; Stiegler's engagements with European publics via his many media appearances, and the establishment of *Ars Industrialis* and The Philosophy School of Épineuil; and Wakeford's on-going collaboration with Intel and Microsoft.

<b>b. Approach to impact</b>
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Sociology as a discipline has made many important contributions to the analysis and evaluation of 'impact'. In particular science and technology studies (STS) - one of our particular strengths at Goldsmiths - has been central to the proposition that impact is best approached as a process and not simply as a product of research. We have been influenced by ideas that challenge the notion that science impacts on society 'as if from the outside', suggesting that it is empirically implausible and normatively problematic. If science or research 'works' or is successful, it is by virtue of a variety of social actors contributing to it on an on-going basis, well before the research can be framed as a 'product' or as an 'outcome'. Indeed, much of our research is carried out in collaboration with others outside of the academy and so is best thought of as being co-constructed. Furthermore, through a variety of dissemination activities beyond traditional academic outputs - such as the traditional media, social media, and public events, exhibitions and live performances - our research makes its way into public, political and policy debates.

This shift in thinking about impact is becoming more and more influential, and Sociology at Goldsmiths is strongly committed to supporting a research environment that approaches the sociological craft as part and not outside of cultural, economic, political, scientific and social practices and structures. Goldsmiths has fostered this orientation through many activities described below and most recently the establishment in 2012 of *The Unit of Play*, directed by Rosengarten. Drawing on contemporary thinking in design and STS, it systematically promotes exploratory forms of engagement between academics and practitioners through events, seminars, workshops and other 'happenings'.

It would be wrong to think that our approach to impact was simply to turn it into an 'object' of substantive enquiry for STS. Equally as important has been the organic and on-going links we have with myriad publics and organisations outside the academy. Many instances of our impact are built upon on-going relationships that have long histories, especially with people and organisations in our local boroughs. One example is Rooke's [CUCR event](#) that took place after the 2011 'riots' and brought together local kids, academics, youth workers, radio DJs and parents in the same room and engaged them in deeply affecting ways with crucial sociological issues. There are many more examples of our wide ranging and highly practical engagements with non-academics, of which the following are representative:

- We have engaged in experimental forms of knowledge exchange. Jungnickel, for example, has been awarded an ESRC Knowledge Exchange grant. 'Freedom of Movement' explores the socio-materiality of the bike, the bloomer and attending ideas of 'rational' dress in legitimising women's presence in outdoor public space. The work interweaves archival research with the making of a series of material garments from 130-year-old patents, in collaboration with contemporary craft practitioners including tailors, weavers, filmmakers and illustrators.
- We have also taken the opportunity to develop relationships and work collaboratively with colleagues who work in practices outside of traditional academia. Burrows, for example, through a recently awarded ESRC grant is studying 'super rich' neighbourhoods in collaboration with Richard Webber from Experian. This builds on a previous ESRC funded collaboration between Burrows and Webber on the development of the geodemographics industry.
- We also have a good record of following through with the findings of our research in order to bring about concrete changes. For example, research carried out by Back on migration, funded by the EU Seventh Framework Programme, led directly to a large-scale improvement in facilities for users of the immigration service at Lunar House, Croydon (see ICS#1).
- Our commitment to 'live sociology' (see REF 5) also means that we have often been able to develop an agile approach to opportunities and make good and flexible use of institutional facilities, expertise and resources when they arise. An excellent example of this was a recent collaborative experiment in 'real-time ethnography' - *Every Minute of Every Day* - undertaken by Gutnaratnam (and others from Goldsmiths Sociology and Computing) and Richard House Children's Hospice (Newham) and St Joseph's Hospice (Hackney). This led directly from Gutnaratnam's work as part of her BA Fellowship. As Rachel Power, from Richard House, explains: *'we are currently engaged in a number of projects that we hope will give us greater insight into the communities we support and facilitating...immersive ethnography is...a way for us to learn more about Newham, its people and its special places.'*

More generally we foster a research environment that supports and enables staff to achieve these forms of research impact through a number of strategic mechanisms. We:

- make pragmatic use of our internal 'research' leave scheme to support outreach and impact development by linking this to discussions of 'impact' within annual Personal Development Reviews (PDRs) thus making explicit that activities relating to impact and/or engagements beyond the academy are recognised criteria for promotion;
- provide (internal and external) media training and support for clearly written research and impact statements; the appointment of Martin Ince, former deputy editor of THES, as a Goldsmiths-wide consultant in scientific journalism, has been transformative in this regard;
- build collaboration and dissemination activities into all of our research grants, such as workshops with practitioners and social media platforms for sharing research practices and outcomes ;
- encourage staff to undertake consultancy, incentivised by returning to the department/staff involved 90% of any income from work that is 'impactful', after covering costs of delivery;
- support, encourage and fund seminars, symposia, workshops, conferences and other events which are open to or designed for non-academic audiences (see REF 5) including the dissemination of outputs via performances, shows, exhibitions, compositions, recordings etc. which are accessible to diverse audiences (e.g., *Noise of the Past*, ICS#3);
- respond proactively to opportunities to make media appearances, which raise the profile of our research across multiple communities of interest. We have a particularly strong presence on *Thinking Allowed* on Radio 4 with the following staff making appearances (many more than once) during this REF cycle: Back; Bell; Burrows; Greco; Knowles; Murthy; Rhys-Taylor; Seidler; Skeggs;

St Louis; and Toscano. Additionally, Back appeared on Radio 1 following the 2011 'riots', Lash crafted a well-received essay on 'liquid modernity' for Radio 3, and Kanngieser appeared on *The Forum* on the BBC World Service talking about her work on tracking and surveillance. Rhys-Taylor appeared on Channel 4's *Sunday Brunch* talking about class and taste. Burrows contributed to an Australian Channel 7 documentary on 'ping pong poms'. Back writes journalism contributing regularly to *The Guardian*, *THE*, the *New Humanist*, and on-line magazines including *openDemocracy.net*, *Eurozine* and *The Conversation*;

- make concerted efforts to disseminate our research in interesting and engaging ways through social media, blogs, websites, podcasts and Twitter in particular. Notable blogs include those run out of some of our research centres—e.g., [CSISP](#) and [CUCR](#)—and those linked to particular projects. Notably innovative and affecting has been [Case-Stories](#), a website set up by Gunaratnam to support an interdisciplinary project on migration, dying and care. Using oral histories, stories and art, it aims to better understand the pain of social exclusion, inequality and injustice at the end of life. Other innovative websites include the [Academic Diary](#) developed by Back and the [Live Sociology](#) site hosted by the Department more generally. We regularly contribute podcasts to iTunesU or via [Goldsmiths site](#), which includes everything from inaugural lectures, talks by staff and visiting speakers to lectures given by staff to A/AS students. We also have a large and influential presence on Twitter; all research centres and many colleagues have highly active accounts (e.g., Back, Benson, Burrows, Gutnaratum, Rhys-Taylor, and Skeggs) representing the full range of interests and research across the Department and all cross-referring to each other about our various activities. However, the Department Twitter account— @SociologyGold—re-tweets and contributes the most: it now has over 2400 followers and a Klout score of 51. However, we also disseminate our activities via more traditional methods, including posters, of which we maintain an [archive](#);
- appoint Visiting Fellows and Professors with interests and expertise in impact and who can contribute to furthering our research strategy: Alex Taylor, from Microsoft Research (UK), who contributes to various projects and some teaching and supervision; Robert Rojek, from SAGE publications, who provides expertise in academic publishing, metrics, 'Big Data' and the impact of open access on research dissemination strategies; and Professor Danny Dorling (Oxford), a quantitative geographer who works with us on the public understanding of the social sciences.

### c. Strategy and plans

The 'impact agenda' is an important one; but it can create subtle changes in the nature of academic work. For one, intellectual commitments can become inflected by economic and political agendas with which many researchers in the social sciences may be uncomfortable. We have had a full discussion of our position on this at Goldsmiths and staff have even published outputs on the topic (e.g. Kelly and Burrows (2012) 'Measuring the Value of Sociology? Some Notes on the Performative Metricisation of the Contemporary Academy' in Adkins and Lury (eds) *Measure and Value: A Sociological Review Monograph*, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwells, 130-150).

Looking ahead, a raft of excellent new staff appointments in the last year or so means that while our theoretical and methodological commitments will remain firmly in place, our substantive research interests will expand and diversify. These researchers bring projects strongly aligned with our approach, principles and values. All engage with non-academic user groups, beneficiaries, audiences and collaborators and together with longstanding staff will undertake new work that advances our approach in myriad substantive ways including, *inter alia*, the 'super rich', the 'self-build' movement, 'marketization' processes, 'Big Data' and the future of official statistics, the relationship between 'value' and 'values' in social media and religion, building design and disability, migration, algorithmic power, gender and sexual violence in war, urban informatics, race and palliative care, the environment, citizen science, the management of disasters, and human rights.

All of these involve engagements with, and will be of relevance and interest to, a very broad range of collaborators and audiences locally, nationally and internationally, whilst at the same time providing plenty of grist to the intellectual mill. As apparent in REF 5, inherent to our broader research strategy to develop a 'live sociology' committed to a range of 'inventive methods' is an investment in approaches to impact (described above) which, in the future, we intend to systematise and extend. In these ways impact is now an intrinsic feature of research design and grant applications; the mechanisms for support and delivery are developing apace at Goldsmiths, as elsewhere. This is in part inspired by Goldsmiths' practice-based environment - especially in art, computing, design,

media, music and theatre and performance - which gives our approach a slightly different flavour to that found in institutions where STEM subjects predominate. We are engaged with and learn much from this environment and plan to continue doing so particularly through large interdisciplinary projects with colleagues and collaborators from the arts, computing, humanities and social sciences.

#### **d. Relationship to case studies**

All five ICSs have informed and exemplified different aspects of our approach to impact as part of the research process and sociological craft. They have been selected not just because of their veracity as impactful research projects, but also to showcase the wide range of theoretical, methodological and substantive interests and geographical reach of our research.

**ICS#1: Back's** direct engagements with politicians, policy makers, practitioners and third sector organisations in the UK has contributed to an accumulating public narrative in favour of deregulation and of a humane national and European migration policy. His work has had impact on a wide range of audiences including the Houses of Parliament and the European Commission, as well as less specialised audiences such as BBC Radio 1 listeners and a variety of readers of online magazines and social media. The impact of his collaborative and engaged approach to the research process is most strongly evident in its contribution to improving the material conditions, experience and treatment of immigrants at Lunar House.

**ICS#2: Campbell's** work in Bosnia has had a direct impact on legal and criminal justice professionals, policy-makers, and practitioners and their understanding of how gender and sexuality shape international criminal law and its role in transitional justice. She is currently consulting with leading INGOs, *Medica Mondiale* and TRIAL, and is using a socio-legal methodology she has developed to build a sexual violence cases database of Bosnian war crimes prosecutions, which can then be used to inform public policy and public interest litigation in this area. From citations in case law reports to those of Amnesty International her research has been influential in the understanding of, and response to, wartime sexual violence beyond the academy.

**ICS#3: Puwar's** project *Noise of the Past* sought to transform the public imagination of war by bringing post-colonial stories into the UK's national memory of World War II. It did this through an innovative collaboration between academic researchers and artists working in the media of musical composition, poetry and film. Through four interwoven research stages the collaboration exemplified impact as a process and not simply a product of research. But it also changed the understanding of what *is* a research outcome through its production and live performances of an award-winning film 'Unravelling' and 'Post-colonial War Requiem'. Both were launched in 2008 at a large public event in Coventry Cathedral, and again in 2010 to mark the 70th anniversary of the Blitz. Through these performances her research has engaged and continues to engage publics not simply as audiences but as dialogic participants in re-imagining war.

**ICS#4: Rosengarten's** impact on the international HIV field follows from her active engagement and interaction with clinicians, policy makers, scientists and advocacy groups. With her collaborator Michael, she has shown that a STS process-oriented understanding of prevention can help solve the intractable problem of the spread of HIV. By accounting for the multiple influences of contextual factors and interactions between people living with HIV and objects - in this instance pills, condoms and needles - her research has had an impact on how HIV prevention is understood and organised in practice. It has directly informed policy and prevention education by the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations and understandings of HIV prevention practices such as randomised trials in other countries including Canada, Peru, South Africa, Thailand, the UK and the US.

**ICS#5: Simone's** process-oriented research on urban redevelopment and restructuring in Jakarta has involved a close collaboration with institutional partners in Indonesia and deliberative engagements with community residents, social action groups, architects, researchers and government decision makers. Through this process and methods such as community mapping, household surveys, ethnographic observation, focus groups, social action engagement with local governance practices, and institutional profiling his research has had direct impact on the preparation of new housing legislation, the writing of a policy platform of a coalition of civic organizations and the consultative processes on a Spatial Plan for Jakarta. But the research process and methods have also given voice to a range of possible future scenarios that are usually left out of policy deliberations and the collective imaginary of the city.