

Institution: University of Abertay Dundee
Unit of Assessment: 23
Title of case study: Countering the Culture of Fear
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>This case study describes Waiton's research on 'moral panics' around children, young people, and football fans. Increasingly, Waiton has developed a national profile as a 'public sociologist' and has been invited to contribute to policy debates and processes related to his research. This has had an impact on practitioners and stakeholders in areas like community work, youth work and practices, and government committees.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Waiton's research focuses on so-called 'moral panics' and the growing regulation of everyday life. This contributes to the social construction of a <i>culture of fear</i> without a corresponding coherent public morality. At the heart of this is the management of risk, the rise of 'safety' based issues such as the erosion of 'free play' for children, the policing of youth, concerns about adult and young people's relationships, and the perceived 'offensiveness' of football fans.</p> <p>Waiton's work on the rise of <i>amoral</i> panics has been disseminated widely across non-academic fields. His major thesis is that as everyday life become 'colonised' by professional interest groups, public self-understanding and confidence is undermined. The intense regulation of language and 'behaviour' concerning 'hate', 'vulnerability' and 'offensiveness' encroaches on wider areas of public life, such as young people and football supporters.</p> <p>Themes covered in Waiton's research build on work by others, in particular, Christopher Lasch's work on the professionalisation of social relationships, and Frank Furedi's analysis of therapeutic culture. Their claim that this represents not the rise of moral self-governance, but rather its erosion, provides the framework for Waiton's <i>Politics of Antisocial Behaviour: Amoral Panics</i> and the surveillance paper <i>Big Brother on Prozac</i>.</p> <p>The second edition of <i>Scared of the Kids</i> (2008) contained an introduction from the eminent youth work expert, Tony Jeffs, and was written with the specific aim of educating undergraduates studying youth, child and community based subjects. <i>Scared of the Kids</i> advances a critique of contemporary social policy and politics and proposes alternative approaches to policy practices and initiatives. A key idea is that of <i>diminished subjectivity</i> – the hollowing out of political and public life and the consequent undermining of 'character' within individuals – constructed and accelerated by the deeper regulation of life, language and behaviour.</p> <p>This theoretical work and policy based critique led to further studies of the English Riots (2011) and 'intolerance' (2013) in the criminalisation of language and behaviour at football (2012). This research develops the on-going interest into the practice and consequence of over-regulating everyday life in the construction of an 'asocial' society and a 'vulnerable public'.</p> <p>Based on this research, Waiton was invited to speak at numerous public debates at conferences and regular media appearances as a 'public sociologist'. Waiton's current scholarship builds upon this public engagement and has led to invitations to speak at both public and academic events, and to write papers and chapters on these subjects. Most recently, Waiton has been invited to write</p>

Impact case study (REF3b)

about intolerance in football, 'Governing Through Tolerance', for Football and Bigotry in Scotland: Perspectives and Debate, edited by John Flint, Edinburgh University Press, 2013.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- 2008: Waiton, S. *The Politics of Antisocial Behaviour: Amoral Panics*. London: Routledge. (leading social science publisher)
- 2008: Waiton, S. *Scared of the kids? Curfews, crime and the regulation of young people*. Dundee: Abertay Press. (independent academic press)
- 2009: Waiton, S. 'Policing After the Crisis: Crime, Safety and the Vulnerable Public', *Punishment and Society*, Vol. 11, No. 3, pp. 359-376. (peer reviewed)
- 2009: Waiton, S. 'Asocial not antisocial: the 'Respect Agenda' and the therapeutic me' in Peter Squires (Ed) *ASBO Nation: The Criminalisation of Nuisance*. Bristol: Policy Press. (peer reviewed)
- 2010: Waiton, S. 'The Antisocialisation of Young People', *Youth and Policy*, 105, pp. 37-49. (peer reviewed)
- 2010: Waiton, S. 'The Politics of Surveillance: Big Brother on Prozac', *Surveillance and Society*. Vol. 8, No. 1, pp. 61-84. (peer reviewed)

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

Waiton's body of work has had a direct impact on professionals working in social work, youth work and community education, including charitable organisations like Play Scotland and the Scottish Parents Teachers Council (SPTC). It has influenced training, helped develop professional resources, informed public and practitioner debates, and contributed to campaigns.¹

The high number of invited engagements and talks delivered by Waiton, often for voluntary organizations, over a long period of time, demonstrate that he has played a significant role informing public and practitioner debates and practices. In recognition of his role as a public sociologist Waiton was invited to become a member of the Royal Society of the Arts, enhancing his reputation as a leading public authority on issues within his field of expertise. This reputation also resulted in Waiton being invited to write a monthly column for the *Times Education Supplement in Scotland* and subsequently being invited to write a column for the *Scotsman*. Waiton is also a regular contributor to national television and radio debate programmes.

Examples of practitioner impact include Play Scotland, who reported² that, 'Dr Waiton's academic arguments regarding the over regulation of young people's lives have been extremely useful for promoting the idea of free play and raising difficult issues and ideas regarding policies directed at both adults and children'. The Scottish Parents Teachers Council (SPTC) stated³, the 'SPTC has found Dr Waiton's work useful for both raising debate amongst the membership and also helping to add weight to concerns we have about aspects of government policy regarding children and parents, issues around which we continue to lobby schools, local authorities and policy makers'.

¹ Written communications from Play Scotland, November 2012; Scottish Parents Teachers Council, October 2012

² Written communication from Play Scotland, November 2012

³ Written communication from Scottish Parents Teachers Council, October 2012

Impact case study (REF3b)

As the education charity Word Write further commented, 'Dr Waiton's writings have been of great benefit to our education charity's work and stakeholders. His correspondence, articles, and now book, looking at the question of sectarianism, racism and the policing of football fans helped us to develop an education and online programme examining the issue of racism and offensiveness in society today'.⁴

A Leading academic and youth work trainer⁵ also commented that, 'Dr Waiton's work has been widely used. I have often drawn on [his] insights on anti-social behaviour policy in constructing training programmes for youth work and for the police and in KE sessions with police, health service and CLD'. As the head of HM Inspector of Education confirmed: 'In 2010 Dr Stuart Waiton gave an input on the subject "Scared of the Kids" to the Community Learning and Development (CLD) Professional Group within Education Scotland (formerly HM Inspectorate of Education). The CLD professional group is made up of HM Inspectors who have a particular focus on work with young people, inclusion and community capacity building. Dr Waiton's input was well received and stimulated lively discussion amongst the group'.⁶

Waiton's expertise on issues associated with antisocial behaviour and curfews has also resulted in his work being referenced within government policy research documents⁷ discussing public space, youth violence and also public perceptions of young people. This also led to Waiton being invited in 2013 to provide written and oral evidence to the Education and Culture Committee inquiry into taking children into care.

Perhaps most significantly, Waiton's research on the criminalisation of everyday life led to him being invited to a meeting at the Scottish Parliament to discuss the proposed *Offensive Behaviour at Football Bill*. Following a written submission on this topic, Waiton was invited to contribute to the Justice Committee review of the Bill.⁸ The Clerk to the Justice Committee, within the limits of Parliamentary probity, noted that, Waiton made a 'positive contribution to the scrutiny of the Offensive Behaviour etc Bill', and that his 'media appearances and writings....played a part in generating awareness of the Bill'.⁹

Although the Act passed, Waiton influenced the nature of the debate around sectarianism and policing. The organiser of the main anti-sectarian body in Scotland, Nil By Mouth, noted that: 'It struck me that [Waiton] was seeking to 'widen' out the sectarianism debate from the narrow confines of football and his contribution touched upon serious moral and ethical issues surrounding free speech and what does, or does not, constitute hate crime. Given the severity of the sentences under the new legislation it is extremely important that these issues were raised and reflected upon

⁴ Written communication from Director, World Write, November 2012

⁵ Written communication from Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice, University of West Scotland, December 2012

⁶ Written communication from Convener, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education, November 2012

⁷ Alistair Fraser, Michele Burman and Susan Batchelor with Susan McVie (2010) Youth Violence in Scotland: A Literature Review, The Scottish Centre for Crime & Justice Research / Scottish Government, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/10/07105517/0>

⁸ 1st Report, 2011 (Session 4) Report on the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/42951.aspx>

⁹ Written communication from Clerk to the Justice Committee, March 2012

Impact case study (REF3b)

by MSPs.'

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)**Media appearances** including news and current affairs programmes

Newsnight, Newsnight Scotland, Panorama, BBC News 24, STV's Politics Now, BBC TV's The Politics Show, STV News, various Radio 5 programmes, Radio 4's Thinking Allowed, Beyond Westminster and the Moral Maze, Radio 3's Nightwaves, and Radio Scotland and Radio Wales.

Written corroborative statements

Clerk to the Justice Committee, March 2012

Play Scotland, November 2012

Nil By Mouth, March 2012

Convener, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education, November 2012

Scottish Parents Teachers Council, October 2012

Director, World Write, November 2012

Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice, University of West Scotland, December 2012