

Impact template (REF3a)

Institution: University of Bolton
Unit of Assessment: 22 Social Work and Social Policy
<p>a. Context</p> <p>The work submitted to this Unit has exercised significant social and cultural impacts which have been achieved in differing contexts.</p> <p>Research undertaken in the Centre for Worktown Studies has enhanced the cultural life of Bolton and extended the scope of practice of Bolton Museum. By re-connecting the people of Bolton with Mass Observation's 'Worktown' project (undertaken in Bolton 1937-1939), the Centre has engaged the public through active involvement in conferences, seminars, photographic exhibitions and local newspapers. It has also involved the public as active collaborators in oral history and community arts projects and in the research and publication of papers on the history of leisure.</p> <p>Research in social documentary photography has similarly engaged members of the public as active research partners through self-representation. Outreach programmes in working-class communities have focused on the social impacts of de-industrialisation in the north of England. Impact has been achieved by enabling working people to become active collaborators in the photographic documentation of industrial decline and its related social changes.</p> <p>Research in the history of road traffic accidents, supported through funding from the Wellcome Trust, has encouraged scholars to engage with twentieth century subjects central to a deeper public understanding of science, technology and medicine. This has contributed to policy making in road and traffic safety.</p> <p>Research in the modern history of Northern Ireland has enhanced knowledge of the social processes of peace-making and reconciliation.</p> <p>The work on recovery has been written in partnership with people who have lived experience of mental health problems. A variety of media outlets have been used to get the recovery message across to mental health professionals, service users, carers and the wider public. In addition to books and journal papers, this has involved film and theatre.</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>The University of Bolton has historically embraced a commitment to access to higher education and to the enhancement of the economic, social and cultural life of Bolton through engagement with its local community. While neither the teaching nor the scope of research in the University is limited by this approach, it has nevertheless supported a research culture which values the active engagement both of civic, social and cultural organisations and of the general public. Social impact is pursued through collaborative research which is of academic excellence and which demonstrates community benefits.</p>
<p>c. Strategy and plans</p> <p>The Centre for Worktown Studies is central to the strategic approach to much of the research included in this submission. Situated in the town chosen by Mass Observation for its anthropological study of working class life in northern industrial Britain, the University is uniquely</p>

located to pursue research related to this topic which has local and regional significance and social impact. The Worktown project included the production by Humphrey Spender of a documentary photographic record of everyday life in Bolton which is now held in Bolton Museum's Humphrey Spender Worktown Collection. This Collection is of international importance in terms of social documentary photography and social history and of unique relevance to the general public and particularly the people of Bolton. The strategic aim of the research based around Worktown has been to undertake work of national and international academic and professional interest which can be mediated and developed through local networks to have local impacts. The University has developed this strategic approach since 2008 and plans for further research through the development of new partnerships and the pursuit of research funding.

Active interest in research based on Mass Observation and Bolton's identity as Worktown was initiated by Snape in 2008 through the presentation, in association with Bolton Museum and the Leisure Studies Association, of the first 'Recording Leisure Lives' conference which adopted as its sub theme 'Histories, Memories and Archives of Leisure in 20th century Britain'. This one day conference attracted 120 delegates comprising researchers in higher education institutions, museum curators, social documentary photographers and members of the public and revealed the existence of substantial social and cultural interest in Worktown. Its public impact was enhanced through being presented in Bolton Museum and having a low admission fee, with concessions, to facilitate public access.

This conference stimulated interest in further research based around Worktown. To co-ordinate and develop this research the Centre for Worktown Studies was established as a joint enterprise with Bolton Museum to promote and co-ordinate academic work inspired by the Spender photographs and the Worktown project. Four further 'Recording Leisure Lives' conferences were presented between 2009-2012 with the sub- themes of 'Sports, Games and Pastimes', 'Holidays and Tourism', 'Everyday Leisure' and 'Sports, Spectacles and Spectators'. All were presented in Bolton Museum and involved members of the public. All produced a published volume of reviewed post-conference papers.

To support the strategic aim of developing research around the Spender Worktown Collection a successful bid for an AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award studentship enabled a PhD student to be placed in the Museum in 2011 to work with the Spender Collection and to design and deliver a community arts project based upon it.

Although the Spender Worktown Collection is an integral part of the total archive left by Mass Observation, it is owned by Bolton Museum and is not part of the national Mass Observation Archive (MOA) at the University of Sussex. From the outset, the Centre for Worktown Studies has sought to collaborate and work harmoniously with the MOA. Following initial contact and a meeting at Sussex, the Centre and the MOA have developed a mutually respectful relationship and a desire to work collaboratively where this is the best and most fruitful approach. A key strategic objective of this collaboration is to collate the Spender photographs and the related written records at Sussex to enable deeper readings of the everyday through textual and visual sources. An initial step towards this objective was the Centre's contribution to a successful Big Lottery bid by the MOA to develop a national education programme around Mass Observation using both the written and photographic records from the two archives. This will enable the use of the total archive of Mass Observation in school and college curriculum delivery. Further collaboration included the loan by the MOA of written documents to accompany the Museum's 75th Anniversary Worktown Exhibition in 2012, enabling the public to view the Spender photographs alongside their related written observer records. Further collaborative work is

planned for 2014 when the University of Bolton will work with the University of Sussex to present a 'Recording Leisure Lives' conference at Sussex to mark the opening of the new MOA building. This research will reproduce on a national scale the impacts achieved in Bolton, viz. public engagement with the Mass Observation Archive through a conference and research publications.

Beesley's research-based practice in social documentary photography forms a disciplinary link with the Spender Worktown Collection and its impact on the development of documentary photographic practice has been recognised in the award of Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society. His work has achieved social impact through the enhancement of the social well-being of the communities with whom it has been collaboratively produced. The strategic basis of his research has been grounded in collaborative work with organisations, gaining access to the everyday lives of people and communities and enabling their self-representation through photography. A current strategic aim is to work collaboratively with the National Media Museum at Bradford with whom strong links have been developed through Beesley's involvement in the 'Born in Bradford' project and exhibitions of his work at the National Museum.

Beyond the Centre for Worktown Studies, Luckin's research on the history of road traffic accidents is innovative and of significant academic interest. This too has social impacts and results from a three year fellowship, funded by the Wellcome Trust. It has been presented nationally and internationally to transport planners and road safety activists and thus has an impact on professional practice and policy-making in this field.

Carson's work on mental health recovery has all been produced in partnership with people who use or have used mental health services. This work has had significant impact. It was used as a case study in the report "Recovery Begins with Hope," written by Su Maddock and Sophy Hallam, National School of Government, (2011). The recovery film has been viewed over 3,500 times on YouTube and shown at numerous conferences. The book on Psychosis: Stories of Recovery and Hope, Edited by Cordle, Fradgley, Carson, Holloway and Richards, has sold over 1000 copies.

d. Relationship to case studies

The Centre for Worktown Studies is the principal medium through which the research submitted to this Unit has made a social impact. It has acted as a catalyst for a wide range of research related to or inspired by the theme of Worktown and is thus the subject of Impact Case Study Number One.

Luckin's work on the history of road safety accidents forms the basis of Impact Case Study Number Two.