

Institution: University of the West of Scotland
Unit of Assessment: UoA22
Title of case study: Neo-Liberalism, Communities and Health in Contemporary Scotland
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Chik Collins's research on the effects of neo-liberal policies on working class communities in contemporary Scotland has contributed to important changes and benefits beyond academia. It has supported community, third sector, professional and trade union organisations in developing appropriate strategies for action. Oxfam Scotland has used the research extensively in reconfiguring its UK Poverty Programme, and has instigated a Partnership with UWS to enhance this development. Public health professionals grappling with Scotland's lagging health outcomes have used the work in shifting their focus towards underlying causes and in reassessing prevailing public health interventions focused on 'health behaviours'.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p><u>References below are to Section 3.</u></p> <p>Collins's research on the impact of neoliberal policies has focused on the apparent intensification of problems in many working class communities, in the context of ongoing, and often expensive, interventions for 'renewal' and 'regeneration'. He has published >50 articles, books, book chapters and reports, and has engaged widely beyond academia. The research has developed in 3 phases.</p> <p><u>Phase 1 – 1990s:</u> Focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working class opposition to neoliberalism in the early 1970s (particularly the UCS Work-In), using archival sources to highlight the role of language in precipitating Heath's U-turn. The Conservatives' New Life for Urban Scotland Programme (1988-98), looking at the problem of 'community participation', particularly in the Ferguslie Park area of Paisley. This research traced the connections between politics and policy at UK and Scottish levels, and the New Life Programme and its local implementation via 'regeneration partnerships'. It demonstrated the profoundly dysfunctional dynamic of these connections, and their equally profoundly damaging effects on communities (3.1). <p><u>Phase 2 – Late 1990s-2007:</u> Focused on the evolution of policy under New Labour at Westminster and the Lab-Lib coalition at Holyrood, highlighting the negative impacts across local communities. It identified the continuing failure of policy (2000-2004), and then the (otherwise barely noticed) major reorientation of policy in Scotland after 2004. It highlighted the role of the Edinburgh financial elite in turning regeneration policy towards liberalisation and privatisation, and drew out the implications for local communities and trade unions.</p> <p><u>Phase 3 – 2007-2013:</u> Focused on the development of policy under the SNP at Holyrood and the Conservative-Lib-Dem coalition at Westminster. In this phase the research was taken up in new ways by external parties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oxfam commissioned research for its UK Poverty Programme on a key community organisation in Clydebank (Clydebank Independent Resource Centre - CIRC), tracing its experience from its early 1970s origins. The challenge was to account for its longevity, when so many community organisations had ceased to exist. The key finding, based on extensive research and delivered in a book-length report, linked this to the organisation's long-standing connections with the trade unions in the area (3.2). Subsequently, Oxfam commissioned further research with the same organisation, looking at the experience of the Labour Government's 'Welfare to Work' policy. Taking case studies of Incapacity Benefit claimants, the research challenged the rationale for the policy and illuminated its damaging impacts on individuals and families (3.4). From 2008, Collins's research was brought to bear on the issue of Scotland's lagging health outcomes. He collaborated with an NHS colleague to formulate a new hypothesis, linked to supporting evidence, focused on Scotland's higher vulnerability to the damaging effects of neo-liberal policies after 1979 (3.3). Continuing research identified and evaluated all the proposed hypotheses for Scotland's health outcomes, and provided an outline synthesis of the more credible hypotheses as the basis for future work (3.5). A further, related exercise traced Scotland's longer-term comparative health trends and identified the key points of divergence (3.6).

Impact case study (REF3b)

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

- 3.1 (Peer reviewed book chapter)** Collins, C. (2008), "Discourse in Cultural-Historical Perspective: Critical discourse analysis, CHAT and the study of social change", in Van Oers, B., Elbers, E. and Wardekker, W. & Van Der Veer, R., eds., *The Transformation of Learning: Advances in cultural-historical activity theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp.242-272.
- 3.2 (Report for Oxfam Scotland, also published as peer reviewed book chapter)** Collins, C. (2008), *The Right to Exist: The Story of the Clydebank Independent Resource Centre*, Oxfam, Glasgow. <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/the-right-to-exist-the-story-of-the-clydebank-independent-resource-centre-112387> ; Collins, C. (2011), and also "For a People's Clydebank': Learning the ethic of solidarity amidst the wreckage of neo-liberalism in contemporary Scotland", in Peter E. Jones (ed.), *Marxism and Education – Renewing the Dialogue: Pedagogy and Culture*, New York: Palgrave, 2011, pp.65-86.
- 3.3 (Peer reviewed journal article)** Collins, C. and McCartney, G. (2011), "The Impact of Neo-Liberal 'Political Attack' on Health: The case of the 'Scottish Effect'", *International Journal of Health Services*, Vol. 41, No. 3, pp.501-523. doi: 10.2190/HS.41.3.f
- 3.4 (Report to Oxfam)** Collins, C., with Dickson, J. and Collins, M. (2009), *To Banker, From Bankies – Incapacity Benefit: Myth and Realities*, Oxfam, Glasgow <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/to-banker-from-bankies-incapacity-benefit-myths-and-realities-126111>
- 3.5 (Report for Glasgow Centre for Population Health, also published as 'Editor's Choice' peer reviewed journal article)** McCartney, G., Collins, C., Walsh, D. and Batty, D. (2011), *Accounting for Scotland's Excess Mortality: Towards a Synthesis*, Glasgow: Glasgow Centre for Population Health http://www.gcph.co.uk/assets/0000/1080/GLA147851_Hypothesis_Report_2_.pdf ; McCartney, G., Collins, C., Walsh, D. and Batty, D.G. (2012), and also "Why the Scots Die Younger: Synthesizing the Evidence", *Public Health*, Vol. 126, No. 6, pp.459-470. doi: 10.1016/j.puhe.2012.03.007.
- 3.6 (Peer Reviewed journal article, published as 'Editor's Choice', with commentary from Johan P. Mackenbach)** McCartney, G., Walsh, D., Whyte, B. and Collins, C. (2012), "Has Scotland always been the 'sick man' of Europe? An observational study from 1855 to 2006", *European Journal of Public Health*, Vol 22, No.6, pp.756-760. doi:10.1093/eurpub/ckr136

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

References below map to sections 3 and 5 respectively.

Impact on Oxfam's UK Poverty Programme

Collins's contributions led Oxfam to fund research for their UK Poverty Programme. This work (3.2) was reported widely in 2008 (e.g. *The Herald*, July 2008, BBC Scotland News, June 2008) and written up for three professional journals. It was used by the Clydebank Independent Resource Centre to ensure its survival in a time of cuts (2008-present), and used by Oxfam, both in highlighting the plight of community organisations to government and in reconfiguring its UK Poverty programme in Scotland (2008-present) (5.1).

This success led to further Oxfam requests for engagement with Collins and UWS colleagues. Collins's 2009 report on 'Welfare to Work' (3.4), again funded by Oxfam, was also widely reported (e.g. BBC Radio Scotland's 'Good Morning Scotland', April 2009), used by the high profile Scottish Campaign on Welfare Reform (e.g. *The Herald*, 18/02/11), featured at the annual Document Film Festival in Glasgow (October, 2009), and became the subject of high-level discussions between Oxfam and the DWP (2009) (5.1).

Collins also introduced Oxfam to a UWS economist to assist with the economic side of Oxfam's policy. This led to Oxfam Scotland's high profile *Whose Economy?* seminar programme (2010-11, co-organised by UWS and Oxfam), which in turn provided the basis for its more recent *Our Economy* report and strategy (2013). The report fully acknowledges the contribution of UWS staff, and has substantially influenced Oxfam's work at UK level and internationally (5.1; 5.2).

The UWS-Oxfam Partnership

The growing engagement between UWS and Oxfam led the latter in the summer of 2011 to instigate a UWS-Oxfam Partnership (5.1). The Partnership, established in 2012 with £50,000 of

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initial funding from UWS, primarily comprises:

- A Policy Forum, focused on Oxfam's ongoing policy development and advocacy strategy, engaging UWS academics with Oxfam, its community partners, and a range of other organisations beyond academia (e.g. NHS; SURF; Scottish Community Development Council; New Policy Institute; Poverty Alliance; STUC; Scottish Family Business Association);
- A programme of research collaborations (currently nine), initially funded by the Partnership, engaging academics with Oxfam and its community partners, both to support these organisations and to inform Oxfam's policy development and advocacy strategy. Some of these collaborations are already producing impacts of their own (5.1).

This Partnership, which Collins leads from the UWS side, is progressing well and working towards leveraging external RKE funding (5.3). It is seen by Oxfam as an exemplar for its wider activities (5.1).

Impact in Public Health Field

Collins's work impacted significantly on the work of NHS Health Scotland and the Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH - a collaboration between NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Glasgow City Council, the Scottish Government and the University of Glasgow) (5.4).

Hitherto, the causes of Scotland's health deficits have been inadequately understood. Remedial interventions have had little or no impact. In 2008, Collins was approached by an NHS colleague (Gerry McCartney) to collaborate on broadening understanding of how immediate causes are linked to broader processes of socio-economic and political change (3.3) (5.4). Discussions (2009-10) were conducted with key public health figures charged with reporting to the Scottish Government.

From 2010, the two Public Health Programme Managers at the GCPH became involved in furthering the work initiated by Collins and McCartney, and co-authoring outputs. In 2011, GCPH itself published one of these – a major report endorsing and further developing the broadening of perspective advocated by Collins (3.5, see also 3.6). All this work has been widely reported in the media, at Scottish level (e.g. *The Scotsman*, August 2011, *The Herald*, June 2012, *Sunday Herald*, August 2011; BBC Scotland News, November 2012, *Scotland on Sunday*, June 2013), UK level (e.g. *The Guardian*, June 2011 and November 2012, *The Economist*, August 2012) and internationally (e.g. *Le Monde*, November 2012).

The ongoing impact is now clearly reflected in the continuing work of NHS Health Scotland and the GCPH – all of which is conducted 'beyond academia' (5.5, 5.6). It has also informed the critical assessment of prevailing interventions focusing on 'immediate' causes, to the neglect of 'causes of the causes' (5.7). This is evident in a recent *Herald* report on the current view of Scotland's Chief Medical Officer, Sir Harry Burns (5.7).

Urban Regeneration and the 'Community Voices Network'

Collins's work raised broad critical awareness of the failings of the prevailing regeneration model. From 2006, it raised particular awareness as to the nature of the Community Voices Network – a national community organisation, created in 2006, led by a private company and funded by the Scottish Executive. This impacted on wider attitudes to the organisation, which was subsequently disbanded by the Scottish Government (in 2009) (5.8)

Impact on Trade Union Organisations

Collins's work played a key role in Clydebank Trades Council's securing a 2007 Scottish TUC mandate to organise a national conference ('Communities, Regeneration and Democracy', September 2008), which Collins addressed. This has contributed to ensuring that community engagement and regeneration have remained on the agenda of the STUC and individual unions (e.g. Unite and Unison). (5.9)

Collins's research on the UCS Work-In was the basis for a national training event for Unite trade union activists (August 2011), and was used extensively by FairPlay Associates, who organised this training and also the wider programme of celebrations for the 40th anniversary of the Work-In sponsored by the Unite trade union (in 2011-12). Collins provided the material for David Hayman's re-enactment of Jimmy Reid's role at the main anniversary event (February, 2012). (5.10)

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- 5.1 Note from Head of Oxfam Scotland
- 5.2 Oxfam's *Our Economy* strategy, see esp. pp.8-9 and p.51 for references to UWS input and current/future role: <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/our-economy-towards-a-new-prosperity-294239>
- 5.3 Application to UWS Strategic Development Fund to support UWS-Oxfam Partnership, May 2012; Memorandum of Understanding for UWS-Oxfam Partnership, signed October 2012; First Annual Report on the UWS-Oxfam Partnership to UWS Financial Monitoring Committee, May 2013 (all available on request to UWS)
- 5.4 Note from Head of the Public Health Observatory at NHS Health Scotland
- 5.5 Martin Taulbut, David Walsh, et al (2012) *Health and its determinants in Scotland and other parts of post-industrial Europe: the 'Aftershock of Deindustrialisation' study – phase two*, A joint report by the Glasgow Centre for Population Health and NHS Health Scotland. The emphasis in this report on the importance of the political differences between Europe and the UK after 1979 to the differences in health outcomes between UK and European deindustrialised areas reflects the intervention of Collins and McCartney after the phase one Aftershock Report in 2008. This emphasis was not to be found in the 2008 report, and in the 2012 report it is linked to the PhD research of Gordon Daniels (a former student of Collins at UWS, who became a doctoral candidate at GCPH and who drew heavily on Collins and McCartney's work). There is also extensive reference in the phase two report to McCartney and Collins's 'hypotheses' report (3.5).
http://www.gcph.co.uk/publications/271_the_aftershock_of_deindustrialisation_study-phase_two
- 5.6 David Walsh et al (2013) *Exploring Potential Reasons for Glasgow's 'Excess' Mortality: Results of a three-city survey of Glasgow, Liverpool and Manchester*, Glasgow Centre for Population Health. This report uses large-scale survey data to explore seven key theories as to the causation of Glasgow's excess mortality. One of these is the 'political attack' perspective developed by Collins and McCartney. Collins helped to design the survey and contributed to the analysis of the results.
http://www.gcph.co.uk/publications/440_exploring_potential_reasons_for_glasgows_excess_mortality
- 5.7 "Demise of Shipyards Blamed for Scotland's Ill Health", *The Herald*, 3rd October 2013, p.4
<http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/health/demise-of-shipyards-blamed-for-nations-ill-health.22329844>
- 5.8 Note from Chief Executive, Scottish Urban Regeneration Forum: Scotland's Independent Regeneration Network
- 5.9 Note from Secretary, Clydebank and District Trades Council. STUC Conference listed at <https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A2=crit-geog-forum;e4ff0bf5.0808>
- 5.10 Note from FairPlay Associates