

<p>Institution: Queen's University Belfast</p> <hr/> <p>Unit of Assessment: 30 History</p> <hr/> <p>a. Context</p> <p>Ever since the emergence of the Troubles over forty years ago the History UoA at Queen's has been acutely aware of its public role in a divided and contested region where the nationalist and unionist communities hold widely differing interpretations of Irish history, not only of the recent past but back to the 17th century and beyond. As a result, the unit has always paid significant regard to the 'impact' of its research, working with specific user groups in the media, education, local government and the heritage sector, and through these communicating its research with the public of Northern Ireland (NI). The recent foregrounding of Impact in academic life is, in this respect, an organic outgrowth of the unit's traditions. Queen's is a neutral academic space within NI, and the unit is acutely sensitive of the need to preserve this reputation. Therefore, while the unit does not look exclusively to the UK or to the Republic of Ireland in its impact strategy, it aims to contribute public benefit in the first instance to NI, the wider UK and the Republic.</p> <p>However, given the diversity of its historical research interests, the unit has not restricted itself to this important field. In recent years the unit's research impact has broadened to incorporate the work of emerging research teams in fields such as global/imperial history, the history of the American South and intelligence history, while retaining the tradition of emphasis on public responsibility, outreach and a sensitivity to the role of history and social memory in fractured societies. In particular, the unit has shown a particular interest in themes of truth, reconciliation and contested pasts, and has sought to work with user groups in developing curriculum, mass media and public policy interventions drawing on this research. The unit's position since 2005 within a School of History and Anthropology (which incorporated the interdisciplinary Institute of Irish Studies as well as colleagues working on the anthropology of Ireland, of conflict and of frontiers) has reinforced these trends, and helped widened the range of user groups with which the unit works.</p> <hr/> <p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>The range of the unit's impact-related activities are manifold, and exceed what can be captured by a limited portfolio of impact case-studies. These activities can best be grouped under two broad types of Impact, public engagement and public policy-related, both with a focus on building relationships and supporting staff to enable impact from research.</p> <p>1. Public Engagement</p> <p>Members of the unit have participated in a wide range of public engagement activities, building on established traditions within the unit and encouraged as part of the unit's research strategy. The contested space of Irish history remains a focus, with members working with NGOs and government bodies to shape the agendas for public commemorations of the past, especially relating to the centenaries of the 1912-23 revolutionary decade. Key user groups here have included museums sector and NI/ROI broadcast media (as interlocutors for users in the broader public), and governmental and quasi-governmental bodies such as the NI Community Relations Council and Belfast City Council.</p> <p>The Irish History research group has formed an Academic Review Group to work with the National Museums of NI in redeveloping the Irish history galleries of the Ulster Museum as part of the 'Connecting History' project 2013-14. Jeffery, McGarry, O'Dowd and Coleman, have contributed to the NI Community Relations Council's 'Remembering the Future: Marking Anniversaries' public lecture programme in 2012-13 (see http://www.community-relations.org.uk/marking-anniversaries/decade-of-centenaries-lecture-videos/), and Coleman sits on its Round Table steering group; Connolly, O'Connell and Purdue were involved in Belfast City Council's lecture series on 'Belfast 400' and the 'Decade of Centenaries' (2012-13). Hayton is a member of the Historical Commemorations Working Group advising the General Synod of the Church of Ireland, advising on its engagement with centenary events. The impact of social as well as political history has also been promoted, with the 'Welfare and Public Health in Belfast and its Region 1800-1973' project, led by Gray and Purdue, taking research into the community through</p>
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use of media (including a narrated slideshow on the BBC website), exhibitions (NMNI project) and public engagement events, including a free workshop at Crumlin Road Gaol in April 2013. Introducing a comparative and global dimension to remembering the 'Troubles', **Weir** curated a public exhibition, 'Turning Point 1968: Belfast and beyond', which accompanied a public lecture and film series on the 40th anniversary of the student and civil rights protests of 1968. Engaging an educational audience, **Aveyard, Connolly, Gray** and **McGarry** have recorded podcasts on Irish history, and **Davis** on Medieval history, for the Historical Association's website for schools, and the unit has hosted several pedagogical conferences, for A-level teachers on historical resources, and for students on modern Irish and European history. In the field of impact through digital media focused on non-academic as well as academic users, the *DIPPAM* virtual library of Irish historical sources (www.dippam.ac.uk, Gray PI), has had over 100,000 unique visitors from 175 countries since launch in 2011. **O'Dowd** has contributed to a project to produce an app for tourists on sites relating to the history of women in Belfast, Cork, Dublin, Limerick and Galway. **McGarry** was involved with a Heritage Lottery-funded project *Belfast Lives: Families and Households in the Edwardian Era* (BELFAM), which produced a multi-media online resource for family history.

Reflecting the growing emphasis on research impact outside Ireland, **Clinton** has been active with a large number of non-HE organizations in the USA, including the Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (where she is curating an exhibition in 2013-14), Ford's Theater, the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace and more than twenty other similar organisations in outreach activities relating to her biography, *Mrs Lincoln* and her role as historical advisor for Steven Spielberg's film '*Lincoln*' (2012). **Marsh** and **McGarry** have acted as historical consultants for productions at the Lyric Theatre, Belfast, advising producers and actors on dramatic interpretations of 17th-century English and early 20th-century Irish history. The unit's historians have taken a leading role in consultancy and engagement with television and radio documentaries with a view to bringing research findings to non-academic audiences. **Jeffery** and **Holmes** spoke in the first BBC Festival of History and Broadcasting in 2012, and the unit is involved in planning the second festival with BBCNI in 2014. Recent documentary engagements include: **Gray** for Irish, UK, Canadian and Belgian channels on the Great Irish Famine and emigration; **McGarry** for Irish-language tv on the Irish revolution and its legacy (see his case study). **Holmes** was consultant to a major BBCNI documentary on Irish Presbyterianism. **Purdue** has appeared in a BBC1 documentary on Ulster landed estates. Members of the unit who have been interviewed for broadcast media on their research and its contemporary resonances include **Clinton** (in NI, USA), **Coleman** (USA), **Farrell** (ROI, NI), **Gray** (NI, ROI), **Jeffery** (NI, UK, ROI, Australia), **Kelly** (USA), **McGarry** (ROI), **Morier-Genoud** (Mozambique, UK, Switzerland), **O'Connell** (NI, UK), **Purdue** (NI) and **Stanonis** (NI).

2. Public Policy-related

The unit has encouraged members to engage in public-policy related impact where appropriate. **Jeffery** has contributed to the formation of public policy about oversight of the UK intelligence services (see his case study). **O'Connell** has contributed to the public policy debate on what has come to be known as the 'Big Society', long before it became a party slogan, including by publishing on working-class debt and credit on the '*History and Policy*' website. **Connolly's** work (with Bryan, Anthropology) on Belfast's urban history has explored the politics of parades, marches and public space (see case study). **Jeffery, Hayton, Gray** and **McGarry** have all given seminars at the invitation of the GOC(NI), to senior military, police and civil service personnel on the legacies of history for understanding contemporary NI. Further abroad, **Gray** and Bryan presented papers to the provincial government of Quang Ngai, Vietnam, on the comparative history of ethnic division in NI and the urban heritage of Belfast. **Morier-Genoud** has been senior adviser on the Abuja project, 'Muslim Leaders in Northern Nigeria', funded by the Dutch government, as part of his broader research interest in Islam, armed conflict and the disengagement of the state in sub-Saharan Africa. **Clinton** completed two years' service with the Teaching American History project administered by the Gilder Lehrman Institute and the New York Department of Education. In 2012 she was involved in the "*Re-Trial*" of *Mary Lincoln* – to determine whether she should be involuntarily committed to an asylum, a project which will result in new curriculum in Illinois State schools, to illuminate issues of mental illness and personal liberty rights. **Kelly's** Case Study sets out a parallel initiative to apply his research to reshaping the pedagogy of the legacies of slavery in South Carolina, through engagement with the state education department, and through it with

educators and school students in the state.

c. Strategy and plans

The Research Committee within the School has taken responsibility for a more proactive approach and formulated plans for forward support of Impact which will reinforce – rather than distort – the research commitments of the unit’s members. The School is setting up a cross-community advisory group of lay users (both existing and potential stakeholders) to inform the unit’s Impact strategy. This group includes key partners including the Head of Public Affairs at BBCNI, the Head of Human History at National Museums NI, and members of media production companies. The school encourages staff to undertake media training under the auspices of staff development. It has introduced a supportive ‘outreach’ criterion into its appraisal process, and places a high value on the mentoring of staff in this area through implementing a scheme of mentoring tutorials, whereby those with experience in this area, whether of outreach, media work, or public policy engagement, will guide the first steps of colleagues new to these areas beyond the familiar bounds of traditional scholarship. The aim is to make impact an integral part of academic research within the unit. One ECR, **Farrell**, was accepted for training by the BBC Academy’s Expert Women programme. The unit has also convened masterclasses for staff and postgraduates, including one in media engagement involving broadcasters and documentary film makers, and another on writing ‘official’ history for government departments, with others planned. Moreover, the School is also conscious that an important dimension of Impact is its audit trail, and has put in place administrative support mechanisms for the systematic collection and retention of Impact-related data. This activity is publicised outside the unit through a monthly Newsletter, published on the School’s website (<http://www.qub.ac.uk/mh/NewsandEvents/>) and emailed to key contacts outside the HE sector, and supported by History facebook and twitter accounts.

As it endeavours to influence the direction of public policy and civil society practice, the School recognises the importance of adhering to best practice in conducting and delivering its portfolio of research activities. The School considers that its supportive approach to high impact research during the period of the current REF has been successful as reflected in the evidence presented in the case-studies. Yet we are eager to improve on this approach and have recently been formulating new strategies to ensure that the research done by our staff has a high impact. Although the unit promotes impact engagement throughout its research fields, it is targeting the opportunities for impact in areas where it has research strength in depth and existing good relations with non-academic bodies: these include in the next cycle, the continuing legacy and centennial memorialisation of the Ulster and Anglo-Irish crises, of the Irish revolution, partition and civil war of 1916-23 and the impact of the First World War on Ireland, and the resonance of these in both parts of the island in the early 21st century; of the upcoming 50th anniversary of the outbreak of the NI conflict in 1968-9, and a continuing engagement with the sesquicentenary of the US Civil War, Slave Emancipation and the Reconstruction of the South (2013-20).

d. Relationship to case studies

Two of the case studies, by **McGarry** and **Connolly**, have emerged from the unit’s sustained tradition of public engagement with the publics of NI, the UK and Ireland in communicating and debating the contested issues of modern Irish history and helping shape its contemporary commemoration. Connolly’s work exemplifies the close relations developed between historians in the unit and key public institutions in the province, such as Belfast City Council, the National Museums and the BBC. McGarry’s demonstrates the serious engagement with documentary making and broadcast media in communicating complex historical ideas to broad audiences, which is central to the unit’s impact strategy going forward. The case studies by **Jeffery** and **Kelly** reflect the recent expansion of research activity into new areas, with associated impact activity. In the former contributing to the formation of public policy, especially with respect to the development of official history policy in the intelligence field; in the latter with respect to the development of pedagogical strategies for teaching the contested histories (in this case of post-Civil War race and labour relations in the Carolinas), and utilising new media such as interactive websites and blogs to do so.