

Institution: University of Strathclyde
Unit of Assessment: 30
Title of case study: Contribution to occupational health campaigns, international debate and public awareness of miner's lung and asbestos related disease and disability.
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>A significant contribution has been made to: a) occupational health policy debates and widening public awareness about the connections between employment environments and disease, and b) compensation struggles and campaigns to improve health and safety in the contemporary workplace, as a result of oral history research on targeting the experience of asbestos and coal mining-related diseases. This has benefitted agencies, organisations and policy-makers involved in campaigning for disease victims and those individuals, families and communities who suffer from occupational diseases - including asbestos-related ones - within Scotland, the UK and globally. There has also been a wider public impact in terms of contributing to sustainable public and community heritage.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Context: Oral-history based research methodology developed by Mclvor (joint-Director of the Scottish Oral History Centre, 1995-2005: Director thereafter), was combined with archival and documentary analysis to systematically study, for the first time in Britain in the twentieth century, the <i>lived experience</i> of occupational disease and disability. The research shifted the emphasis in scholarship from accidents and injuries (trauma) to argue that chronic occupation-related disease and disability was significant, neglected and merited more attention. The work provided insights into how historic and current occupational health epidemics – notably related to asbestos exposure and to respiratory disease in coal mining – impacted upon society. The study went beyond the statistical body counts and company records to explore prevailing work regimes and cultures of risk-taking as well as the physical and emotional effects of the transition from fit and healthy workers to disabled and dependent individuals.</p> <p>Key findings: This research on the cultural history of disability articulated the experiences of victims of occupational diseases as expressed through their own words. The findings identified the diverse ways that such disabling and life-threatening conditions affected people economically, socially and personally, including the impact of disability on gender identities. Identifying the incremental processes of emasculation which went along with disability was a key research finding. Crucially, by creating and analysing a body of personal narratives the research shed important insights into the dynamics of power and agency in work-health cultures, the inequalities and injustices of existing compensation regimes, the shortcomings of regulatory frameworks and preventative policies, as well as what it actually meant to be a victim of such diseases on a day-to-day basis. Amongst key findings were identification of a significant gulf between regulatory frameworks and actual workplace practice, the persistence of high risk cultures in the workplace and how chronic respiratory disease restricted lifestyles, including the widespread 'anticipatory anxiety' that permeated such traditional working class communities (notably where past asbestos exposure was significant). The research developed a new area of disability history. The research methodology also contributed to oral history theory and practice, engaging with such issues as inter-subjectivity, the self and memory in interviewing (particularly in relation to the body) and emphasising the importance of oral testimonies as part of public and community heritage.</p> <p>Key researchers at Strathclyde: Prof A Mclvor – Reader (2000) then Professor of Social History and Director of the Scottish Oral History Centre (SOHC).</p>
<p>3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mclvor and R. Johnston, <i>Miners' Lung: A History of Dust Disease in British Coal Mining</i>, Ashgate Press, 2007, 388 pp. ISBN 978-0-7546-6095-8 Notes on quality: Peer-reviewed international academic publisher. Outstanding book reviews.

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2. R. Johnston and A. Mclvor, 'Narratives from the urban workplace: Oral testimonies and the reconstruction of men's work in the heavy industries in Glasgow' in R. Rodger (ed.), *Testimonies of the City*, Historical Urban Studies Series, Ashgate Press, 2007.
Notes on quality: Peer-reviewed international academic publisher.
3. R. Johnston and A. Mclvor 'Medical Knowledge and the Worker: Occupational Lung Diseases in the UK, c1920-1975', *Labor*, 2005 Volume 2, Number 4, 2005, p 63-86 doi: 10.1215/15476715-2-4-63
Notes on quality: Peer-reviewed international (USA based) journal.
4. R. Johnston and A. Mclvor, 'Oral history, subjectivity and environmental reality: Occupational health histories in 20th century Scotland', in G. Mitman, M. Murphy and C. Sellers (eds), *Landscapes of Exposure: Knowledge and Illness in Modern Environments*, special edition of *OSIRIS* (History of Science Society), USA, vol 19, 2004 p. 234-249
Notes on quality: Peer-reviewed international (USA based) journal.
5. R. Johnston and A. Mclvor, (2004) 'Dangerous work, hard men and broken bodies: Masculinity in the Clydeside heavy industries, c1930-1970s', in E. Yeo (ed.), *Masculinities in History*, special edition of *Labour History Review*, vol 69, p113 -137.
Notes on quality: Peer-reviewed international journal.
6. R. Johnston and A. Mclvor, *Lethal Work: A History of the Asbestos Tragedy in Scotland* Tuckwell Press, 2000, pp. 256.
Notes on quality: Peer-reviewed publisher.

Other evidence for quality of research: The research was supported by a series of external funding awards between 2000-2013 (Mclvor PI or CI) from the British Academy, Nuffield Foundation, the AHRC and the Wellcome Trust and formed the basis for a successful AHRC Knowledge Transfer Fellowship award of £182k on Oral History and Glasgow Museums, 2010-2011, a Wellcome Trust award (£158k) for a project on the history of coalfield disability (2011) and an AHRC award (£233k) for 'Masculinities Challenged, 1939-45' (2012).

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

Process from research to impact: The research was Strathclyde-originated with Mclvor as PI and Johnston employed as RA. This research collaboration continued after Dr Johnston moved to a lectureship at Glasgow Caledonian University (until his retirement in 2010). The research findings reached a wider audience directly through readership of publications (including the two research monographs) together with other modes of research dissemination, including conferences, seminar papers, training workshops and speaking at stakeholders groups, from trade unions to asbestos activist groups, such as the global Ban Asbestos Network (for example in Tokyo, 2009). The methodology developed and experience accrued has also had important 'spin-off' impacts in relation to public and community heritage, including within museums. For example, the AHRC KTF with Glasgow Museums (noted above) provided an important conduit to a non-academic audience, as does Mclvor's work as Director of the Scottish Oral History Centre. The AHRC KTF incorporated auditing and supervising the digitising of existing collections (notably *Glasgow 2000 Lives*), training curators, undertaking new interviews and promoting oral history in the public domain, and with contributions made to several exhibitions, projects and publications (Source 6; Source 7).

Types of impact: The body of research on miners' respiratory diseases and asbestos-related diseases and disability, using an oral history methodology has specifically contributed to:

- occupational health policy debates at international level,
- raising awareness in Scotland and contributing to legislative change, care practices and campaigns to improve health and safety in the contemporary workplace,
- widening public understanding of the connections between work processes, employment environments and well-being, and growing oral history within museums, the heritage sector

and the local community

1. Impact on international debate and awareness: Mclvor acted as an adviser to and speaker for the International Ban Asbestos Secretariat (IBAS), drawing upon the asbestos oral history research to provide presentations. For example, on 28 March 2009 IBAS (Japan) held its annual meeting in Tokyo. Throughout the day, a panel of Japanese victims and experts detailed the current situation and discussed strategies for achieving the provision of free medical treatment and equitable compensation for all asbestos victims and the asbestos decontamination of the built and natural environment in Japan (Source 2). Mclvor addressed the meeting and spoke of the human tragedy of the “innocent victims” (of asbestos contamination). A feature on the underpinning research has been permanently on the IBAS website for the past decade. The IBAS Coordinator (Source 1) has said: “*There is absolutely no question in my mind of how your research has impacted on the global campaign to ban asbestos and achieve justice for victims. ... Your help with the Queen Mary case was pivotal in getting justice for the California victim*”. The latter refers to Mclvor’s role in research and the provision of witnesses from oral history interviewees who worked on the construction of the ship, The Queen Mary, in compensation litigation.

Coal miners’ respiratory diseases (as well as accidents) are currently at epidemic proportions in China. A consultant to the ongoing EU-China Safety Co-operation Programme (and former Energy Adviser to the ETUC and TUC) has said: “*The book [Miners’ Lung]...has encouraged us to move ahead and organise international research/action on pneumoconiosis and other miners’ lung diseases. I asked the Chinese government to invite an international team of specialists to China to visit the miners’ hospitals there*” (Source 3).

2. Influence on health care: The research has also been influential in developing therapy and palliative caring practice in relation to asbestos related diseases (ARDs). Dr Helen Clayson, MD (an asbestos campaigner and previously cancer hospice manager), has testified that: “*Professor Mclvor’s work is widely read amongst UK asbestos victim support groups and by researchers and campaigners worldwide. He continues to support research into asbestos-related conditions and to make serious occupational diseases more visible through exposure of the experience of affected individuals and communities. He is an adviser to my current project in Mumbai and Ahmedabad that aims to deliver self-help low-tech, low-cost, palliative interventions to very disadvantaged former asbestos industry workers.*” (Source 4).

3. Legislation, compensation and raising awareness in Scotland: *Lethal Work* and subsequent research publications on asbestos were also influential in raising awareness amongst Scottish voluntary agencies and Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) of the extent and the effects of ARD disability on peoples’ lives. This contributed to a more progressive compensation welfare regime in Scotland than in England, for instance with the statutory recognition in Scotland in 2010 of pleural plaques as an ARD. Scotland is the first country in the world to do this. MSPs and ex-MSPs, such as Rt Hon Lord McFall, MP, and the MP for Clydebanks (Source 5) have testified to the importance of our *Lethal Work* book in influencing campaigning in relation to the latter as has the Welfare Rights Officer at Clydeside Action on Asbestos (Source 6) who has said of *Lethal Work*: “*No other book or piece of research has had such fundamental effect on our thinking. It made an important contribution, in particular, to the passage of the Damages (Asbestos Related Conditions, Scotland) Act 2009 which radically improved the welfare compensation rights of asbestos disease victims in this country*” Our work is cited on the websites of the main asbestos campaigning groups (Source 2).

4. Contribution to heritage: The research has also made a contribution to sustainable public and community heritage. Research findings, including oral interview extracts from both *Lethal Work* and *Miners’ Lung*, have been featured in a number of public forums, popular magazine articles and other media. For example, the riverside public display boards at the Science Museum, Glasgow and the public exhibition on occupational health organised by the Centre for the Social History of Health and Healthcare at Summerlee Museum, Coatbridge, for the ESRC Festival of Social Science in Nov. 2012. Summerlee Museum had 3,627 visitors during the time when the exhibition was on show. Mclvor brought the archive of the UK’s leading asbestos victims’ pressure group (the

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Occupational and Environmental Diseases' Association, 1979-2009) to the University Archives in 2009, and this has attracted significant interest from outside the institution from researchers, the media and advocacy groups (with 161 archive visits to July 2013). This complements the interviews accumulated from the research, available for public access through the archive of the SOHC. The new SOHC facilities at the University, opened in Sept 2012, have facilitated public access, and made a significant contribution to raising awareness of the importance of memory / oral history in museums and public heritage, growing the public stock of archived recorded oral history interviews in Scotland (Source 7).

5. Consultancy and training: Mclvor's research experience has directly benefitted the community via advice and guidance services, public talks, formal and informal training, CPD, consultancy and project management activities through the Scottish Oral History Centre (SOHC). The evocative workers' interviews undertaken in the research provided an array of specific examples of interview dynamics, intersubjectivity, memory 'framing', narrative construction and story-telling which have wider implications for the practice of oral history within the community. Mclvor's public impact here includes training for 14 Heritage Lottery Fund supported local groups since Jan 2008, such as the Rainbow Lives Group in Kirkcaldy, the Scottish Council on Deafness (Source 8) and the Govanhill Peoples History Project, as well as Glasgow Museums (Source 9). The SOHC Archive (comprising several hundred oral interviews, including those relating to occupational disease) is used by the wider public, researchers, journalists and the media. The underpinning research interviews have been used, for example, by the writer Piers Dudgeon for a book on Glasgow and for research on Scottish dialects (Source 10). Mclvor has been involved in the oral history training of more than 240 non-academic individuals representing 32 different groups and organisations through the auspices of the SOHC over 2008-2013 and public interest continues to rise on a year-on-year basis.

In sum, this research has been important in terms of reach and significance in raising awareness, contributing to campaigns and policies promoting occupational health and has had a series of notable impacts in the heritage sector, museums and the local community.

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

1. Statement from Coordinator, International Ban Asbestos Secretariat (IBAS) and member House of Commons Select Committee on Asbestos, supports the claim of international debate.
2. Campaigning group website which refer to 'Lethal Work'
http://www.ibasecretariat.org/lka_jap_asb_prot_0409.php.
3. Statement from Consultant for EU-China Mine Safety Cooperation since 2007 and Energy Adviser for TUC and European TUC since 2003 supports impact in China.
4. Statement from Helen Clayson, MD, ex- cancer hospice manager and Adviser for IBAS supports influence on palliative care.
5. Statement from Des McNulty, ex-Member Scottish Parliament representing Clydebank supports influence on Scottish campaigns and legislation.
6. Statement from Phyllis Craig, MBE, Welfare Rights Officer, Clydeside Action on Asbestos supports influence on Scottish campaigns and legislation
7. <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/News-and-Events/Features/Pages/Glasgow-Memories.aspx>
Project to digitise the oral history collection currently held by Glasgow Museums and make them publicly accessible
8. http://www.scod.org.uk/What_training_have_we_had-i-234.html
9. <http://www.hlf.org.uk/news/Pages/Govan.aspx>
10. <http://soundsofthecity.arts.gla.ac.uk>.

Sources 8 – 10 support claims of training and public use of oral history archives