

<p>Institution: Nottingham Trent University</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: D30 History</p>
<p>a. Context: Extending the reach of our research to a broader, and increasingly diverse, audience is central to the Unit's strategy. It is embedded within three key activity portfolios:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre for Museum and Heritage Management (CMHM): This practitioner-led centre (est. 2002) operates at the forefront in developing cutting-edge exhibition interpretation that enhances audience access and community engagement for major national, regional and local clients including the National Trust, and Nottingham and Leicester City Councils. • Public History: As one of the first in the UK HE sector (in 2006) to adopt an integral public history agenda to bridge the divide between the academy and general public, the Unit continues to develop areas such as memory studies, democracy awareness and community history, and the use of 'virtual' interactivity. • External interventions: The unit engages in a diverse range of external interventions that have impact by informing and shaping external opinion. It operates through many routes, including talks, papers, consultancy, news media, broadcasts and displays.
<p>b. Approach to impact: While unit members previously had individual impact agendas, these existed outside of a coherent collective strategy. For most, impact was a by-product of pure research, rather than a goal in its own right. The exceptions, again, were those working in the museums sector, where the external end user was always the primary target. Since RAE 2008, the Unit's overall approach has changed significantly. Now working within a supportive university, college and school structure (NTU Strategic Plan 2012-15), the Unit has since 2009/10 developed a coherent framework to enhance individual and group activities based on the following three point strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Working with existing research projects:</i> the Unit has reviewed developmentally existing outputs and expertise to identify potential external non-academic end-users. Re-evaluation, for example, has seen Inkster's longstanding work on patents incorporated into the AHRC's Science and Heritage programme, working with a local Leavers manufacturer, Nottingham City museums, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and NTU's College of Art and Design, to develop computer graphic displays demonstrating the workings of jacquard lace machinery, bringing visual simplicity to an otherwise complex industrial process. Hayes, supported by the Marc Fitch fund, is developing an interactive web-based presence using his work on elites and civil society. The site is designed to be used by both academic and non-academic users, history groups and libraries. It will be fully searchable and capable of being added to externally, tapping into the wealth of knowledge embedded within local communities. • <i>Opening Up New Initiatives:</i> the search for new external partners and audiences is seen to be critically important. The Unit committed 10 % of its QR income annually to meet start-up costs, and domestic and overseas travel/accommodation, to facilitate impact diffusion - for example, Black, keynote, 'Target groups for art and cultural education in the digital era', European Foundation, Berlin (Nov. 2011) - with a further £7,500 and £10,000 being set aside 2011-12 and 2012-13 respectively to fund other targeted new initiatives: noticeably to pump-prime its collaboration with regional museums under the Arts Council England (ACE) 'Innovation in Museums' initiative'. One direct consequence of the past on-going process of review has been to raise awareness amongst all Unit members of the importance of external communication and of locating new audiences. Quite simply, the Unit is doing more media work than it used to (working closely with NTU's Press Office), more public speaking and more external out-reach work. • <i>Developing New Vistas:</i> moving from the specifics to a more general refashioning of attitudes of mind, the Unit is actively seeking to provide new opportunities for external engagement, seeing this as a starting point for future research activity. The Unit has recently agreed with local media

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outlets, Notts TV and the Nottingham Post, to provide slots by its staff to reach out regularly to new, larger non-academic audiences. Morton, aided by NTU's Development Office, took his knowledge of military history to Warlord Games, producing a war-gaming manual for its product *Hail Caesar*. Hodgson similarly acted as a historical consultant for designer John Streets to develop a game entitled 'Bezant'.

Practical examples of how this approach plays out through the three strands of activity introduced in Section (a) are:

- **Centre for Museum and Heritage Management:** Building on its own theoretical/empirical case study nexus, and its intimate knowledge of sector policy, and working in partnership with Renaissance East Midlands and the East Midlands Museum Service, the Centre has developed diverse professional programmes and training projects, visitor surveys, project evaluation and curatorial consultation across the public and independent sectors (National Trust Hardwick Hall, 2008, 2011; Erewash Museum 2011; Sudbury Hall and Kedleston Hall, 2012; NTU ProCert Heritage Tourism 2010/11). Keynote addresses to practitioner audiences include: Black, 'Re-inventing the museum experience for the 21st century', UK Association of Independent Museums (June, 2012); Burch, 'People's Art for The People's Panel', Nottingham Museums Service Consultative Group (Feb 2012). The recent award of £105,000 by ACE to the CMHM is testament to the latter's success in developing community audience engagement strategies, in this case working with smaller museums.
- **Public History:** Niven, in particular, has been active in key interpretative areas like memorialisation, memory studies and national story-telling. His book, *The Buchenwald Child*, instigated a major public re-evaluation within the recently re-united Germany into how constructed memories determined political and popular landscapes. Republished by the German Federal Centre for Political Education, which supports interventions likely to stimulate democratic awareness and political participation, it later provided the basis for a documentary film (dir. Ute Gebhardt) shown on Germany's main television channel ARD in 2010. Examples of interventions that increased community history resources and interaction range from: Bennett, Naseby Battlefield Project: Restricted Sight Tour, vocals (2008), to Burch, 'Archives, Assets and Audiences' (2013, AHRC: Creative Economy Knowledge Exchange), a collaborative award between local universities and a matrix of external partners (British Film Institute, local authority museum services and archives services, National Trust), to facilitate 'virtual' interactivity between archives, the creative industries and public audiences.
- **External interventions:** Members regularly project historical perspectives onto contemporary issues. Hayes has given talks on NHS health reform and past provision to medics and health professionals at Worcester Infirmary, Sept. 2012 and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, January, 2013 (<https://soundcloud.com/lshmt/did-we-really-want-a-national>). His comparative study 'Health Reforms, Opinion Polls and Surveys: Myths and Realities, Pasts and Present', working in conjunction with pollsters Ipsos Mori, was published in *History and Policy*, November 2013 (<http://www.historyandpolicy.org/papers/policy-paper-149.html>) and offered as evidence to the *People's Enquiry for London's NHS* (<http://www.peoplesinquiry.org/index.php>). Inkster has long written a monthly paid column in the *Taipei Times* (largest English-language newspaper circulating in South China), commenting on history, economics and current affairs, and has offered many major keynote address to 'non-academic' audiences e.g. to the European Space Agency, Advanced Concepts Team, on 'Technological dynamics in world history', Noorwijk Jan. 2008 and 'Education, Attitudes and the Armed Forces: A Cultural and Comparative Historical Analysis', Chinese Military College, Kaohsiung County, April 2009. We have also created numbers of cultural products through media outlets: Hodgson: C4 *Christianity A History*, Feb 2009; Bennett: *The Great British Story* (BBC 2 July, 2012), *History Cold Case* (BBC 2, July 2012). Public talks are central to our dissemination ethos: from numerous lectures to local history groups, to forms of general public display (Burch: Antony Gormley's Fourth Plinth Art Project, Sky TV, Trafalgar Sq, Aug. 2009 <http://www.stuartburch.com/06-talks.html>) and Hayes on the arts, media and conflict to Afghani and other community groups, May 2013 (<http://thenewartexchange.org.uk/children-in-wartime/>). Members, including those outside CMHM, serve as advisers/trustees/consultants to numerous national and local institutions: e.g. Morton: Malt Cross Restoration (ex music

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hall/Carmelite monastery) (from March 2012); Hodson, curriculum development at the International School in Geneva on the Crusades in its new Medieval History Bacculaureate (2010-2011).

c. Strategy and plans: The Unit has in place a comprehensive review policy for all new and existing research proposals, where members are asked to identify potential external impacts within their annual research review. Yet it is also acutely aware that identification, in itself, is only the first step to its central objective of expanding future external penetration in its search to find new audiences. It has, therefore, decided on the following layered stratagems to drive forward the diffusion of research into the broader community, building on the data already collected.

- *Core research:* It is accepted that capturing new publics will rarely act as the primary driver in determining choice or method of research. Nor would we want this to alter radically. Nonetheless the subsequent targeted diffusion of such outcomes can be strategically managed, often in minor, cumulative ways, to provide significant improvements in external engagement. The Unit is currently ratifying the networking arrangements through which this can be achieved (e.g. by talking directly to media outlets), by supporting staff networking opportunities financially and by a mentoring programme of experienced, successful senior to junior staff, thereby ensuring particularly that ECRs are firmly embedded within this diffusion paradigm.

- *Impact Scoping:* Yet, progressively, activity needs to cluster beyond the public environments of communication into those more clearly 'shaping and informing public attitudes and values', reaching out to specific end users. The Unit is fortunate in already having several leading practitioners with a proven track record, upon whose expertise it can draw in terms of developing individual and joint strategies. The University and School of Arts and Humanities, where the Unit resides, are also fully committed to underpinning this activity. The Unit has an increased targeted commitment of 25% of its future REF earnings being ring-fenced to supporting directly staff activity (including training where necessary: e.g. media) and to expanding material/virtual structures enabling knowledge transfer and diffusion to external partners and audiences. Applicants for funding are expected to identify clearly the pathways and impacts to be achieved. It is recognised, too, that a greater emphasis needs to be placed in securing external income, both directly from the funding councils and other external agencies, to help develop this pathway.

- *Ambition:* consequential to this, the Unit has set a target that, overall, half of all its future research projects will have at least one linked, measurable, non-academic impact over the next REF cycle. This is a figure already easily exceeded in the Heritage and Museums sub-section. It is particularly important, though more problematic, to establish impact conduits directly to policy formers. Contributions, for example, to fora like *History and Policy*, act as enablers, as will the Unit's enhanced external press work. But the key here is substantive, rather than aesthetic. It centres on project design, the control of which, if managed successfully, will drive forward a new impact agenda. It is accepted that this will be easier for some than others. Nonetheless, the ambition is to embed an impact mentality across the whole Unit rather than just in particular areas.

d. Relationship to case studies: The two case studies selected capture the range of the Unit's existing impact activity and its applied operation, although each has its origins in very different approaches. For the Unit's Museum and Heritage practitioners (represented by Black), the end research product routinely lies, as it has always done, beyond the university system: as display, design, preservation, audience, philosophical diffusion. Here the end impact is the intellectual starting point i.e. how to improve knowledge transfer, best display collections to a budget, and stimulate debate on future best practice. Niven's focus on popular and political representation, by contrast, derives from a more traditional academic focus of open enquiry. Nonetheless, the international impact that sprang from this addressed key questions of policy formation, identification through media constructs and political process. In both cases localised institutional support was instrumental in facilitating open engagement with external agencies: providing both physical and virtual structures to enable better external communication; by consciously supported the projects financially through the research budgets; and by operating a flexible approach to timetabling and cover by colleagues because they recognised the importance of the work.