

Institute of Humanities & Creative Arts: Research & Knowledge Transfer Report 2007/08

Overview

2007/08 was, inevitably, dominated by preparation for RAE 2008, which provided occasion for reflection upon, and analysis of, research achievements since 2001 and the existing strengths and weaknesses of IHCA's research base. Of the four UoAs, to which UW elected to submit, two (57 and 62) focussed upon work generated by staff attached to IHCA*. Outputs from 5 staff (4.5FTEs) were submitted to History (UoA 62), 4 of whom were attached to the Institute; seven of nine staff submitting outputs to English Language & Literature (UoA 57) were attached to the Institute, teaching and researching in and across its English, Media & Cultural Studies, Sociology and Drama departments. Both English and History had been casualties of HEFCE's revised research funding methodology in the wake of RAE2001 (resulting in 3-rated departments being unexpectedly excluded); Drama, on the other hand (rated 3a at RAE2001), had benefitted from New Capability funding. The number of staff in a position to submit outputs to RAE2008 was thus testament to the University's continuing commitment to research, in the face of minimal RAE funding. The decision to submit outputs generated by staff across a broad range of its subjects to a single UoA (57) exemplified growing, discursive research synergies emerging across the Institute.

RAE preparations aside, 2007/08 saw publication of a number of important outputs from individual researchers in IHCA, further development of the Institute's research infrastructure, continuation of its successful monthly research seminars, completion of Dr Pearson's AHRC-funded research project to digitise Lacy's Acting Edition of Victorian Plays, publication and distribution of Issue 5 of the *Worcester Papers in English & Cultural Studies* (eds Dr Mueller and Prof Webb), commencement of a number of new research and knowledge transfer projects, new academic appointments, and continuation and growth of doctoral research, including that undertaken by members of staff, several of whom completed during the year.

Staff Publication

Staff continued to disseminate the outputs of their research through conference papers and presentations, journal articles, book chapters, edited and sole authored books, and performances and exhibitions. A full list is attached at Appendix A. Highlights included publication of Dr Arnold's *Poetry and Language Writing: Objective and Surreal* (Liverpool University Press), which was selected by the University of Chicago Press as one of the highlights of the Fall 07 list. Prof Webb edited and contributed a chapter and introduction to 'A Noble Unrest'. *Contemporary Essays on the Work of George MacDonald* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing). Dr How's *The Text, The Author and the Canon: Gadamer and the Persistence of Classic Texts in Sociology* was published in the *Journal of Classical Sociology* (Vol 7: 1); Prof Pearson contributed a chapter, 'Twin Sisters' and 'Theatrical Wives': *Wilkie Collins and the Dramatic Adaptation of 'The Moonstone'* to A Mangham (ed) *Wilkie Collins: Interdisciplinary Essays* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing); Dr Hardy's chapter *Anal sex: phallic and other meanings* was included in Steven Seidman, Nancy Fischer, and Chet Meeks (eds) *Introducing the New Sexuality Studies* (Routledge); Dr McNally's essay *Rural Protest and 'Moral Economy': the Rightboy Disturbances and Parliament* was commissioned for A Blackstock and E Magennise (eds) *Politics and Political Culture in Britain and Ireland 1750-1850: Essays in Tribute to Peter Jupp* (Ulster Historical Foundation); Dr Oldridge contributed a chapter, *Casting the Spell of Terror: The Press and the Early Whitechapel Murders* to A Warwick and M Willis (eds) *Jack the Ripper: Media, Culture, History* (Manchester University Press); Dr Cinpoes contributed a chapter on *Stillness in 'Hamlet'* to M Gibińska and A

* Outputs for UoA 62 were also submitted by Prof Cox of the Business School, and for UoA 57 by Prof Elkin, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Rachel Johnson, Research Collections Librarian.

Romanowska (eds) *Shakespeare in Europe: History and Memory* (Krakow: Jagiellonian University Press); James Fisher exhibited work in two exhibitions - *Enchanted* and *Baroque* – at the Eagle Gallery, London; Dr Key exhibited work in *Digitalis*, Sekler National Museum, Sfantu-Gheorghe, Romania; Dr Koven's book *Film, Folklore and Urban Legends* was published by Scarecrow Press.

Development of Research Infrastructure and Culture

An Early Researchers Group was established under the leadership of Dr Mueller, with the intention of providing a support structure for young and emerging researchers within the Institute. The Group made a promising start in encouraging growth in the numbers of staff actively engaged in research and publishing outcomes.

A multi-disciplinary Early Modern Research Group was established under the leadership of Drs Cinpoes and Mueller, with Dr Cinpoes undertaking initial research to position the work of the Group within wider national and international academic contexts. By the year end, Dr Cinpoes and Dr Mueller had identified discrete research strands to provide the focus of development in future years (including development of research drawing on the history, culture and archival resources of the University's regional context of Worcestershire, Herefordshire and the wider West Midlands). The Group extended invitations to local researchers who were not affiliated to the University to participate in some of its early meetings and, in support of wider local history research in Worcester, subsequently arranged for the Chair of the Battle of Worcester Society to be provided with a reader's ticket for the University library. A variety of organisational and administrative tasks were completed to prepare for growth of activity from 2008/09.

IHCA's research sub-committee met three times during the year. Chaired by Dr How, its membership comprised: Profs Pearson and Webb, Drs Neale, Cochran, Bulley, Koven and Kowalski, and Pippa Galpin, Martin Woodford and James Fisher.

Two members of staff continued to assume responsibility for Institute research co-ordination: Dr Cochran lead on Drama, English, Media & Cultural Studies and Art, Design & Creative Digital Media, and Dr How on History and Sociology.

Co-ordinated and organised by Dr How, IHCA held ten research seminars during the year, eight of which were delivered by staff of the Institute: Dr Oldridge – *Mother Shipton and the Devil*, Prof Ebbatson – *Prophetic Landscapes: Hardy, Jeffries, Trakl*, Dr Nyabuga – *Media Corporatism: Whither Journalistic Values?*, Anton Polan – *Authority and Disaffection in the Secondary School: Some Considerations from Political Sociology*, Sarah Key – *Grids: Painting in Dialogue with the Digital*, Dr Mitra – *Pink and Blue Advertising: Gender Roles and Children*, Julie Maclusky – *Creative Writing: Why Do It? Can It Be Taught?*, Dr Neale – *Toppling Towers: A Consideration of Breughel's Paintings of the Tower of Babel*. Two external speakers also contributed: Prof John Schad of Lancaster University – *Si puer vivet: Derrida my father* and Prof John Hillman of Trent University, Ontario – *"Markets Good, Government Interventions Bad." Economists, Ideologies and the International Tin Cartel 1931-1941*.

As in previous years, the annual Women's History Network (Midlands Region) conference, organised by Sue Johnson and attracting some 40 delegates, was held at the University in May.

Completion of Prof Pearson's AHRC-funded Research

Prof Pearson's AHRC Resource Enhancement grant had enabled Phase Two of *The Victorian Plays Project: Lacy's Acting Edition of Victorian Plays (1848-1874)*. This four-year project, begun in 2003, was directed by Dr Pearson with input from UW postdoctoral researcher, Dr Kate Mattacks. It involved compilation of a catalogue to provide a volume-by-volume listing of the contents of Lacy's Acting Edition of Plays (a complete run of which is held by Birmingham Central Library) and, in Phase Two, digitisation of a number of important plays and examples of genres included in the edition. Dr Mattacks' work on the project

supported her subsequent appointment as a contract researcher at Royal Holloway, from which she has since gone on to gain a permanent academic appointment at UWE.

Worcester Papers in English & Cultural Studies

The editors describe *Worcester Papers in English & Cultural Studies* as being “devoted to research in both English and Cultural Studies in their broadest contemporary meanings” offering “a forum for work arising from concerns which may be scholarly, theoretical, or pedagogical. It will also include work which engages with the status and nature of English and Cultural Studies. Although the journal’s aim is to publish finished papers, it also gives space to shorter pieces which may prompt research or correspondence.” Issue 5 contained four essays, two from UW researchers (Prof Webb and Research Librarian Rachel Johnson) and two from researchers in other institutions (Dr Stephanie Schwerter, University of Ulster and Dr Elizabeth Woodward Smith, University of La Coruña). *Worcester Papers* is distributed by the Institute to colleagues internationally.

Commencement of New Research and Knowledge Transfer Projects and work in progress

Dr Cochrane continued with the writing of her book, *Twentieth Century British Theatres* to be published by Cambridge University Press and now scheduled for completion in Summer 2009.

Dr How continued with the writing of his book, *Recovering Sociology’s Classic Texts* to be published by Palgrave/Macmillan, now scheduled for submission to the publishers in Summer 2009.

Dr Mueller began University Research Study Leave to complete his monograph, *Pardon the Poet: A Critical Study of Daniel Defoe’s Poetry* (working title), to be published by the Edwin Mellen Press and due for submission to the publishers in March 2009. He also began working with Dr Aino Makikali to edit a collection of essays on Defoe (including an essay by him), with the working title *Form, Function, Genre: Positioning Daniel Defoe’s Non-Fiction*, contracted to Cambridge Scholars Publishing for submission in September 2009.

Paul Snookes, Language Centre Manager, was awarded a UW First Stage Knowledge Transfer Grant to develop his proposal for a Blended Learning Language Consortium in partnership with a number of other UK universities. Success of this initial phase of development has subsequently led to his achievement of a Stage Two Grant to pilot the project.

Paul Hazel continued his knowledge transfer work with Cambridge University on the University’s Microsoft Research-funded project to develop *The Plants of Darwin’s Beagle Voyage* web resource, to be launched in 2009.

Andy Stevenson’s completion of his MA in August 2008 (see below), concerned with multimedia mapping and psycho-geography, involved a project with Worcester City Council’s Landscape Architects to develop the *Worcester Riverside Emotimap*. This formed the basis for development of subsequent research and knowledge transfer work with the Council on public consultation, as well as with South Worcestershire Schools. Andy is now working closely with the University’s Business Development Unit and the City Council’s Planning Department on ‘product development’.

Changes to Academic Staff

Dr Mikel Koven joined UW in September 2007, as Course Leader for Film Studies. Dr Koven works primarily in the areas of Folklore and Film and in Cult and Exploitation Cinema and also holds research interests in representations of the Holocaust in Film and TV, and in American Television Studies. He has published *Blaxploitation Cinema* (2001), *La Dolce Morte: Vernacular Cinema and the Italian Giallo Film* (2006) and *Film, Folklore and Urban Legends*

(2007). He co-edited, with Sharon Sherman, a special issue of *Western Folklore* on "Folklore & Film" (2005) and *Folklore/Cinema: Popular Film as Vernacular Entertainment* (2007); he also edited a special issue of *Shofar* titled "Cool Jewz: Contemporary Jewish Identity in Popular Culture" (2007).

Dr Nicoleta Cinpoes joined UW as a Lecturer in English, from her former post at the University of Warwick. Dr Cinpoes's research focuses on: Shakespeare (performed, edited, filmed, adapted, translated, recycled), Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, performance hermeneutics and audience studies, European and Foreign Shakespeares, early Modern e-resources, and documentation and archiving of performance. She has published on contemporary productions of Shakespeare, translations of Hamlet, Bond's and Wesker's recyclings of Shakespeare, and audience studies, and is currently completing a monograph, *As a Stranger Give it Welcome: Romania's Hamlet 1808-2008* for publication by The Edwin Mellen Press.

Dr George Nyabuga, Course Leader for Journalism, who gained his PhD from Coventry University during the year, completed his three-year contract with the University.

Prof Richard Pearson resigned his post as Head of IHCA to pursue new opportunities from a base in Ireland. During his leadership of the Institute, Prof Pearson played a key and much valued role in developing its research profile and in sustaining its commitment to research and the research activity of staff.

Doctoral Research

Three new students enrolled for MPhil/PhD study during the year (Corinna Haycox, Dennis Lee and Peter Rose) and one directly for PhD study (Fawzia Gilani-Williams). Corinna Haycox is a full-time, bursaried student supported through RAE New Capability funding. A second full-time student, Sharon Young, successfully negotiated the RDB1 approval process to achieve formal registration of her research.

Paola Botham, also a New Capability-funded, bursaried student, was at the writing up stage of her project and achieved early dissemination of some of the outcomes of her research when her article *From deconstruction to reconstruction: A Habermasian framework for contemporary political theatre* was accepted for publication in *Contemporary Theatre Review* (Vol 18, no 3, August 2008).

17 PGRs with IHCA-based Directors of Studies were new or continuing enrolments during 2007/08; 10 IHCA staff were acting in the role of Director of Studies; a further three were contributing to supervision teams.

One student, Denise Mylechreest (DoS: Dr McNally), completed her project *A Singular Liberal: Richard Robert Fairbairn and Worcester Politics 1899-194* and was awarded her MPhil.

Eight members of IHCA staff were, themselves, undertaking doctoral research during the year (see below).

University/Institute Support for IHCA Research

IHCA supported researchers in a variety of ways, primarily through remission from teaching and meeting the costs of conference attendance (documented in Appendix C), but also through payment of some MA/PhD fees. The availability of RAE New Capability funding considerably enhanced resources available for these purposes.

As part of a reorientation of her research interests, Dr Neale (English) was supported to undertake an MA in the History of Art with the Open University. Her dissertation (*The Paintings of the 'Months' by Pieter Breughel the Elder: An Exploration and Appraisal of Some Critical Approaches*) was nominated for the Association of Art Historian's MA Dissertation Prize 2008-2009, awarded in association with Thames & Hudson.

Pippa Galpin (Fine Art/Ceramics) was supported to undertake postgraduate study at Bath Spa University; she achieved an MA (with distinction) in Design in January 2008. Andy Stevenson (Creative Digital Media) was supported to undertake an MA at Coventry University, which he was awarded in August 2008.

Elizabeth Swift, Jane George, David Broster and Stuart Currie in Drama were all supported to continue their PhD research registered, respectively, with Exeter University, the University of Winchester, the University of Reading and the University of Worcester. Jane George subsequently successfully submitted her thesis for examination.

In Art, Design and Creative Digital Media, David James (Digital Media) was in the early stages of his doctoral research, registered with the University of the West of England; James Fisher (Fine Art), registered with the University of Gloucester, had commenced writing up by the year end and Sarah Key (Fine Art), registered with Loughborough University, submitted and was subsequently awarded her PhD.

George Nyabuga (Journalism) submitted his doctoral research, registered with Coventry University, and was awarded his PhD.

Dr Cochrane was provided with teaching remission to continue work on her book, *Twentieth Century British Theatres* (see above); Dr Leighton was supported to work on an article for RIDE (Research in Drama & Education) which was submitted for publication during the year; Jane George was provided with funding to support development of her *The Ten Thousand Things* performance project for which she had already won an Arts Council England Grants for the Arts award and which was presented as work-in-progress at Pegasus Theatre, Oxford.

Dedicated, secretarial project support was appointed to work with Prof Pearson on preparing a collected edition of the plays of Wilkie Collins.

Dr How was provided with teaching remission to continue work on his book, *Recovering Sociology's Classic Texts* (see above).

Staff contributions to the National/International Research Infrastructure

A number of staff contributed to editorial boards and peer review related to their subjects (see Appendix B). In addition, Dr Koven continued his editorship of the peer reviewed journal, *Contemporary Legend*. Several staff acted as external examiners for PhDs including Dr McNally's examination of a European Doctorate awarded by the University of La Coruña.

International Centre for Research in Children's Literature, Literacy & Creativity (ICRCLLC)

Co-directed by Prof Webb of IHCA and Dr Cox of IES, the Centre is attached to IHCA but works closely with IES. Its activity and achievements are detailed in a separate annual report written by Prof Webb and provided as Appendix D.

Associates and Visitors

Prof Roger Ebbatson continued his informal association with research in English, and was a regular and much-valued presence within IHCA throughout the year.

Numerous visiting academics and researcher-practitioners added to the richness of the Institute's academic and research culture, some of whom are named elsewhere in this report. In addition, nationally acclaimed theatre company C&T continued to be based on-campus, with Honorary Research Associate, Paul Sutton (C&T's founder and Artistic Director) contributing to postgraduate teaching and research enquiry within Drama. Highlights of C&T's own year included its growing, national network of long-term partner schools, its collaboration with Arts & Business on an Arts Council England-funded project to encourage 18-25 year olds

to join the Boards of arts organisations, its pilot project as part of ACE's national *Young People's Participatory Theatre* scheme, and its launch of *candtnetwork.org* to provide an online environment for pupils of its partner schools to create and share drama and new media work online. C&T's *Epiphany Virus* online music and drama project formed the subject of a workshop at the 6th *International Drama and Education World Congress* held in Hong Kong. Paul Sutton's chapter on *Epiphany Virus* was published in *Teaching Drama with Digital Technologies: applying theatre, drama and technology to learning* John Carroll, D Cameron, M Anderson (eds) (John Forrest SHS: Western Australia).

Prof Antonia Payne
December 2008