

Institution: Arts University Bournemouth		
Unit of Assessment: D33 Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies		
Title of case study: Addressing bullying and harassment in the media, arts and entertainment industries		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: September to November 2013		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Cathy John	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Senior Lecturer, BA (Hons) Creative Events Management	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: September 2013-Present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: November 2013 to date		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Cathy John's research found that bullying and harassment were endemic within the media, arts and entertainment industries. This research, conducted prior to the revelations of the #metoo movement in the entertainment world, put a spotlight on the sector in a field where historically there was little scrutiny. Highlighting the extent and types of abuse prevalent, the research detailed five key recommendations which were adopted by the Federation of Entertainment Unions (FEU). The report was a catalyst for change, leading to union campaigns supporting respect at work and improved employer policies for dealing with unreasonable behaviour. Critically, the BBC and ITV amongst others, took the advice of the research and included freelance workers in their new bullying policies, this led directly to the BBC's dismissal of freelancer Jeremy Clarkson who was found to have breached them. The report also had broader implications for people working in other sectors with similar stress factors such as deadline orientated, high-pressure working environments.</p>		
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Cathy was commissioned by the Federation of Entertainment Unions (FEU), which for this research represented workers in TV, theatre, film, music, writing, visual effects, newspaper and other performing arts areas, to undertake research into bullying and harassment in these sectors of the media, arts and entertainment industries</p> <p>Cathy undertook quantitative and qualitative analysis of responses to a survey sent to the membership of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ), Broadcasting Entertainment Cinematograph and Theatre Union (BECTU), WGGB -The Writers' Union, Equity and the Musicians' Union. The survey attracted a significant response of over 4,104 replies. Cathy conducted follow up interviews with a smaller number of respondents from leading screenwriters and performers, to those at the beginning of their careers, whose stories were included in the final report anonymously.</p> <p>Cathy's analysis organised respondents' data into sectors: film, television, theatre, live performance (circus, dance, live music and variety), radio, local and national newspapers. Cathy then identified the prevalence and the attributes of the bullying in each sector. For example the intimate rehearsal and live performance environments of theatre, gave some</p>		

bullies or sexual predators license to perpetrate harassment. The data was also analysed according to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. The report evidenced research which had found workers with protected characteristics to be more vulnerable to harassment if they worked in a sector where bullying behaviours are tolerated. Sex, age, race, sexuality and religion all proved to make workers targets for ill-treatment.

Crucially the report concluded that the media, arts and entertainment industries were a “hotspot” for unreasonable treatment at work due to three contributing factors: the job instability of freelance culture, high pressure, deadline-centric workplaces and a general tolerance of bullying, exacerbated by a culture of silence around unreasonable behaviour.

The prevalence of freelance work in the industries (two-thirds of survey respondents were freelance), contributed significantly to the creation of this ‘hotspot’. The research found freelancers less likely to report ill-treatment, due to not being covered by employers’ bullying and harassment policies and fears of jeopardising future work.

The findings were detailed in a 28-page report published in November 2013, which clarified definitions for bullying, harassment and discrimination and provided key recommendations. The recommendations asserted that employers improve policies for dealing with bullying and harassment, that support should be extended by employers to freelance workers, and that campaigns promoting respect at work and telephone support lines regarding these issues should be opened. The report was endorsed by the five general secretaries of unions represented by the FEU.

Cathy presented her findings at RADA, at the FEU’s conference *Creating without conflict* (CWC) held in November 2013 which focused on this issue and was open to the membership of all five unions. The research was developed into a chapter in *The handbook of dealing with workplace bullying*, used by HR professionals and organisational leaders across a range of industries.

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

- John, C. (2013). *A Federation of Entertainment Unions’ report examining bullying, harassment and discrimination in the entertainment and media industries*. <http://writersguild.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/CWC-Report.pdf> [Available on request]
- Greenslade, R. (2013). *Bullying of staff in newspapers is a way of life – with a long history*. [online]. Available from www.theguardian.com/media/greenslade/2013/nov/19/bullying-newspapers [Accessed 9 July 2018] [Available on request].
- John, C. (2015). *Creating without conflict*. In Quigg, A. (ed) *The handbook of dealing with workplace bullying*. Farnham: Gower. [Returned to REF 2021].

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

Beneficiaries

The key beneficiaries of the report were workers in the media, arts and entertainment,

industries, who benefited from the opportunity to learn directly from the research, from campaigns based on the research from their unions and ultimately from having bullying policies instigated and reviewed in their places of work. These benefits have been building since November 2013.

This research was impactful instrumentally through providing large media and entertainment unions with evidence on endemic bullying and harassment in workplaces across these industries and in identifying its key causes. *The recommendations from the research shaped our FEU (Equity, NUJ, Musicians Union, BECTU and WGGB-The Writer's Union) campaign [Creating without conflict] against workplace conflict in the following years. (S4).*

This research was also impactful conceptually, in dispelling the myth of the media and entertainment industries as a glamorous working environment, one where 'talent', can expect superior privileges and treatment to other workers. This was achieved through media reports on the findings and one very high-profile news story as a result of instrumental change delivered by the research (S9).

The dissemination of the research was further enhanced by the publication of its findings in *The Handbook of Dealing with Workplace Bullying* (2015), as the book's editor Dr Anne-Marie Quigg states: *the inclusion of Cathy's recommendations from her research and the evidence of their impressive impacts as revealed in the Handbook, provided a number of excellent examples of how to effect real change within an industry to readers across the globe, including HR professionals, management consultants and organisational leaders and mentors. (S5).*

Workplace Policy Impact

The research and its key recommendations were all adopted by the FEU and informed an industry-wide *Code of Practice for Employers (S1)*. The FEU were then able to lobby employers (such as the BBC) and industry-bodies to adopt the Code. (S1).

The signatories of the Code of Conduct's pledged:

- To acknowledge a bullying and harassment problem throughout the media, arts and entertainment sector and work to make workplaces safe, positive environments.
- To provide training for managers and workers in dealing with unreasonable behaviours and education on awareness of bullying.
- To incorporate freelancers and casual workers under company bullying policies.
- Provide access to confidential bullying hotlines and counselling services
- To clarify formal and informal channels for reporting and resolving conflict.

Informed by the research, the CWC campaign prompted large media and arts organisations, including ITV (S2) and the RSC (S7) to revise and reinvigorate their bullying and harassment policies, creating a new emphasis on respect at work. The BBC put in place its new bullying and harassment policy in February 2015, and in light of the research's recommendations, the BBC's new bullying and harassment policy also incorporated freelancers (S2).

The research was instrumental in demonstrating that there was a problem with conflict in the workplace and in identifying its key causes. It highlighted the importance of the inclusion of freelancers in bullying and harassment policies to both protect them and take disciplinary action if they are perpetrators. This evidence was then utilised to get management bodies/employers in theatre, television and other sectors, to open up their existing bullying and harassment policies to freelancers. This inclusion of freelancers happened at the BBC, ITV and other employers. This was a direct recommendation of the 'Creating Without Conflict Report'. (S2).

The new policy was promptly put to the test in March 2015 when high-profile freelancer Jeremy Clarkson was reported to have made bullying remarks and been physically violent towards a BBC employee. As noted in *The Guardian* newspaper *Broadcasting and entertainment Unions had been pushing for the policy to protect freelancers working for the corporation. But it applied equally to potential abuses of the policy by freelancers, including stars such as Clarkson who are not BBC employees.* (S9) The then Assistant General Secretary of BECTU following the news of the Clarkson incident in March 2015 stated: *The CWC report and conference formed a backdrop to the ongoing discussions with the BBC over the [...] new policy on bullying and harassment. In a welcome development the BBC accepted the point made by the trade unions that the policy had to cover freelance workers as well as staff. The recent events at the BBC...[are] an acid test for the new policy and will show whether the BBC is serious about changing bullying culture, described in the Respect at Work Review and make the Corporation a better place to work or whether it is just window dressing.* (S3). Clarkson's contract was not renewed, and demonstrated a real change at the BBC *the decision at its most fundamental level makes it clear that all BBC staff and freelancers are equal in respect of BBC policy. The decision is one which puts dignity ahead of the bottom line and we welcome that.* (S6).

Using the evidence provided by the research, the FEU unions provided a series of conferences and training opportunities for creative companies and workers from 2013-2019. The November 2013 Conference launched the research's findings and provided union members with an opportunity to participate in smaller discussions on topics raised by the research. The 2016 employers' conference brought key organisations, such as the RSC, ITV, the BBC, Scottish Ballet, orchestras such as The Hallé, National Theatre and the English National Opera, together to share progress on changing workplace cultures to tackle bullying and harassment (S7). The 2019 conference was specifically focussed on making workplaces safe from sexual harassment (S8).

In conjunction with this, the CWC campaign sought to provide distressed workers with a confidential avenue through which to seek support and advice. Hence union support lines specifically for advice regarding unreasonable treatment at work were established, as well as a mental health and well-being support service set up by Equity (S4, S10).

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

- S1. FEU. (2014). *Code of conduct on bullying*. [Impact on workplace policy].
<https://www.nuj.org.uk/documents/feu-code-of-conduct-on-bullying/>
- S2. Testimonial from Deputy Secretary General WGGB-The Writers' Union. [Inclusion of freelancers in new bullying policies].
- S3. Quote regarding Clarkson/BBC Bullying policy, Assistant General Secretary, BECTU, 2015 [Changing bullying policies].
- S4. Testimonial from Equity. [Setting up of counselling and support services].
- S5. Testimonial from Editor *The handbook of dealing with workplace bullying*. [Examples of how to effect real change within the creative industries].
- S6. BECTU. (2015). *Clarkson departure appropriate. Stage, Screen and Radio. April/May 2015 Pg. 17*. [Inclusion of freelancers in bullying policies to enable action to be taken against perpetrators].
- S7. FEU. (2016). *Positive strategies for resolving conflict conference report*. [Training to change workplace cultures to tackle bullying and harassment].
<https://writersguild.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Positive-Strategies-for-Resolving-Conflict.pdf>
- S8. FEU. (2019). *Creating without conflict: from disbelief to dignity*. [Training to make workplaces safe from sexual harassment].
<https://writersguild.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/FEUDignity.pdf>
- S9. Doward, J., 'Jeremy Clarkson 'fracas' key test for BBC bullying rules in wake of Savile crisis, *The Guardian*, March 14, 2015. [Incorporating freelancers under company bullying policies].
<https://www.theguardian.com/media/2015/mar/14/jeremy-clarkson-row-test-bbc-bull-rules-savile-crisis>
- S10. Bullying and Harassment Helpline, Equity. [Provision of confidential bullying hotlines].
<https://www.equity.org.uk/at-work/bullying-harassment/>