

<b>Institution:</b> Bishop Grosseteste University (BGU)		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 27 – English Language and Literature		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Deeds and words: reclaiming women's lives and their legacy in Lincolnshire since 1862		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 01/02/2017 – 31/07/2020		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Dr Claudia Capancioni	Reader in English Literature and Programme Leader for English	14/01/2013 to date
Dr Andrew Jackson	Reader in History and Head of Research & Knowledge Exchange	01/09/2007 to date
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 01/09/2016 – 30/11/2019		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> No		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b>		
<p>A public engagement project through 2018-20 aimed to recover and reclaim narratives surrounding the transformative roles of women who lived in Lincolnshire from 1862 to the present, and their legacy. Deploying unique archival material relating to women's suffrage, the project achieved impact in the areas of '<b>creativity, culture and society</b>' and '<b>understanding, learning and participation</b>'. Collaboration with heritage professionals, and co-creation of a portfolio of public events (including exhibitions and performances) stimulated public interest in research on women's history, staged open events of commemoration, attracted under-participating audiences, shaped values and attitudes, <b>increased wider understanding of gender roles and promoted equality</b>.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b> – References in section 3 are indicated by number (e.g., R1)		
<p>A programme of public engagement was underpinned by well-established research focusing on the legacy of women's lives in historical, socio-cultural, literary, gender and education studies. It aims to recover forgotten lives of women, and illuminate the significance of women's contributions as writers, translators, educators, and political activists, and their intergenerational intellectual legacy (Capancioni). This is reflected in, more specifically, expertise on Victorian and Edwardian women's travel and life-writing, education, and intellectual networks (R1, R2). This portfolio of work connected with another research strand encompassing public, local and community history, the role of provincial newspaper representation, and co-operative education and learning for working-class women (Jackson, R3, R4).</p> <p>Central to the research was new investigation of the BGU Archive which was undertaken in order to reveal the stories of young, mainly working-class women who studied for the teaching profession at Lincoln Diocesan Training College (LDTTC, now BGU) from 1862. It was also felt appropriate to introduce to the research the active engagement of a number of current MA students as co-researchers and producers (Hope-Johnson, Johnson and Mills). This was supported by a number of internal 'pump-priming' grants (£11,249, 2017-19) to facilitate student engagement and co-creation.</p>		

A notable launch opportunity for the programme of research was the hosting at BGU of the August 2017 annual conference of the British Association for Victorian Studies (BAVS) on the theme of 'Victorians Unbound: Connections and Intersections'. Two temporary, portable exhibitions were co-produced for this event: 'BGU's Victorian Origins' and 'Mapping Victorian Lincolnshire'. Following the BAVS conference, the approaching centenary of the Representation of the People Act, 1918 became a stimulus for further research in the archive about the ideas and roles of the female students at BGU at that time, including their attitudes towards the franchise.

Material from BGU formed a prominent feature of an exhibition on women's suffrage, as a local contribution to national 'Vote100' initiatives. The research revealed the character of Lincolnshire suffragism with investigations uncovering writings of BGU students of the period, auto-biographical material relating to regional campaigners, representations in provincial and national media publications, local government records, and student family histories. New testimonies and interpretations were also created for leading local political figures.

The research for Vote100 also led to spin-off research activity and a companion exhibition on women's football. This also explored attitudes towards gender and equality, but in relation to the development of association football for women. Archive work paid particular attention to uncovering the history of local munitionette worker teams (R4).

Key outputs included:

- Conference paper drawing on the LDTC archive for *Literature, Education and the Sciences of the Mind in Britain and America, 1850-1950* (University of Kent, Canterbury) (Capancioni, 2018);
- Peer-reviewed article for *Midland History* (Jackson, Capancioni, Hope-Johnson, and Johnson, 2020, R4);
- Exhibition catalogue, *Vote 100: A Lincolnshire View of Women's Suffrage* (Capancioni, Hope-Johnson, Johnson, and Mills, 2019, Section 5, S4);
- Popular-history article, 'Perspectives from the provincial press: a Lincolnshire view of women's suffrage', *East Midlands History and Heritage* (Johnson, 2019, 9,18-21; mentored by Jackson).

### 3. References to the research

\* Independent peer-reviewed chapters and articles

1. **Capancioni, C.** (2018) 'Janet Ross's intergenerational life writing: female intellectual legacy through memoirs, correspondence, and reminiscences', in North, J. and James F. (eds) *Writing Lives Together* (London: Routledge), 101-12. Indicative review in [Victorian Studies](#) (2020).
2. **Capancioni, C.** (2014) 'Victorian women writers and the truth of the "other side of Italy"', Saunders, Clare Broome (ed.), *Women, Travel Writing, and Truth* (London: Routledge), 109-123.
3. **Jackson, A.J.H.** (2016) 'The cooperative movement and the education of working men and women: provision by a local society in Lincoln, England, 1861-1914', *International Labor and Working Class History*, special 'Working-class education' edition, 90, 2, 28-51;
4. **Jackson, A.J.H., Capancioni, C., Johnson, E., & Hope-Johnson, S.** (2020) 'Provincial newspapers, sports reporting, and the origins, rise and fall of women's football: Lincolnshire, 1880s-1940s', *Midland History*, special 'Print culture' edition, 45, 2, 244-57.

### 4. Details of the impact – Sources in section 5 are indicated by number (e.g., S1)

Impact activities:

- Developed partnerships and co-creation with the heritage, arts and public sectors;
- Increased and widened public understanding;
- Stimulated interest in research among local communities and schools;

- Enhanced awareness of contemporary issues surrounding gender;
- Shaped attitudes and promoted values in relation to equality;
- Commemorated major civic anniversaries.

### Partnership and co-creation

The lead partner, Lincoln Central Library (LCL), approached BGU in early 2018 for assistance with producing a public exhibition for the region as part of 'Vote100'. Fawcett Society Lincolnshire (FSL, **S1**) were also close collaborators and supporters of this undertaking. Other key partners and project beneficiaries were North Kesteven District Council (NKDC) and Market Rasen Town Council (MRTC); and the Lincoln Book Festival, for whom two Vote100-inspired events were organised, under the title, 'Sisters of the Revolution' (27 September 2018, **S4**). An exhibition guide was produced with the support of three of the key partners (LCL, NKDC and FSL; **S5**).

Public interest and participation were generated through a series of public talks (5), presentations (8), performances (2), media articles (1, **S9**) and readings (6, including for BBC Radio Lincolnshire's 'Vote100' feature, 2018; and Caistor Arts & Heritage Centre, 2019). These accompanied 'Vote 100: A Lincolnshire View of Women's Suffrage', the touring exhibition co-produced by BGU staff and students, and with active engagement of LCL staff. Other contributing and supporting organisations, and sources of historical materials included: FSL, Old Students' Association (BGU), Grantham Library, Lincolnshire Archives, *Lincolnshire Echo*, Lincolnshire Co-operative Ltd., and The National Trust, Gunby Hall, Spilsby. Visitor feedback and responses were collected through 'Ballot Paper' comments cards (116, 4 June-2 July, **S10**) deposited in a mock ballot box.

### Awareness, promotion and commemoration

The exhibition opened at LCL on 4 June 2018 (**S6**), where it remained until 2 July, and the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Equal Franchise Act. It returned there on 14 December, in the lead up to the centenary of the 1918 general election, and as a backdrop to a programme of performances with scenes from the plays, *The World At Her Feet* (on a munitionette workers' football team, introduced by Stephen Gillard and Sam Miles, Lincoln Mystery Plays), and *The Forgotten Suffragette* (introduced by Phoebe Wall-Palmer, Lincoln Performing Arts Centre, and Rachel Baynton, Proto-type Theater).

The public-engagement potential of the exhibition was recognised by a number of visitors to the June-July 2018 staging, generating invitations for it to proceed on tour around the county. In 2018, it became a tool for enhancing historical and cultural awareness and for increasing understanding of gender equality and participation in the political process during NKDC's Local Democracy Week (4 October-13 November 2018), which tied in with European Local Democracy Week / UK Parliament Week. It was hosted by two schools, as well as the Council Chamber, Sleaford Town Hall, and the Terry O'Toole Theatre, North Hykeham. Subsequently, The Lincoln Labour Club requested that it was displayed for their event, '100 years of Women's Suffrage: Learning from their Legacy' (17 November 2018). This was followed by an invitation from the City of Lincoln Council, for its display in the Old Stonebow Guildhall (10-13 December 2018, **S8**). In 2019, requests were responded to for it to join 'The Wolds Women of Influence' exhibition at Spilsby (5 June-26 July), and at Caistor Arts & Heritage Centre (25 October-30 November).

### Schools engagement and learning

A programme of school events, facilitated by the exhibition materials, engaged schools in enhancing understanding of the political process, and stimulating debates on equality, representation, and decision making. This started with the Being Human Festival event, 'Unfolding Lost and Found Voices', (25 November 2017, 28 attendees, **S3**): a creative writing workshop to voice the original historical debates on suffrage (participating schools took part in

Slam Jam and First Story in Lincolnshire and East Midlands). Secondary pupils attended 'Winning the Vote: Equal Rights Past and Future' (16 November 2018, 37 attendees, **S2**) for Being Human 2018. They debated equal representation and current eligibility to vote, and reflected on making informed decisions by recreating a parliamentary voting scenario. A presentation, 'Votes for Women: The Story of Women's Rights', followed at Queen Elizabeth School Horncastle (20 July 2018), where students worked on a project reclaiming the contribution to women's suffrage of an alumna. On 29 January 2019, 'Equal Rights Past and Future' (60 attendees) was an outreach taster session on debating skills for Next Steps, BGU's Widening Participation programme for schools across Lincolnshire. The programme ceased in 2020, with the onset of lockdowns.

## 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

### Corroborating contact

1. Lincoln Fawcett Group, The Fawcett Society.

### Corroborating sources

Public event programmes

2. Being Human Festival 2018: 'Winning the vote: equal rights past and future', in *Origins and Endings Programme*. 26 November, p. 28, at: <https://beinghumanfestival.org/programme/past-festivals/>
3. Being Human Festival 2017: 'Becoming teachers: women's college life from 1862 to 1918', in *Lost and Found Programme*, 18 and 23 November, p. 42, at: <https://beinghumanfestival.org/past-festivals/>
4. Lincoln Book Festival 2018: 'Sisters of the Revolution' events on 27 Sept. at 16:00 and 18:15: [Lincoln Book Festival 2018](#)

Open access exhibition resource

5. Capancioni, C., Jackson, A.J.H., Hope-Johnson, S., Johnson, E., and Mills, J. (eds) *Vote 100: A Lincolnshire View of Women's Suffrage* (Lincoln: Bishop Grosseteste University), supported by Lincoln Central Library and North Kesteven District Council ISBN 9781871346237, at: <https://2019.bishopg.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Vote-100-to-Email.pdf>

Media Coverage

6. BBC News Webpage, 2018. ['Women's suffrage exhibition opens in Lincoln'](#), 8 June, 13:02.
7. BBC Radio Lincolnshire, 2018. 'Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Women's Right to Vote'. In *Melvyn in the Morning*, 6 Feb. [BBC Radio Lincolnshire Schedule](#)
8. BBC Radio Lincolnshire, 2018. 'Vote 100'. In *Melvyn in the Morning*; Carla Green and Sue Taylor, 14 Dec. [BBC Radio Lincolnshire Schedule](#)
9. Jackson, A. 2018. [Celebrating votes for women one hundred years on](#). In *The Lincolnite*, 5 February, online.

### Visitors' feedback and comments

10. 116 'Ballot Paper' comments cards deposited in a Ballot Box, 4 June to 2 July 2018, indicative selections:
  - 'Thank you for an informative and interesting exhibition and great overview of the movement along with specific Lincolnshire detail – the reproduction of local letters and newspapers was particularly interesting. Great research for a current writing project!';
  - 'Absolutely fascinating that so much was done locally + I knew nothing about it,

assumed (!) it was all big city focussed’;

- ‘A most interesting and informative exhibition which links the local perspective and tensions with the national. A real insight in different views and tensions’;
- ‘A fantastically informative and well curated exhibition and nice to learn about the Lincolnshire pioneers’;
- ‘Such an eye-opener on this time. ... It has made me want to learn more about these women who put their lives on the line for us today’;
- ‘A wonderful exhibit. Full of information specific to Lincolnshire. It made me proud to see suffrage in the place where I was born & raised’;
- ‘Finally! Some research has been done which highlights how Lincolnshire women contributed towards the fight for suffrage!’;
- ‘As an elected working class woman I could not be more thankful to have the chance to read about & celebrate those that paved the way before me, It makes sobering reading and may we never forget their work and passion for change. Thank you’;
- ‘Loved it. I did this topic at school years ago but we were all sort of left with the impression that it was mainly the women’s contribution to the war effort that earned them the respect they wanted. ... This has put a lot of things in perspective’;
- ‘I had no idea that Lincolnshire ladies played such a prominent role in the fight for the right to vote. Wonderful exhibition’;
- ‘Thank you for creating and curating this exhibition. Incredibly thorough and fascinating. I am proud to see that activism took place in Lincoln as my own research was thin!!’;
- ‘A fascinating & educational exhibition. Good to know that Lincolnshire was part of this movement for women’s votes.’