

Institution: Keele University		
Unit of Assessment: UoA27 English Language and Literature		
Title of case study: Using geopoetics to enhance community understanding, well-being, and artistic innovation		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2007-2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Dr Ceri Morgan	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Senior Lecturer, School of Humanities (English and Creative Writing)	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: 1999 - present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2015-2020		
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>Morgan is a creative methodologist and practitioner who employs geopoetics techniques to foster relationships between place and the moving body. The methodology has generated original artworks, innovative artistic practices, and new conceptions of identity, community, health and well-being among practitioners, participants, and audiences. Work completed in North Staffordshire has produced:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. enhanced understandings of collective identities, social histories and trauma 2. reflections on abilities and disabilities, mobilities, everyday routines 3. changes to creative practices through collaboration with artists. <p>These impacts have benefited a wide range of audiences through Morgan's exhibition; a show she co-created and performed with artist-writers (Restoke) and community participants; Anna Macdonald's participatory moving-image work and the co-created exhibition and online exhibition artefact, 'Circling (Again).</p>		
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Since 2015, Morgan has applied her geopoetics methodology in North Staffordshire, leading workshops with a range of groups, including members of a former coal-mining community, residents of an area affected by failed regeneration, and individuals with persistent pain. The workshops have generated new artworks (creative writing, photographs and other visual arts, dance, film, music and sound art) and innovative artistic practices. They have challenged participants' understandings of 'walking' as just a bipedal practice (R6), conceptually extending 'walking' into a practice for accessing collective memories and traumas, a restorative source of health and well-being. Morgan's participatory research has been informed by her criticism and artistic practice on place, mobilities, and embodiment, which includes her monograph on literary geographies in the contemporary Montreal novel (3.1), followed by a digital map of fictional Montreal (3.2) featuring audio recordings of authors reading extracts of their works set in the city. Both monograph and map invite reflections on affective attachments to place, reading and writing practices; embodied forms of knowledge; and how imaginary and material geographies shape each other (3.3). Morgan has developed her creative practice alongside her critical work. Her recent prose-poems combine elements from travel-writing and sensory geographies in their exploration of a body moving through various sites (3.4, 3.5). The methodology Morgan has devised draws on geopoetics (defined here as site-responsive creative practices) including the approaches of La Traversée, the Montreal geopoetics research group, notably the mobile workshop (<i>l'atelier nomade</i>). Her geopoetics research is also informed by geocriticism (notably</p>		

polysensoriality), psychogeography, and other mobilities methods from the humanities and social sciences, such as the walking interview (3.6). During 2020-22 the method will be further developed in national and international contexts, in two AHRC-funded projects: 'Planning Creativity' explores community responses to decommissioning at three English sites; and 'Heartlands/*Pays du coeur*: Geohumanities and Quebec's "regional" fiction' focuses on Québec's Eastern Townships.

Principal research insights/outcomes:

- Mobile, site-responsive embodied creative practices can be used to engage a range of publics, from artists to current and former industrial workers to members of the local community, as detailed below (3.6)
- Practices for creating new artworks by bringing together mobilities, writing, composition, dance, sound art, performance and visual arts (3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6)
- Artefacts which engage with affective attachments to place can generate new understandings of community and belonging (3.2, 3.3, 3.5)
- The ways in which artefacts which engage with themes of trauma, working and striking practices generate new understandings of social history (3.5)
- Participation in collective, site-responsive activities can foster health and well-being (3.6)
- Arts-based methods are able to improve well-being amongst individuals with persistent pain (3.6)
- Geopoetics can change relationships to the spatial in individuals' everyday lives (3.6)
- Walking is not to be equated only with bipedal forms of mobility (3.6)
- Material and imaginary geographies inform each other (3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6)
- The importance of other knowledges besides academic/intellectual knowledge, including embodied knowledge and knowledge based on learned experiences (3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6).

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

3.1. Morgan, C. (2012) *Mindscales of Montréal: Québec's Urban Novel, 1960-2005* (Cardiff: U of Wales P). ISBN: 9780708325339. Monograph. Can be supplied on request.

3.2. Morgan, C., with Philip Lichti (2016) 'Fictional Montreal/Montréal fictif', digital map

3.3. Morgan, C (2018) 'Sonic Spectres: Word Ghosts in Madeleine Thien's *Dogs at the Perimeter* and the Digital Map Project, 'Fictional Montreal/ Montréal fictif', *London Journal of Canadian Studies* 33.4, 39-56. <https://www.scienceopen.com/document?vid=7583b64a-c293-4be2-9969-d347310a0ade> Journal article.

3.4. Morgan, C. (2019) 'Avenue (rue) Coloniale', *GeoHumanities*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2373566X.2019.1649091>. Prose-poem, Morgan, C. (2020) 'Avenue Bernard', Keywords, RTE Radio 1 Extra and RTE Radio 1 Prose-poem.

3.5. Morgan, C. (2019) 'Walking, writing, reading place and memory', in Sarah De Nardi et al. (Eds) *Routledge Handbook of Memory and Place* (London: Routledge), pp.261-7 ISBN: 9780815386308. Book chapter.

3.6. Macdonald, A. (2020) 'Circling (again)' <http://www.circlingartproject.co.uk/>

Evidence of the quality of the research:

Mindscales

- Research was supported by the AHRC Research Leave Scheme: 'Mindscales of Montreal', £21,214. Final report graded 'good'.
2007. Visiting Eakin Fellow, McGill Institute for the Study of Canada, Montreal, \$10,000 Cdn. McGill University ranked 12 in the world in 2007 (THE World University Rankings), currently at 42.

- c. 2013. *Mindscapes* was the UK nomination for the Pierre Savard Award, offered to the best book in Canadian Studies in French or English.
- d. 2014. Reviews: *French Studies* <https://doi.org/10.1093/fs/knt237>, *British Journal of Canadian Studies* <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/539907>.

Heartlands/pays du cœur

- e. 2014. The Leverhulme Trust International Academic Fellowship, spent at the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling (COHDS), Concordia University, £19,143.
- f. 2016. Keynote lecture, 'Writing, Talking and Walking Québec's Eastern Townships', British Association for Canadian Studies conference, Eccles Centre, British Library, London. Published by BL ISBN 0 7123 4478 0.
- g. 2020. AHRC Leadership Fellowship: 'Heartlands/Pays du cœur: Geohumanities and Quebec's "regional" fiction', £247,805.

Fictional Montreal/Montréal fictif

- h. 2016. The British Academy small research grant: 'Fictional Montreal/Montréal fictif', £9,983.67.
- i. Sonic Spectres': 400 views as of 10/09/20 <https://www.scienceopen.com/hosted-document?doi=10.14324/111.444.ljcs.2018v33.004>.

Memories of Mining

- j. 2020. Co-I on AHRC-funded project, Planning Creativity (PI: Ben Anderson), £4,500.
- k. 'Walking, writing, reading': 117 on-line views as of 10/09/20 <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780815354260-31>.

Walking writing, 'Circling'

- l. 'Avenue (rue) Coloniale': 140 views as of 10/09/20.
- m. Avenue Bernard' broadcast on RTE Radio 1 Extra and RTE Radio 1.
- n. 1331 views of *Circling (again)* digital artefact based on project as of 14/07/20

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

Impacts on understanding, learning and participation

Creative artefacts from a workshop entitled 'Memories of Mining' (2016), held at Silverdale Country Park to mark the 50th anniversary of the Aberfan Disaster, formed the basis of an exhibition at Silverdale Community Library (2017), and a show, called *Seams* (2018). Created in collaboration with Restoke, a non-profit arts organisation, *Seams* was performed on 11 June 2018 at Keele Chapel. 16 community volunteers aged 14 to 78 joined 3 professional performers and 4 Keele members (1 academic, 3 postgraduate students). The show was attended by 150 people.

Seams generated increased public understanding of Aberfan and similar catastrophes and their long-lasting emotional and embodied effects on communities. Audience members' reflections include: "as someone who's not from the mining community I, rather naively, did not know just how many people/communities are still affected by mining disasters" (5.2); "I learnt more about the culture, memories, loss and tragedy of mining in 35 minutes than in any academic paper or book" (5.3). The show fostered shifts in perception of coalmining and its position within communities, as illustrated in comments such as "Seams moved me and caused me to reflect in a way I never have before about mining, work, loss, community and love", and "it helped me to view our mining history more positively" (5.2). The international sharing of memories of mining disasters was highlighted in comments from audience members from Poland and Germany (5.3).

Impacts on health and well-being

Morgan's mobilisation of geopoetics and screendance introduced a new lifestyle intervention aimed at enhancing individual well-being (5.4, 5.5) through engaging under-represented members of society in creative practices. Morgan's collaboration with dance and moving-image artist Anna

Macdonald resulted in 'Circling: Interdisciplinary arts-based research into the pathways of chronic pain', which recruited 6 participants to a pilot project. Aged 19 to 60, participants had a variety of chronic health conditions, all characterised by persistent pain and reduced mobility. 'Circling' fostered changes to perceptions and experiences of persistent pain (5.6), changes to everyday negotiations of space (5.4, 5.5), and enhancements in quality of life (5.6). One participant noted, *"it's been a different experience in translat[ing] my pain and it has giv[en] me an opportunity to rethink from a new perspective"*. (5.5). A digital event showcasing Circling (5.6) elicited the following from audience-members: *"having never experienced chronic pain, it gave me an understanding that I would not otherwise have gained"*, and *"I had not thought of pain as movement and rhythm before this workshop"*, *"these stories are not usually ones that are heard"* (5.7).

Impacts on creativity - the co-production of new cultural artefacts

'Memories of Mining' (2016) produced poems, short stories, photographs and music, exhibited/performed at Silverdale Community Library (November-December 2017). A Creative Community Walk held in Longport and Middleport (Potteries, Stoke-on-Trent) in June 2019, was attended by 15 people. Morgan co-led a workshop with visual artist Nicola Winstanley, which ended with the co-curation of an exhibition at the Waiting Room Gallery, Longport. This was refined and enlarged throughout its two-month show (June-August 2019). Visitors added to the exhibition with thoughts and memories of the area via writing in a book artefact (5.8). Exhibits comprised creative writing, photography, film poetry, installations, sketching and painting (5.8).

Morgan has influenced new forms of creative thinking through her collaborative research with practitioners

Restoke Co-Creative Director, observed, *"we liked the idea that we could move between [...] the now and the then, and look at the memory and the nostalgia, but the reality and then the re-landscaping of collieries"* (5.1). Anna Macdonald remarks, *"the openness of the geopoetic scores... offered the participants a really useful processing space ...I would really think about the amount of space I offer people in a future work and certainly look to use more outside work as this helps regulate the intensity [...] a lot"* (5.7). Nicola Winstanley comments, *"[I've become] more confident in my writing – it has become a [...] bigger feature of my practice now, especially in these times where we can't collaborate [...] in any physical sense"* (5.9). Rebecca Goldsmith, film-poet and participant in the Creative Community Walk, observes, *"I've worked in participation for more than 15 years, and that session has challenged my practice as a participation curator/project-manager [...] because I was so taken by how doing less can result in more, and [how] having faith in the process can really unlock a lot more than if you try to be too prescriptive [...]. It [...] really had a sense of magic"* (5.9).

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

5.1 Artistic Co-Director, Restoke, 'Behind the Seams' taster <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=tQEGWpv2Lu8> (download also held within Keele's repository)

5.2 Seams evaluation report (2018) https://issuu.com/restoke/docs/seams_report_web?fbclid=IwAR3blbu8Uk6iGs2mkhNEIUMBmNi qHLq1CADjUVCwsiD8tds5eeA-4l CCAC

5.3 Audience feedback, Seams (2018)

5.4 Exhibition artefacts, Circling, Keele University (2020)

5.5 Participants' contributions, Circling (2019-20)

5.6 *Circling (again)* <http://www.circlingartproject.co.uk/> and online discussion event https://mmutube.mmu.ac.uk/media/circling+again+event+29th+June/1_91coct6n (2020, 2020) (download also held within Keele's repository)

5.7 *Circling* evaluation report (2020)

5.8 Exhibition artefacts, Creative Community Walk, The Waiting Room Gallery, Longport (June-August, 2019). See also: <https://dawdlers.org/index.php/ezone/>, and Nicola Winstanley, *Adapt the Nothing* (2019) <http://nicwinstanley.com/atn/>

5.9 Interviews with collaborating artists (2020-1)