

<b>Institution:</b> University of Kent		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 31: Theology and Religious Studies		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Britain's Child Migrants: Deepening Public Understanding and Shaping Public Policy		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2011-2019		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b> Gordon Lynch	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b> Michael Ramsey Professor of Modern Theology	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b> January 2011-present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> April 2014-October 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> No		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>Lynch's research on the history of UK child migration programmes underpinned his co-curation of a widely commended national exhibition, a related music project that received national performances and broadcasts, and his work as an expert witness for two national child abuse inquiries. His research has contributed directly to the creation of a UK Government redress scheme for former child migrants, which has made payments in excess of £32 million, and has been a primary influence on public understanding of this history over the past six years, reaching an estimated audience of around 20-25 million people.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>Between 1869 and 1970, around 100,000 children were sent from the UK to other parts of the British Empire and Commonwealth through child migration programmes funded by governments and delivered by leading charities, churches, and religious orders. Lynch's research on the history of these programmes has built on his earlier work on the moral assumptions of historic welfare interventions that removed children from their families and local communities (see, for example, [R1]). His major publication on this history has been his monograph, <i>Remembering Child Migration</i> [R2]. This has been supplemented by other publications on post-war childcare policy [R3] and child migration to Australia by Catholic and Anglican organisations [R4, R5], for which the research was undertaken alongside the impact activities for national inquiries described below in Section 4. Key findings from this work have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From the 1870s onwards, a range of criticisms were made of child migration programmes for separating children from their birth families and placing child migrants in contexts where they were at risk of exploitation and abuse. Concerns were also raised as to whether migration programmes offered children any significant benefits, and whether systems for monitoring their progress and welfare were adequate.</li> <li>• There were significant differences in the public policies and understanding of child welfare that provided the context of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century child migration schemes compared to child migration after 1945, which was undertaken in the context of the emerging welfare state and the increasing policy and professional influence of insights from child psychology.</li> <li>• In the post-war period, the UK Government persisted in permitting and funding child migration programmes, despite its knowledge of failures in their work according to accepted childcare standards of the day (set out, for example, in the influential 1946 Curtis</li> </ul>		

Report). This happened because of the fragmented system of governance through which these programmes were administered, an aversion to confrontation with influential voluntary organisations, and the strategic desire to maintain good relations with the Australian Commonwealth Government for geopolitical reasons.

- Whilst the experiences of Britain's child migrants varied significantly, many experienced significant traumas as a result of separation from birth families, loss of identity, sexual, physical, and emotional abuse, exploitation of their labour, and poor preparation for adult life through growing up in isolated, impersonal, and regimented institutions.
- Despite concerns raised about the effects of these schemes, leading charities and religious organisations failed to take sufficient account of them because of the moral investment they and their supporters had made in the idea that emigration could enable the moral, civic, and spiritual flourishing of children. The specific moral meanings underpinning these convictions varied between different organisations.

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

[R1] Lynch, G. (2014). 'Saving the child for the sake of the nation: moral framing and the civic, moral and religious redemption of children', *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*, 2:2, 165-196, doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/ajcs.2014.5>

[R2] Lynch, G. (2015), *Remembering Child Migration: Faith, Nation-Building and the Wounds of History*. London: Bloomsbury.

[R3] Lynch, G. (2019). 'Pathways to the 1946 Curtis Report and the post-war reconstruction of children's out-of-home care', *Contemporary British History*, published online 27 April 2019, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13619462.2019.1609947>

[R4] Lynch, G. (2020a). 'Catholic child migration schemes from the United Kingdom to Australia: systemic failures and religious legitimisation', *Journal of Religious History*, published online 17 August 2020, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9809.12686>

[R5] Lynch, G. (2020b). 'The Church of England Advisory Council of Empire Settlement and Post-War Child Migration to Australia', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 71(4): 798-826, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022046920000081>

[G1] Lynch, G. (PI): AHRC Follow-On Funding Award, AH/M001989/1, *Remembering Britain's Child Migrants: Supporting Public Reflection Through a National Exhibition, Media and Organisational Engagement*, £79,740.80 (2014-15).

[G2] Lynch, G. (PI): AHRC Leadership Fellows Award, AH/R001766/1, *British Child Migration Schemes to Australia, 1947-1970: Historical Perspectives and Public Memory Today*, £199,580.66 (2018-19).

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

#### Activities

In April 2014, Lynch was appointed academic curator to the exhibition, *On Their Own: Britain's Child Migrants*, displayed at the V&A Museum of Childhood between October 2015 and June 2016. Drawing on his underpinning research, Lynch proposed 80% of the objects, images, and display materials that were subsequently used in the exhibition, devised the interpretative approach for the whole exhibition, commissioned and advised on new AV material, wrote the non-technical elements of the brief for the exhibition designer, wrote three-quarters of the text for display panels and labels, and undertook media work for the exhibition launch with national radio (BBC Radio 2 *Jeremy Vine Show*, and Radio 4 *PM* programme) and press (including *The Times* and the *Independent*).

Lynch also commissioned and worked with the production company, 7digital, for twelve leading British folk musicians to write songs reflecting British child migrants' experiences that were used as audio displays for the exhibition. He provided copies of relevant primary materials and draft chapters of **R2**, which the musicians used as the basis for these new compositions. In a later interview about this project on BBC Radio Scotland, one of the songwriters, Julie Matthews, commented that when 'somebody's given you some research and you delve into it [...] you can't help but be inspired. And so someone else has supplied the inspiration really, and it's been a fantastic project' **[a]**. This project was released as a CD, *The Ballads of Child Migration*, and went on to have major national performances and broadcasts in its own right. Lynch wrote a history of child migration as an insert for the *Ballads* album CD, and advised on the script for live performances **[a]**.

Positive reception of the *Ballads* project by senior management at BBC Radio 2 led to a short set of songs from the project being performed at the BBC Radio 2 annual Folk Awards ceremony at the Royal Albert Hall on 5 April 2017, with simultaneous live radio broadcast. Following a national tour of the *Ballads* project across five venues in England in November 2018, a programme of the BBC Radio 2 Folk Show was broadcast on 16 January 2019 dedicated to live performances from this tour. Songs from the *Ballads* were also used to provide the structure for a four-part musical dramatisation of Michael Morpurgo's children's novel *All Alone on a Wide, Wide Sea*, broadcast during the station's flagship *Jeremy Vine Show* in August 2018 and starring Jason Donovan and Toby Jones. Lynch was interviewed again on the BBC Radio 2 *Jeremy Vine Show* on the same day as the broadcast of the first episode.

On the basis of his research, Lynch was placed under instruction to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) in September 2016 as an expert witness for its child migration programmes investigation. He worked collaboratively with another expert witness, Stephen Constantine, for twelve months analysing relevant archival material (including material not previously seen by researchers). He and Constantine co-authored 250,000 words of reports and addenda requested by the Inquiry, and Lynch gave oral evidence during 9 of the 20 days of public hearings of this investigation in 2017. On the basis of this work, Lynch was subsequently engaged in 2018 as an expert witness by the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry (SCAI) for its investigation of the migration of Scottish children, and both produced 116,000 words of written reports requested by the Inquiry team, and gave evidence over three days of its public hearings in September and October 2020.

### Impact

The V&A Museum of Childhood exhibition *On Their Own* received 310,000 visitors. Its launch received positive coverage in all UK national broadsheet newspapers **[b]**, and the exhibition was commended by the then Prime Minister, David Cameron, for its work in raising public awareness of this history **[d]**. Total media audience reach for the exhibition, based on newspaper ABCs and RAJAR data, was 16 million. Evaluation research commissioned by the Museum of Childhood showed that 84% of visitors had little or no knowledge of this history before visiting the exhibition, and 96% of visitors said they would recommend it to family and friends **[g]**. Visitor feedback also indicated that the exhibition succeeded in significantly developing their understanding of this history through both the intellectual and emotional content of the selected material. Feedback comments included: 'Richly curated, challenging, sensitive [...] must see'; 'Brilliantly curated, moving exhibition'; and 'Highly recommend a couple of hours @MuseumChildhood absorbing the #OnTheirOwn exhibition about child migration. Fascinating and devastating'. Another visitor wrote: 'I feel moved and inspired at the same time. I have for some time felt the need to start a children's group in my local area. Coming here has given me the creative momentum to move ahead with my idea' **[b]**.

These views were also reflected in the very positive national media coverage given to the exhibition. In a review in *The Times*, its Arts Editor, Alex O'Connell, wrote: 'It is not an easy view. Yet if the success of an exhibition is its ability to get into your pores, then this show [...] is a major achievement' **[h]**. After recording her piece for Radio 4's PM programme, including an interview

with Lynch, the senior journalist Emma Jane Kirby, wrote: 'Don't miss the V&A Museum of Childhood exhibition on now – beautifully done and heart wrenching'. Her feature on exhibition for Radio 4's *PM* programme remained one of the highlighted stories on the programme's main website for three months after broadcast [c]. Former child migrants also praised its content, with one, John Hennessey, writing to the museum 'to thank you [...] particularly for including material in your exhibition that truly reflects the experience of former child migrants and our families [...]. The history of child migration is not yet complete [...]. Your exhibition comes much closer to a truthful account that acknowledges our experience' [e]. David Hinchliffe, the former Labour MP who had chaired the 1996-97 House of Commons Health Select Committee report into the Welfare of Former British Child Migrants, wrote that 'all concerned with curating it [...] in such a coherent way deserve congratulations', and that he wished he had access to material presented in the exhibition whilst undertaking this Inquiry [f].

The *Ballads* project has also received strong critical acclaim. Michael Morpurgo has written that it 'tells the story of Child Migration in words and music so well that anyone who hears it, will feel the pain and sorrow and fears such children lived through, but they will know of the hope too, and of their determination to survive' [c]. BBC Radio music presenter, Mark Radcliffe, has described it as 'one of the pre-eminent song collections of recent times, poignantly re-telling one of the most important stories to have emerged from these islands' [c]. A review of the *Ballads* album in the *Guardian* described it as 'a powerful and poignant history lesson' [c]. Audience responses to the *Ballads* performances on social media included: 'Truly stunning and heart-breaking *Ballads of Child Migration* tonight'; and 'Well I didn't know that [history], I'm shocked with myself for not knowing that' [c]. Based on RAJAR data, the total audience reach for the radio broadcasts of the *Ballads* and *All Alone on a Wide, Wide Sea* was around 15 million.

Evidence provided by Lynch to IICSA featured extensively in the Inquiry's child migration programmes report, with oral evidence by Lynch cited 101 times and written evidence by Lynch cited 58 times [i]. This evidence demonstrated that the UK Government had failed to uphold reasonable standards of the day in safeguarding child migrants, and that there were known failures in its systems of monitoring children sent overseas. Lynch's evidence included detailed archival analysis of serious safeguarding failures, including the UK Government allowing children to be sent to institutions about which concerns had previously been raised, undue trust being placed on inspection reports by Australian inspectors, which were known not always to be reliable, and repeated incidents of the UK Government conceding on appropriate standards under pressure from the Australian Government. In addition to regularly citing this evidence to underpin its account of the operation of child migration schemes, the IICSA report also credited it for shaping the Inquiry panel's views on a number of other issues, including the Inquiry's conclusion that the UK Government had allowed the 'high politics' of maintaining good relations with the Australian Government to compromise its oversight of child migrants. This evidence also underpinned the Inquiry's central recommendation that the UK Government urgently establish a redress scheme for all surviving British child migrants. This understanding of the UK Government's historic failings was also supported by MPs, who called for prompt implementation of this recommendation in an adjournment debate in the House of Commons tabled by the Labour MP, Lisa Nandy, on 3 July 2018 [k].

The UK Government agreed to implement this payment scheme for former child migrants in December 2018, making it the first UK-wide redress scheme for historic child abuse. To date, more than 1,600 applications to this scheme from former child migrants have been approved, with the total payment from this scheme in excess of £32 million [j]. The IICSA investigation also received extensive media coverage, and was the lead item on national television and radio broadcasts on the investigation's first day of public hearings, on 28 February 2017. Lynch has held regular briefing conversations during this period with the BBC Home Affairs correspondent, Tom Symonds, who led the BBC's coverage on this. Audience reach of this news coverage is estimated to be at least 20 million. The Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry's report on child migration is not due to be published until 2021, but in her closing comments on Lynch's evidence, the Inquiry Chair, Lady Smith, described his analysis of archival material as 'seminal' [i].

The total audience reach for media coverage of *On Their Own*, the *Ballads* project, and the national inquiry work is in excess of 40 million. It is likely that the UK audience will have seen more than one of these media outputs, thus reinforcing their impact, and that the total audience reach is therefore more likely to be in the range of 20-25 million.

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

**[a]** Copy of *Ballads of Child Migration* CD Album insert, and extract from interview with Julie Matthews on the Janice Forsyth Show on BBC Radio Scotland, 14 January 2016.

**[b]** Copy of the summary of media coverage of the V&A Museum of Childhood *On Their Own* exhibition, produced by the exhibition's media consultant, and of *On Their Own* visitor feedback cards.

**[c]** PDF file containing screenshots of online/social media impact evidence for *On Their Own* and *The Ballads of Child Migration*.

**[d]** Statement from Prime Minister David Cameron on the 6th Anniversary of National Apology to Child Migrants, 24 February 2016.

**[e]** Letters from former child migrants sent to the V&A Museum of Childhood, autumn 2015.

**[f]** Email from former Labour MP and Chair of the House of Commons Health Select Committee, 12 February 2016.

**[g]** Copy of *Own Their Own* visitor evaluation report, produced by the V&A Museum of Childhood.

**[h]** Review of the *On Their Own* exhibition: 'The story of a forgotten generation', by Alex O'Connell, *The Times*, 23 October 2015.

**[i]** Copies of Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, *Child Migration Programmes Investigation Report*, March 2018, and transcripts of oral evidence to IICSA and the SCAI by Professor Lynch and other relevant witnesses. (Available on request.)

**[j]** Evidence by Mark Davies, witness representing the UK Government to Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, transcript of Inquiry Day 198, p. 6.

**[k]** Speech by Stuart McDonald MP, House of Commons, 3 July 2018.