

Institution: Edinburgh Napier University		
Unit of Assessment: Unit of Assessment 27: English Language and Literature		
Title of case study: Robert Louis Stevenson: Globally Extending and Enhancing a Literary Reputation		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2003 – 2018		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Linda Dryden Sarah Wasson Duncan Milne Kate Simpson	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Professor and PI Lecturer Intern/Research Assistant Cataloguer	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: Sept 1998--ongoing July 2011—Sept 2016 July 2013-ongoing June 2014-Oct 2016
Period when the claimed impact occurred: October 2015 - December 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? Y		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words) <p>Impact and outreach concerning Stevenson have extended his reputation and brought new resources for public benefit. Stevenson research and activities attract interest and resources to enhance Stevenson studies, resulting in the donation of the Ernest Mehew Stevenson collection to the University in 2013. A GBP25000 grant from the Mehew Trust enabled Dryden to establish a publicly accessible Stevenson Library.</p> <p>RLS Day continues and the award-winning RLS website has been re-launched. Public engagement activities and impact include workshops at the Edinburgh International Book Festival, documentary films (European ARTE channel), media appearances, a schools creative writing competition, and a volume of essays including world-leading authors.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words) <p>Research undertaken since 2003 addresses the reductive perception of Stevenson as a children's writer, and thus brought his work to a wider audience. Stevenson is internationally renowned largely because of the cultural currency of <i>Treasure Island</i> and <i>Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde</i> and their film adaptations. Dryden's research, and the subsequent Stevenson initiatives, like the RLS website and RLS Day were specifically designed to heighten awareness of the breadth and impact of Stevenson's work. Dryden's work has thus been pivotal in broadening an awareness of the variety of Stevenson's work, and in charting his influence on other writers, such as Joseph Conrad, Ford Madox Ford and H.G. Wells. Building on this research, a number of initiatives have enhanced Stevenson's reputation internationally, and there has been a step-change in the profile of Stevenson-related activities at the University since 2014 (see section 4).</p> <p>Professor Dryden's research is historical <i>and</i> ongoing: Output 01 places Stevenson within the popular gothic mode. Outputs 02, 03 and 06 widen Stevenson's sphere of influence to include Joseph Conrad and H. G. Wells. Output 03 brings Stevenson into a postcolonial frame of reference and 04 details his formative influence on popular culture. Dryden used the knowledge</p>		

gained during the research to initiate the website, to strengthen *The Journal of Stevenson Studies* through her co-editorship, to initiate RLS Day, to inform the Mehew Collection, and to present public lectures and workshops in the city of Edinburgh. As a result of Dryden's research, a number of further initiatives and activities have taken place as detailed at 4 below.

A 2008 grant from the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland enabled the creation of the RLS website, launched in 2009, and utilising research carried out by Dryden and her research assistant, Dr Hilary Grimes. The website makes Stevenson's life and works available to a global audience, hosts the *Journal of Stevenson Studies*, now freely available on the site, and contains resources and links to new research on Stevenson. The website was redesigned and re-launched in 2016, and is under constant review to reflect burgeoning interest and activities related to RLS [C1].

Ernest Mehew edited the letters of Stevenson and, on his death, the Mehew Trust donated his library to Edinburgh Napier. The library has now been catalogued and provides the largest collection of Stevenson material in Europe. It is a major resource for researchers and visiting scholars, containing many rare volumes and first editions, as detailed in section 4 below [C1].

During the census period, Dryden has continued to publish work on Stevenson. A chapter in *Joseph Conrad and H. G. Wells* (2015) charts Stevenson's influence on other writers, and a chapter in *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Great Affair* (2017) reveals Wells' use of Stevenson in his own writing. The research underpinning the impact of the Stevenson project is thus on going, and ground-breaking, bringing Stevenson into a wider context that challenges his earlier reductive reputation [O5, O6].

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

Listed books O1, O2, O4, O5, have been cited multiple times in further international research and have all been peer-reviewed. O3 is a competitively peer-reviewed journal article.

Publications:

[O1] Dryden, L. (2003) *The Modern Gothic and Literary Doubles: Stevenson, Wilde and Wells*. Book. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. Can be supplied by HEI on request.

[O2] Dryden, L., Arata, S. and Massie, E. (2009). *Stevenson and Conrad: Writers of Transition*. Book. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 236 pp. Can be supplied by HEI on request.

[O3] Dryden, L. (2010) 'Stevenson and Popular Culture' in *Nordic Journal of English Studies* Vol. 9. 3 (2010). Invited paper. Special Issue: Popular Culture. pp. 11-24.
<http://ojs.ub.gu.se/ojs/index.php/njes/article/view/583/548>

[O4] Dryden, L. (2011) 'Literary Affinities and the Postcolonial in Stevenson and Conrad.' In Michael Gardiner, Graeme Macdonald and Niall O'Gallagher eds., *Scottish Literature and Postcolonial Literature: Comparative Texts and Critical Perspectives*. Book. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. pp. 86-97. Can be supplied by HEI on request.

[O5] Dryden, L. (2015) 'Conrad, Wells, Ford and the Ghost of Robert Louis Stevenson' in Linda Dryden, *Joseph Conrad and H. G. Wells: The Fin-de-Siècle Literary Scene*. Book. Basingstoke: Palgrave Press, pp. 39-68. **Submitted to REF2.**

[O6] Dryden, L. (2017) 'Monomaniacs, Evolutionary Science and the Influence of Stevenson in Wells' *The Island of Doctor Moreau*' in Richard Hill ed., *Robert Louis Stevenson and the Great Affair: Movement, Memory, and Modernity*. Book. Routledge, pp. 162-79. **Submitted to REF2.**

Projects:

Title: The Ernest Mehew Robert Louis Stevenson Collection:

- £25,000 Awarded to Napier University by the Ernest Mehew Trust 2013
- PI: Professor Linda Dryden
- Research Assistants: Kate Simpson/Duncan Milne

- Project Duration: 12 months from June 2014 to June 2015

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

Since REF 2014, impact continues to accrue to the RLS project. The website maintains approximately 500,000 page views per year and remains *the* authoritative online RLS resource, with an increase of 83% in new visitors in 2018 [C1]. RLS Day, media appearances, international talks and visitors have all increased over the census period [C2], and the acquisition of the Mehew collection has created further opportunities for impact [C1]. Dryden continues to be sought for media appearances and expert interviews [C4, C7, C8]. Activities have expanded into the Edinburgh International Book Festival [C5] and the European Cultural Network [C6], and a publication including a number of celebrity contributions is due for publication in 2021. These are just highlights of an ongoing renewed interest in Stevenson initiated at Napier University, as detailed below:

Public Engagement:

- 2021: Dryden, Editorial Board member, publication celebrating the 100th anniversary of the RLS Club: contributions from Sir Paul McCartney, Ian Rankin, Nigel Planer, Nicola Sturgeon and Michael Morpurgo.
- 2017: Dryden and Milne, Stevenson Workshop, Edinburgh International Book Festival [C5].
- 2017: Mehew Collection exhibition, Edinburgh International Book Festival, free, drop-in event [C5].
- 2015/16: RLS website, redesigned and re-launched with increased accessibility. This continues to attract approximately 500,000 page views per year (with over 4 million page views since its creation). The largest number of visitors is from the USA: 34%. 2015/16 saw an increase of new visitors to the website by 83% [C1].
- Since 2013: Dryden and Milne have collaborated with the RLS Club in Edinburgh to run the RLS Creative Writing Competition for schools [C3].
- Milne assists in all of the public events, and delivers public lectures. For example:
 - 7 February 2018: '*Stevenson in Perthshire*', Tay Probus Society, Dewar Centre, Perth.
 - 17 March 2016: '*Stevenson Unbound*' – Mehew Collection Launch.
 - 11 November 2015: '*RLS at the Anatomy Museum*', Anatomy Museum, Edinburgh for RLS Day.
 - July 2015: '*Robert Louis Stevenson's Literary Networks*', Museum of Edinburgh.

Mehew Collection:

- 2014: GBP25,000 from the Mehew Trust enabled preservation and display of the Mehew collection for the public, which is now housed in bespoke bookcases in a dedicated room at Merchiston campus.
- 2014: Dr Kate Simpson catalogued the Mehew collection, which is now available on the RLS website for public consultation.
- 2016: Nick Rankin, public lecture for '*Stevenson Unbound*', public launch of the Mehew Collection.
- Visitors come from as far afield as Norway, Brazil, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the European Cultural Route delegation, and China, as well as various local bodies.

RLS Day (C2):

RLS Day was inaugurated by Dryden in collaboration with the Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust in 2011, and attracts enthusiastic support across the city of Edinburgh and internationally. It takes place every year during the week including the 13th of November, Stevenson's birthday. In 2020 we responded to the global pandemic by staging a virtual RLS Day on the RLS website. This attracted huge international participation with 31 events or items on the website to mark the day. The international scale of RLS Day 2020 has set a precedent for future virtual iterations.

Highlights:

- 2015: Howard Blake, composer of the music for *The Snowman*, presented a screening of his animated film based on Stevenson's *A Child's Garden of Verses* in the Faculty of Advocates.
- 2016: A public lecture was given by leading Stevenson scholar Professor Barry Menikoff, Chair, Nigel Planer, Central Library.
- 2017: A public lecture was given by Jane Rogers, who adapted Stevenson's *The Beach of Faleså* for BBC Radio 4 starring David Tennant; St. Augustine's Church.
- 2018: Napier Acting students produced a short dramatizations of RLS works, St. Augustine's.
- 2019: A public lecture was given by author Nick Rankin on RLS and Rider Haggard, St. Augustine's.
- 2020: RLS Day was a wholly virtual event delivered via the RLS website. Activity registered from 48 countries across the world, making the day a truly global event. The website retains all of this activity for future reference.

International Activities/Visitors:

- 2017: Dryden convened the international Robert Louis Stevenson conference at Edinburgh Napier, with 50 international presenters, some from beyond the academy.
- 2016: Dryden was invited by the European Cultural Network, *Sur Les Traces de Robert Louis Stevenson*, to give a public talk at Grez, France, the village where Stevenson met his wife, Fanny. 40 people (network delegates) subsequently visited the Mehew Collection in 2017 [C6].

Media Activity:

- 2015: Artist Simon Zabell filmed Dryden for his Stevenson documentary [C7]. This was subsequently nominated for a prize at the Malaga Film Festival (2018).
- 2016: Dryden authored an article for *The Conversation*, an online publication reaching a global audience [C4].
- 2017: Yvan Pierre-Kaiser filmed Dryden and Milne for a documentary about Stevenson in Scotland on the French ARTE channel.
- 2020: Dryden was interviewed for the ITV programme *All Around Britain* (aired 22nd November 2020).

- 2020: Dryden was interviewed by journalist Sean Hillen for an article on Stevenson [C8]. Following the publication of this article, Dryden has been invited as a guest speaker to discuss her work on RLS at a virtual writing retreat in Ireland in March 2021.

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

[C1] RLS website and Google Analytics information:

www.robert-louis-stevenson.org (2018 statistics: Google Analytics)

[C2] Contact for the Director of the Edinburgh: UNESCO City of Literature Trust for corroboration of RLS day activity.

[C3] Contact for schools writing completion at the RLS Club.

[C4] Dryden article in *The Conversation*:

<https://theconversation.com/how-robert-louis-stevensons-reputation-was-shipwrecked-by-his-inner-circle-55666>

[C5] RLS Workshop at the Edinburgh International Book Festival: Edinburgh International Book Festival Mehew Exhibition 2017:

https://d3v4sx4i2y2qe1.cloudfront.net/content/programme_pdfs/2017-edinburgh-international-book-festival-brochure.593ecae2f105b.pdf (page 74)

[C6] Robert Louis Stevenson European Cultural Route:

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/in-the-footsteps-of-robert-louis-stevenson>

[C7] Simon Zabell documentary on Stevenson (Spanish):

<https://festivaldemalaga.com/pelicula/ver/1529/Our-Man-in-Tahiti-VOSE>

[C8] Hillen and World Itineraries articles

<https://worlditineraries.co/2020/12/15/walk-in-the-footsteps-of-celebrated-scottish-author-robert-louis-stevenson/>

<https://www.justluxe.com/lifestyle/arts/feature-1970850.php>