

<b>Institution:</b> University of Lincoln		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 34 – Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Studies		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Justice, Arts and Migration		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2018 -2020		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>  DONALD Stephanie Hemelryk	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>  Distinguished Professor of Film	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b> 9 Apr 18 – 31 Dec 20
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2018 - 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> N		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b> <p><i>Justice, Arts and Migration</i> (JAM) is an interdisciplinary Arts and Humanities project, embedded in an international research network set up in 2018 and led by the University of Lincoln (Donald), Hong Kong Baptist University and University of Western Sydney. Postdoctoral fellow Kaya Davies Hayon assisted in the delivery of events and activities cited below (Jan 2019-July 2020). In collaboration with public arts venues, artists and curators nationally and internationally, JAM-based research has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• informed and refined public understanding of the experience of contemporary migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.</li> <li>• influenced the practice of artists and professional curators as they engage with questions of migration, displacement, detention and hospitality.</li> <li>• injected a cultural and creative dimension into campaigns for the ethical treatment of refugees and asylum seekers.</li> <li>• raised public awareness about issues of migration, refuge, and asylum.</li> </ul>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b> <p><i>Justice, Arts and Migration</i> represents an evolution in Donald's long-term research interests, which have encompassed, most notably, cinema and the visual arts, primarily in China, Europe, and Australia; children's media; and domestic (intra-Chinese) and global migration. The hypothesis being explored in JAM projects is that creative arts practice has a unique power not just to influence public opinion about questions of migration, refuge, and asylum, but actually to change perceptions and so produce new forms of understanding and encourage ethically-informed activism.</p> <p>The longer background to Donald's JAM research and engagement is her earlier study of migrant children in world cinema, whose findings were published in the award-winning monograph, <i>There's No Place Like Home: The Migrant Child in World Cinema</i> (2018a). In that work, she developed an 'action research' methodology that enriched analyses of cinematic representations of migrant children by juxtaposing them against accounts of film-making workshops she undertook with migrant children in Australia, China and the UK. This work has been further refined in her methodological argument in partnership with the British Film Institute's <i>Cent Ans de Jeunesse</i> programme of film art and film-making (2019a) and her critique of activist film featuring children (2019b). This combination of critical analysis with engaged creative practice provided the methodological platform for a new programme of work conceived and developed at Lincoln from 2018 onwards. The Justice, Arts and Migration (JAM) project focuses on adult migrants and asylum seekers, as well as children, to explore and explain how practices and strategies across a number of creative arts might help to achieve more ethical</p>		

treatment for refugees, particularly those being held in detention. Research outputs that underpin the new JAM project published during her tenure at Lincoln include:

- a. An article that challenged the ethics of an Australian documentary film's claim to 'speak for' detained asylum seekers, published in a journal issue devoted to 'Refugee Filmmaking.' (2019b);
- b. a critique of *Lampedusa*, a stage play about displacement, debt, and austerity in the EU, that exposes the playwright's limited capacity to articulate the voice of the indebted migrant subject (2018b);
- c. an assessment of the value of, and constraints on, co-creative film workshops with migrant children (2019a);
- d. further reflection on child migrants and cinema, showing how contemporary events have highlighted forced migration as a recurrent *topos* in the history of European cinema (2020).

JAM is fundamentally characterised by the engaged relationship between academic and public, which has shaped the nature and focus of the research programme. Ongoing public engagement initiatives (described in section 4), not only arise from Donald's research, but provide in turn feedback about the representation and communication of migrant experience allowing research findings and hypotheses to be tested at each stage of the investigation.

### 3. References to the research

- 3.1 Donald, S. H. (2018a) *There's No Place Like Home: The Migrant Child in World Cinema*. London: I. B. Tauris / Bloomsbury (2018 CHOICE Outstanding Academic Title in Film) Submitted under REF2.
- 3.2 Donald, S. H. (2018b) 'Debt, the migrant and the refugee: Lampedusa on stage', in Cox, E. and Wake, C. (eds.) 'Envisioning Asylum' [Special issue], *Research in Drama Education: Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 23, 193-209  
<http://doi.org/10.1080/13569783.2018.1438177>
- 3.3 Donald, S. H. (2019a) 'Follow the Yellow Brick Road: the passeur, the gatekeeper, and the young migrant film-maker.' *Film Education Journal*, 2:1, 48-61  
<https://doi.org/10.18546/FEJ.02.1.04>
- 3.4 Donald, S. H. (2019b) 'Shaming Australia: cinematic responses to the "Pacific Solution"', in Donald, S. H., Davies Hayon, K. and Sorbera, L. (eds.) 'Refugee Filmmaking' [Special issue], *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Media*, 18, 70-90  
<https://doi.org/10.33178/alpha.18.01>
- 3.5 Donald, S.H. (2020), 'Foreword', in Alison Smith ed. *The Big Walk: It Takes a Decade*, (Lincoln: JAM). Donald is the Commissioning Editor for the JAM imprint that encourages community editors and authors/artists with lived experience to share their work. Available on request.

### 4. Details of the impact

Within JAM, impact arises primarily through an ongoing commitment to the integration of public voices into the research process, rather than via the dissemination, reception and/or uses of specific outputs. A suite of six engagement initiatives have led to impacts on public understanding of social issues, political engagement, the creative practice of professional artists and curators, and a dynamic link between events and the collaborative production of ideas

#### **Initiative 1: *There's No Place Like Home*, Mansions of the Future, Lincoln, 24-26 April 2019 [5.1, 5.10]**

This mixed-media event was the first occasion on which Donald's research into the ethics of the cinematic and dramatic representation of asylum seekers (2018b; 2019b) served as the basis for collaboration with artists and curators in an attempt to inform and refine public understanding of questions about migration, displacement, detention and hospitality. Donald and Davies Hayon curated the event in partnership with Mansions of the Future, an Arts Council-funded arts and cultural hub in Lincoln.

As with the special issue of *Alphaville* on 'Refugee Filmmaking' that Donald edited with JAM members Tofighian (UNSW/University of Cairo) Lucia Sorbera (University of Sydney) and Davies Hayon (Lincoln), the catalyst for TNPLH was the literary and cinematic response of the Kurdish poet and filmmaker, Behrouz Boochani, to his detention on Manus Island by the Australian Government. In addition to readings from Boochani's book *No Friend but the Mountains* (2018) by Iranian and British actors and a screening of his film *Chauka, Please Tell Us the Time* (2017), TNPLH featured an exhibition of photographs of Manus detainees by the Iranian-Australian photographer Hoda Afshar and screenings of her film *Remain*, as well as the first live Skype interview/Q&A with Boochani in the UK.

Building on Donald's use of creative workshops as a research method, Afshar ran a 2-day workshop on photographic practice, and writer Daniele Pantone led another on poetry (April 2019). Donald and Hong Kong collaborator Erni led a symposium of academics, activists and service providers on the ethics of engaging with refugee art in Lincoln. Mansions of the Future data record attendance of over 120 across the 3 days, plus footfall of 1,385 for Afshar's photographs and film over their 6-month run. These events produced:

***New thinking among attendees about the capacity of creative arts practice to challenge conventional wisdom about the situation of asylum seekers held in detention in Australia and the UK.*** One visitor commented that it was 'Eye-opening and very inspiring. I'll never be the same again' another said 'The more I have learned about the migration/ detention aspects, the more nuanced and complex I see that it is; I realise how important the arts can be in exploring, conveying and interpreting such ideas'. [5.1]

***Research-informed insights influencing creative practice.*** Writer Tanya Akofri stated that 'These two days have transformed me as a writer and as an artist. I now know what I want to write about forever. I now know that as a storyteller I have a duty to give a voice to the voiceless.' [5.1].

A podcast about the event by sound-artist Femi Oriogun-Williams was broadcast as 'Message from Manus' [5.6, 5.7] in BBC Radio 4's *Shortcuts*, 24 September 2019.

#### ***Changes in professional curatorial practice.***

Mansions of the Future Director [5.10] stated that: 'Working in partnership with JAM has enabled MAF to think more critically about ... how Mansions can respond to local concerns with an urgency and sensitivity to Lincoln citizens and those displaced within Lincolnshire.' In addition, Clare Cumberlidge, development partner [5.10] stated: 'The academic rigour provided by the research strengthened ... the knowledge and learning of the Mansions team including the employees (cultural producers), the volunteers and the associate artists.'

#### ***Initiative 2: Detention, Activism and the Arts, Mansions of the Future, 21 May 2019 [5.2]***

In response to feedback from TNPLH, and as an opportunity to observe how, in practice, a cultural and creative dimension might be introduced into campaigns for the ethical treatment of refugees and asylum seekers, JAM hosted a panel of academics, artists and activists to discuss detention, activism and art in the UK, focussing in particular on the proximity to Lincoln of Morton Hall immigration removal centre. The audience of 40 to 50 Lincoln citizens not only provided written responses but were moved to practical initiatives. The Big Walk (see 6 below, was a major outcome). The event produced:

#### ***Public debate about the rights of detainees leading to engagement and action.***

Typical phrases were: 'caused me to question my own responsibility'; 'made me think of what I can practically do to help change the situation'; 'energised to get more involved in local struggle.'

***Enhanced Participation in the political process.*** Participants drafted an open letter [5.5] to the Australian Prime Minister, and one initiated a petition on change.org [5.4] calling for Boochani's release.

***Innovative linkages between artistic practice and political activism.*** See Initiative 6 (below).

**Initiative 3: *There's No Place Like Home*, Community Links, Canning Town, 5-6 July 2019 [5.3, 5.10]**

Community Links, an East London charity, 'supports people to come together, overcome barriers, build purpose and make the most of the place they live in.' It has two guiding principles: to find new solutions to old problems, and to deliver them to the whole community. Having participated in the Lincoln event, the Director of Community Links invited JAM to present an appropriately reconfigured version of TNPLH to its London audience. The poet and charity activist, Lemn Sissay, read from Boochani's *No Friend but the Mountains* (2018), Afshar's *Remain* was screened, and there was a further online interaction with Boochani. These presentations were followed by participatory music, soundscape, and photography workshops. Around 150 people attended the event and workshops, about 50% of whom had never attended Community Links events before. Among the impacts of the event were:

***New ways of thinking enhancing social engagement.*** The Director commented [5.10] that the project 'encouraged a freedom of expression in our service users that we have not noticed before. This is to do with their ability to take their stories and communicate the key points within them in a different way, better and with greater effect. This has in turn impacted on their motivation to come together as a group and organise in order to influence local decision makers about their situation and their needs.'

***Enlarging Community Links staff perspectives and practice.*** The Director further commented [5.10] 'They have thus far only had training on how to help refugees access benefits. Since our work together they have themselves gone on to look at different material to widen their knowledge on the issue of migration and refugees and they have recognised the power of creativity to encourage the development of our service users.'

**Initiative 4: *'Childhood Curtailed'*, GroundLAB, Sincil Bank, Lincoln, 23-24 November 2019**

As part of *Being Human*, the national festival of the humanities, and underpinned by Donald's career-long experience of filmmaking workshops as a method for elucidating children's understandings of place and belonging, but developed explicitly in the UK context and in relation to post-Schengen migration to Lincoln (2019a), JAM ran photography and text workshops for Year 6 pupils from Bishop King Primary School, the great majority of whom came from first-generation migrant backgrounds. The children were encouraged to reflect on the meaning of *home* by drawing maps, creating cardboard sculptures, and photographing their work for public display. Their teacher wrote that they 'really liked thinking about their local community in a different way than they usually do.' The *Being Human* evaluator [5.8] commended the event as 'a highly effective model for depth, rather than breadth, engagement.' Positive outcomes included 'learning about "place", new creative "skills" and enhanced attitudes to the community.'

**Initiative 5: *Childhood and Public Housing, Mansions of the Future*, 28 February 2020**

Aware of her research into cinematic representations of vulnerable children (*Alphaville*, 2019), and having observed the success of 'Childhood Curtailed', Mansions of the Future invited Donald to organise a symposium that would enhance the local social impact of its screenings of films by Andrea Luka Zimmerman. Addressing questions of housing, space, marginalisation and social justice, Zimmerman's art radically reimagines relations between people, place, and ecology. As well as interested members of the public, the 44 participants included academics, artists and activists with housing-related expertise in archaeology, cinema (including Zimmerman), architecture, design, sociology and criminology. Community Links Director Venu Dhupa gave the keynote, which led to plans for 'early-action' workshops for housing activists in Lincoln, including GroundLAB. Due to COVID, the first was delivered to the Maison Dunkerque and Maison des Femmes migrant support groups in Northern France in an online format in May, 2020. The young British-Nigerian filmmaker Lazeez Raimi, whose short film, *An Englishman's Stead* (2019), was premiered at the symposium, wrote to say that: 'It was a great experience to have screened my film at Mansions of the Future ... Being present with likeminded people gave me renewed optimism to continue trying to tackle past and present injustices.'



**Initiative 6: 'The Big Walk': Curated walk from Lincoln to Morton Hall Immigration****Removal Centre**

Following 'Detention, Activism and the Arts' (Initiative 2), members of the public asked about making some kind of pilgrimage to mark the presence of detainees in the UK. Accordingly, a panellist, Croatian-British performance artist Natasha Davis, was commissioned to curate a site-specific 'Big Walk' from Lincoln to Morton Hall. In line with Donald's questions about the potential of art practice to disrupt taken-for-granted perceptions and political positions, Davis's location of events and installations along the route were designed to refashion ancient ideas about pilgrimage, walking walls, beating bounds, and protest marches in order to create a poetic interrogation of memory, identity, migration and the trauma of incarceration. (This initiative has inspired Davis to create a series of walks to national centres related to detention and removal, entitled *It Takes a Decade*.) Unfortunately, due to the effects of Covid-19 'The Big Walk' had to be reorganised into an online event. This included a greater focus on collaboration with authors for the legacy book *The Big Walk: It Takes a Decade* (2020) and outreach to the public via online activities, seminars, and debates (see our Covid statement).

Comments from those who attended the online event indicated both their increased understanding and their changing perspective [5.9].

'The hidden nature of the detention system; as soon as people arrive here we erase them from society and their individual identities. Migration has become a crime in this country, which has directly led to negative opinions, narratives and hostility – that's not something to be proud of, or even tolerate.'

'What would I do in the same shoes as the personal accounts fleeing their home? How I will be treated by authorities, my non-position in British society, the encountered attitudes of British or Australian people, even the ignoring my plight.'

'I'm going to immediately share it all with my sister in Canada who works in refugees' social justice, there.'

'I will be sharing all your resources with Refugee Tales who have a very similar goal but use different methods. I don't do enough collaboration, lockdown has made this worse, but I will try harder to work 'with' rather than 'against'.'

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact** (indicative maximum of 10 references)**Audience Feedback:**

- 5.1 Mansions of the Future, 23-26 April <https://migrationandart.com/event/28>
- 5.2 Mansions of the Future, 22 May <https://migrationandart.com/event/23>
- 5.3 Community Links 5-6 July <https://migrationandart.com/event/29>

**Community Action:**

- 5.4 Change.org petition <http://chnq.it/8FdFmZYctt>
- 5.5 Open letter <https://tinyurl.com/wvz94sk>
- 5.6 Femi Oriogun-Williams, 'Message from Manus', BBC Shortcuts <https://tinyurl.com/qpggopfb>
- 5.7 Testimonial from Femi Oriogun-Williams <https://tinyurl.com/vv3c6z9>
- 5.8 Teachers and Being Human testimonials <https://migrationandart.com/event/37>
- 5.9 The Big Walk Feedback

**5.10 Organisational and Curatorial Testimonials**

- Venu Dhupa, Community Links <https://tinyurl.com/u8wcd96>
- Kerry Campbell, Mansions of the Future <https://tinyurl.com/weudq9z>
- Clare Cumberlandidge <https://tinyurl.com/tlxytff>