

Impact case study (REF3)

Institution: University of Aberdeen		
Unit of Assessment: UoA28 (History)		
Title of case study: Child Abuse in the Scottish Diaspora: Enabling the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry through Historical Research		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2003-2019		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Marjory-Ann Harper	Chair in History	04/1984-present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2018-2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>The Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry (SCAI), established in 2015, investigates the historic abuse of children in Scotland, with a view to enable public acknowledgement of the abuse, provide recommendations for legislators and policy makers and improve reporting functions within Scottish care facilities. Drawing deeply on her research, Professor Marjory Harper has provided crucial insight into the historic policies surrounding child emigration and its relevance to the inquiry; particularly by highlighting the abuse suffered by adolescent groups of migrants. She contributed significantly to a co-authored report and contributed an appendix on juvenile migration, which has enabled SCAI to fulfil its statutory duty to apply public scrutiny in this sensitive area.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>Professor Harper is established as a leading authority on Scottish and British Emigration; her research explores the cultural, socio-economic, political and institutional contexts of emigration and immigration as well as lived experiences of individuals, families and communities in the UK and overseas. As she puts it, 'Memories are constructed and reconstructed not simply by the lapse of time and the onset of old age, but by the political, cultural and personal context in which recollections are invoked and interpreted'. [6, p. 19]. Harper's work on the Scottish diaspora offers novel insight into memory as a source of identity and the mental stress commonly experienced by diasporic populations.</p> <p>Harper has an unsurpassed track record in the study of migration from Britain, including child migration. In Chapter 9 of <i>Migration and Empire</i> Harper and Stephen Constantine scrutinise the transportation from the UK and the resettlement in the British empire of those who would now be called 'children in need'. In that study the experiences of Scottish children are evaluated within the much wider context of UK-wide policy and practice devised and managed by poor law guardians and charitable agencies [1].</p> <p>That reflects Harper's broader engagement with the institutional context facilitating child migration. In a chapter of her earlier monograph, <i>Adventurers and Exiles</i> [2], Harper analysed the philosophy and activities of Scottish institutions, which sent children overseas in the Victorian era, and in <i>Scotland No More?</i> she undertook a similar study for the twentieth century, looking not only at charitable agencies but at the government's wartime sea-evacuation programme [3].</p> <p>Harper's article entitled 'Minds on the edge (2014)' explores the impact of Scots' migration to Canada from late 19th - early 20th century on their mental health, demonstrating that the process of transition could be an alienating experience, whilst highlighting barriers to the exploration of such records, such as lack of accessible documentation and privacy legislation [4].</p>		

The distinctive contribution of Harper's research (into child migration and other types of population movement) is that it populates official policies and procedures with real people, looking at the impact of those policies, procedures and practices on individuals and families. Studies of policy making, and the implementation of policy generally involve a top-down approach, whereas Harper works bottom up, starting with the individuals who were impacted by those policies. People's experiences are not shaped by top-down frameworks and policies, but by the effectiveness (or otherwise) with which those policies were implemented, including the robustness of the safeguards that were or were not set in place. With specific reference to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, her work as a historian generates findings that can be appropriated by the Inquiry into its ultimate report and recommendations about how we can use the mistakes of the past to inform future policies and practices.

A more recent phase of Harper's research explores the interaction of migration and mental health. Her assertion that 'migration is a phenomenon synonymous with dislocation' has been explored not only in her publications, but also in her contribution in 2017 to a WHO webinar (where she presented alongside child psychiatrists, cultural mediators, and others) on the mental health of refugees and migrants. [5, 7; P1]. These collaborations across disciplines and beyond the academy laid important foundations for Harper's contributions in SCAI by tailoring and connecting historical research to present concerns.

Thus, knowledge and methods developed through her research led her to be invited to act as historical consultant when the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry [P2] turned its attention to the experiences of children and adolescents (her research was a major focus for discussion when she gave evidence to the inquiry), [see S6]

Harper's research and expertise were considered crucial providing:

- Expert knowledge of the Scottish diaspora and its relevance to the emigration of minors
- Expert historical knowledge of the institutional context within which child migration took place.
- Research specialism allowing the identification of a range of small-scale institutions relevant to the inquiry;
- Documentation of trauma and additional outcomes experienced by emigrants (recognition of other forms of abuse suffered by a child);
- Key expertise in identifying adolescents whose experiences are also integral to the inquiry.

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

- [1] M. Harper and S. Constantine, *Migration and Empire* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010)
- [2] M. Harper, *Adventurers and Exiles: The Great Scottish Exodus* (London, Profile Books, 2003)
- [3] M. Harper. *Scotland No More?* (Edinburgh, Luath Press, 2012)
- [4] Harper, M-AD (2014), 'Minds on the Edge: Immigration and Insanity among Scots and Irish in Canada, 1867-1914', *Journal of Irish and Scottish Studies*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 56-79
- [5] M. Harper (ed), *Migration and Mental Health* (Basingstoke, Palgrave MacMillan, 2016),
- [6] M. Harper, *Testimonies of Transition*, (Edinburgh, Luath, 2019),
- [7] WHO Webinar, 'Migration and Health Webinar Two: Mental ehealth of refugees and migrants: myths and realities', 2017. See <http://www.euro.who.int/en/media-centre/events/events/2017/09/migration-and-health-webinar-two-mental-health-of-refugees-and-migrants-myths-and-realities>

All listed publications were published in quality journals and subjected to peer review providing assurance that the underpinning research meets the 2* threshold.

Grant funding

[P1] Peer Reviewed Wellcome Trust Conference Grant to support a two-day international, multi-disciplinary conference on Migration and Mental Health leading to the above volume of the same title, 04/14-05/14 (GBP4,880)

[P2] *[text removed for publication]*

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

In October 2015, the Scottish Government commissioned the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry (SCAI). It follows the ongoing Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) undertaken in England and Wales beginning in 2014. Both were established due to concerns that organisations had failed to protect children in care from sexual abuse. The scope of the Scottish inquiry extends beyond the IICSA in that it considers policies and procedures in respect of the migration of children whose care originated in Scotland and considers also non-sexual and non-physical forms of abuse. The SCAI is required by statute to investigate all 'failures by institutions and bodies which had legal responsibility for the care of children within living memory'. The significance of SCAI to former migrants can be seen in the testimony of one former child migrant to an initial hearing in November 2018: *'I hope that the evidence that I have given to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry allows governments to understand child migration. I hope that they will care enough to ensure that people and children never have to go through an experience like this again. Governments must and should protect their children'* [S2].

The SCAI is obliged to judge issues of past failings and testimonial evidence in the context of the standards and legislation prevailing at the time [S1]. This remit requires the Inquiry to depend on a combination of interviews with former migrants and their families, and a strong historical research component to inform future practice and policy. To fulfil its remit SCAI depends on historical research and the reapplication of that research to the needs of the enquiry.

Drawing on her research as detailed above, Prof. Harper was invited to act as a consultant for SCAI in December 2018 in order to join Prof. Stephen Constantine (Lancaster) and Prof. Gordon Lynch (Kent) [S3]. Reflecting a division of labour underpinned by their respective expertise and pragmatic time considerations, Harper was solely responsible for the report's first appendix (approximately 56,000 words) covering juvenile migration as well as co-authoring the final expert report (approximately 120,000 words). Most child and adolescent migration was organised through specific emigration institutions. Some, such as Quarrier's, are relatively well known. However, the Inquiry was required to be comprehensive, not least because abuse and systemic failures were just as likely within smaller institutions. Harper was able to identify the records of lesser known migration schemes and relatively unrecognised institutions. In so doing, Professor Harper has both supplied a significant body of historical knowledge and actively re-packaged and applied that knowledge to enable SCAI to perform its function – which it would not otherwise have been able to do.

During the compilation of the report, Harper drew on her research to enrich the inquiry in several ways. As the Head of Policy and Research stated, *'We would have been at a loss if it was not for all your work in revealing to us this history of juvenile migration we know so little about'* [S4]. Crucially, Harper was responsible for the identification of previously lesser-known child migration schemes in Scotland, including the identification of institutions linked to the wider scope of the inquiry [S5].

The report, published in June 2020, enabled SCAI to move to full hearings [S5]. Following a five month delay due to the impact of COVID-19, the hearings began in September 2020. Prof. Harper gave evidence as a witness on 16 September 2020 [S6]. The questioning focused on both Prof. Harper's underpinning research and the work undertaken for the inquiry, underlining and amplifying her findings. Her evidence along with the report will now form the basis of the ongoing hearings, including the collation of testimonials from former migrants, and will feed into the interim finding and recommendations of this section of the inquiry [S8].

Prof. Harper's work will inform the SCAI report on child migration and final report, delayed due to COVID-19 and likely to be published in 2021. This will likely result in further impact consequent on the report in the next cycle [S8]. For instance, a Scottish government proposal that child migrants suffering abuse be compensated is currently under consultation, notwithstanding that the UK Government has already offered compensation for child migrants [S7].

Harper's research-based contributions enabled the Inquiry to fulfil its statutory role, enabling it to proceed to hearings and execute public scrutiny based on a deep historically informed evidence-base, thus fulfilling its remit as mandated by the Scottish parliament. Lady Smith, SCAI chair, confirmed the public benefit in a letter to the University of Aberdeen which stated, '*Professor Harper has performed a great public service to this Inquiry, and we are very grateful to her*' [S8].

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

[S1] The Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry Website, <https://www.childabuseinquiry.scot/>

[S2] Testimony presented to Scottish Child Abuse Enquiry, Thursday 21 November 2018, <https://www.childabuseinquiry.scot/media/2014/transcript-day-92.pdf>

[S3] Correspondence with Head of Policy and Research, Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, 7 December 2018

[S4] Correspondence with Head of Policy and Research, Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, September 2019

[S5] Constantine, S.; Harper, M. and Lynch, G., *Abuse and Scottish Children Sent Overseas through Child Migration Schemes Report* (2020) Available At: <https://childabuseinquiry.scot/resource-centre/child-abuse-and-scottish-children-sent-overseas-through-child-migration-schemes/>

[S6] Transcript of Prof. Harper's Evidence, 16 Sept 2020, Available At: <https://www.childabuseinquiry.scot/media/2606/day-185-scottish-child-abuse-inquiry.pdf>

[S7] Scottish Government Consultation on Compensation, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/pre-legislative-public-consultation-financial-redress-historical-child-abuse-care/pages/3/>

[S8] Chair of SCAI to University of Aberdeen, Statement of Corroboration, 14 October 2020