

Institution: University of Oxford		
Unit of Assessment: 27 – English Language and Literature		
Title of case study: Improving cultural understanding of Victorian 'diseases of modernity' and stimulating critical, artistic and medical insights into contemporary parallels		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: Feb 2006-April 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:
Prof Sally Shuttleworth	Professor of English Literature	2006-present
Dr Melissa Dickson	Postdoctoral Research Assistant	March 2014-December 2017
Dr Amelia Bonea	Postdoctoral Research Assistant	March 2014-March 2018
Dr Jennifer Wallis	Postdoctoral Research Assistant	March 2014-August 2016
Dr Emilie Taylor-Brown	Postdoctoral Research Assistant	October 2016- July 2019
Period when the claimed impact occurred: June 2017-31 December 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words) <p>Creative educational-entertainment programmes enhanced audiences' understanding of 'diseases of modernity' from the Victorian era to the present. Cultural participation with literary and medical history was stimulated by original forms of engagement with research, including theatre, cabaret, a children's story, and a light and sound projection shown in Oxford, Poole, and Dunedin, New Zealand. Collaborations with Chipping Norton Theatre (CNT) and Projection Studio extended repertoires and provided actor employment for CNT during lockdown. A teaching resource assisted preparation for A-level 'unseen prose' examinations. Online resources exploring expert/non-expert perspectives on mental health and personal narratives benefitted psychiatrists and mental health service-users.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words) <p>Shuttleworth is an authority on Victorian literature and psychology, with expertise in interpreting relationships between popular and professional understandings of mental health and disease.</p> <p>(i) <i>The Mind of the Child</i> (2010) fundamentally reassessed the scope and significance of 19th-C child psychology, reconnecting literary works with concurrent work in medicine and psychiatry. The book extended accounts of the 1890s Child Study Movement and established new historical and literary insights into imagination, childhood fears and concepts of precocity and prematurity.</p> <p>Underpinning publications after 2016 were supported by a major ERC grant (PI: Shuttleworth). Employing 7 full-time and 3 part-time researchers from English Literature and History of Science, 'Diseases of Modern Life' (DML) made apparent a holistic, integrative Victorian approach to problems of modernity. Identifying perceived causes of physiological, psychological and social disease in technological change, pressures of work and education, and environmental pollution, the group extended 19th-C 'public health' studies into professional and 'lifestyle' diseases, including alcohol and narcotic abuse, countering a tendency to compartmentalize psychiatric, environmental and literary history and recontextualising 21st-C 'problems of modernity'.</p>		

(ii) Shuttleworth's essay 'Fears, Phobias' (2018) traced the rise of medical diagnoses of inexplicable phobias in the late 19thC, establishing George Borrow's *Lavengro* as inspiration for the first extended English medical analysis of psychological obsession.

(iii) 'Fagged Out' (2019) set concerns with insomnia in our 24/7 society alongside 19th-C anxieties about overwork and sleeplessness. Treating a case study of a sleepless prime minister, Gladstone, it uncovered the early history of sleep research and the medical and popular remedies advocated.

(iv) *Anxious Times* (2019), the principal co-authored publication, presented in-depth case studies from DML. **Bonea** examined the emergence of occupational health discourse, retrieving influential work by the 18th-C Italian Ramazzini, and exploring how Victorians negotiated questions of moral responsibility for health in the workplace. Her second chapter undertook innovative analysis of modern technologies within medical practice: telegrams, telephones, and the forgotten 'pleasure telephone'. **Wallis** showed how British coastal resorts, designed for health, became objects of anxiety – recognised sources of infection due to poor sanitary conditions. Her second chapter treated cultural anxieties around the secret female drinker: a figure not of the slums, but the middle-class home. **Dickson** placed debates around overpressurised school education in European perspective, analysing fictional fantasies of overstretched minds. Her final chapter put such concerns in evolutionary perspective, investigating literary projections of speeded-up nervous systems and bodiless lives.

(v) **Dickson's** monograph, *Cultural Encounters* (2019) interrogated the rhetoric of modernity in the 19th-C periodical press. It showed writers on science, technology and literature drawing on the Oriental magic of the *Arabian Nights* to gauge how far Britain had realised 'impossible' technological ambitions while continuing to generate fantasies of escape from modern pressures.

(vi) **Taylor-Brown's** essay 'Being Hangry' (2018) contextualised modern 'hanger' (expression of unidentified hunger as anger) in relation to historical intertwinement of digesting and feeling. It examined how, through the 19thC, neurological understandings of the body gave new meanings to digestive complaint, the 'demon of dyspepsia' becoming a cultural referent for complex emotional experiences associated with poor gut health.

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

- i. [Authored Book, available on request] Sally Shuttleworth, *The Mind of the Child: Child Development in Literature, Science, and Medicine, 1840-1900* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010). ISBN: 9780199582563. **Winner of the British Society for Literature and Science Prize, for the best book in the field of literature and science (2010).**
- ii. [Chapter, listed in REF2] Sally Shuttleworth, 'Fears, Phobias and the Victorian Psyche', in ed. Daniel McCann and Claire McKechnie-Mason, *Fear in the Medical and Literary Imagination, Medieval to Modern: Dreadful Passions* (London: Palgrave, 2018), 177-202. ISBN: 9781137559470
- iii. [Journal Article] Sally Shuttleworth, 'Fagged Out: Overwork and Sleeplessness in Victorian Professional Life', *Interface Focus* (The Royal Society) 10 (2020), 1-10. DOI: [10.1098/rsfs.2019.0088](https://doi.org/10.1098/rsfs.2019.0088)
- iv. [Edited Book, listed in REF2] Sally Shuttleworth, Amelia Bonea, Melissa Dickson, and Jennifer Wallis, *Anxious Times: Medicine and Modernity in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Pittsburgh, PA: U of Pittsburgh Press, 2019). ISBN: 9780822945512
- v. [Authored Book, available on request] Melissa Dickson, *Cultural Encounters with the Arabian Nights in the Nineteenth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2019). ISBN: 9781474443647
- vi. [Chapter, available on request] Emilie Taylor-Brown, "'Being Hangry': Gastrointestinal Health and Emotional Well-Being in the Long Nineteenth Century', in ed. Manon Mathias and Alison M. Moore, *Gut Feeling and Digestive Health in Nineteenth-Century Literature*,

History and Culture (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 109-32. ISBN: 9783030018566

Grants and Awards:

- **European Research Council Advanced Grant (AdG), SH5, ERC-2013-ADG Project no. 340121:** Shuttleworth (PI), 'Diseases of Modern Life: Nineteenth-century Perspectives' (1.2.14-31.7.19). Award value: **EUR2,362,659.**
- **UKRI Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) and ESRC Impact Acceleration Account (IAA), Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Impacts of Covid-19: Urgent Response Fund:** Shuttleworth (PI), 'Contagion Cabaret for Covid' (14.5.20-25.8.20). Award value: **GBP7,340.**

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

Educational Entertainment. A collaboration with Chipping Norton Theatre (2017-20; trialled with Pegasus Theatre 2016) adapted 19th-C popular drama and music with interspersed educational talks, creating 'Contagion Cabaret'. The Cabaret **showed diverse audiences how popular culture, past and present, exploits metaphorical connections between disease and 'contagion of ideas'**. Venues included the History of Science Museum, Oxford (audience: 60), Pitt Rivers Museum (200), and Chipping Norton Theatre (50) (5.1.i). Updated and filmed during COVID-19 lockdown, the Cabaret **provided online educational entertainment for 735 viewers** (post-show discussion: 345+ views) (5.1.iii). Its 'brilliant and irreverent historical look at lockdowns, diseases and pandemics' (Ox in a Box review, 5.1.ii) generated intense audience responses ('Moved me to tears... what a powerful idea'; 'current/past/scientific..... I couldn't stop watching') (5.1.iii). The theatre **benefitted from 'new ways of working during lockdown/social distancing', speaking to 'themes and ideas ... of immediate relevance and interest to our audience'** (Director). **45 days of freelance actor and production staff employment were created** during enforced theatre closure (5.1.iii).

19 state-school students on the 2018 Oxfordshire County Music Service Advanced Musicianship Programme **developed composition skills**, interpreting 'Contagion Cabaret' for a 'Contagion Camerata'. Working with composer John Traill (U Oxford), they elaborated motifs of contagion, capturing 'the feeling of what it was like to have a terminal illness' and improvising on thematic 'cells', 'mutating' between instruments (participant interview feedback, 5.2.ii) (live audience: 65; YouTube video of performance viewed 83 times, 5.2.iii).

A DML-designed programme of interactive games and activities at the History of Science Museum, Oxford (HSMO) in 2018 educated 180 amateur science enthusiasts in the technologies that fuelled 19th-C anxieties about accelerating pace of life (5.1.i). Participants welcomed the 'move away from a very academic approach only to museums', reporting changed perceptions of 'modern' pressures: (indicatively) 'I'm surprised at how not-modern the pressures are! ... even instant connectivity' (5.3).

Collaboration with the Projection Studio created 'Victorian Light Night' (VLN), part of the city of Oxford's Light Night, 2018: 2,500 festival-goers watched **a rolling sound and light projection sequence** on the Radcliffe Infirmary building, Oxford, in November (5.4.i). A scripted montage of Victorian archival images and sounds incorporated a 'telegraph polka' with commissioned recordings of 19th-C environmental pollution songs on Victorian instruments and a telegraph machine ('Amazing [how] ... [p]resent conditions are simply an increment on' rapid 19th-C technological change – anonymous feedback, 5.4.ii). Accompanying talks and activities on historical perspectives of 'work-life balance' and technological/workplace anxieties **gave visitors a changed understanding of 'convalescence'** ('didn't know about ... convalescent homes. ... [I]nteresting!', 5.4.ii). Others gained new perspectives on trade unions – born of 'overly demanding' 19th-C employment practices (5.4.ii). The installation **expanded Projection Studio's 'range as artists', providing new research input (with Shuttleworth 'guid[ing] and support[ing]' interpretation) – yielding 'an incredibly powerful way of working' with new publics** and generating a further commission (testimonial letter, 5.4.iii). VLN won an Oxford Preservation Trust Award (2019), recognising 'temporary installations or events that help bring the city's past alive' (5.4.iv). Re-constructed at the Poole Guildhall in February 2020 for a Digital

Light Art Festival, the installation was seen by 40,000 (5.4.iii). VLN moved to Otago, New Zealand the same month. **As COVID-19 spread through the Southern hemisphere, it became increasingly relevant, attracting over 1,000 viewers in Dunedin, c. 80 of whom attended Shuttleworth's accompanying public lecture at the Toitū Otago Settlers Museum** (co-hosts: U Otago). The Museum's Public Programmes Developer observed: 'the work inspired ... realisation that many ... 21st-century life [stresses] have 19th-C precursors; musicians were intrigued by the audio track 'imagining the sounds of Victorian life' (5.5.i). Feedback postcards highlighted viewers' surprise that 'diseases of modern life have a long (and well-considered) history'; 'The projection made me think about the pressures on us by COVID 19 [...] panic buying adding bodily stress' (5.5.ii). Nationwide reach came through a 30-minute interview on Radio NZ's prime-time (live audience: c. 316,000). A listener, planning to write a popular Victorian history, welcomed a **'resource gold mine'** (5.5.iii).

Enhancing English and History curricula in the UK. Workshops with Cheney School, Oxford supported the **Year 8 English curriculum**, comparing Victorian and modern responses to new communication and transport technologies. 30 children produced artistic interpretations – the most striking projected onto the Radcliffe Infirmary as part of VLN. The school lead observed **'behavioural' and 'educational' benefits** (5.6). 62% of children changed 'the way [they] think about how [they] communicate with others': 'the school should teach about phone addiction'; 'I should talk in person for those who I can and only use online ... for those I can't' (5.6).

An online kit of 19th-C literary non-fiction extracts **improved resources for the 9-1 GCSE English Language and Literature unseen test**. Collaborating in 2019 with the Thomas Hardy Society educational charity in Dorset looking to widen access to 19th-C literature, DML trialed extracts (AQA exam formatted including introduction and glossary) with 6 teachers from mixed schools. Teachers praised an 'improved range of resources' and fresh ways of 'us[ing] contextual links' in teaching (5.7.i). Released nationally via the Oxford English Faculty resources webpage, and used by the AQA with teachers (5.7.i, addendum), the kit filled a resource gap (teacher feedback, Finham Park 2 Academy: 'I had been struggling to find appropriate texts, ... non-fiction can be a huge challenge, ... these extracts ... [are] a little gold mine!', 5.7.ii). 17 Year 10 students attending a free Dorset state schools workshop understood better 'how to answer GCSE questions and prepare ... for analysing texts'; 87% became more interested in the Victorians, 94% more interested in history of medicine (5.7.i).

Bonea **created an online adventure story** about a 19th-C boy attempting to telegraph a mango seed, India to London. Hosted by open website Storyweaver (India), *The Magic Mango* educated children in the historical impact of technology. Since going live (31 March 2018), *The Magic Mango* has been **translated into 9 languages** including Bengali, Hindi, Romanian, Tamil (5.8.i), and adopted by Free Kids Books (online), recommended for Grades 1-3 History and English (**9,000+ downloads**) (5.8.ii). The story **gave pupils 'exposure and challenges beyond routine syllabus and social environment'** (Principal, Focus High School, Hyderabad, 5.8.iii). A virtual theatre production and documentary film adaptation were produced by Hyderabad children during lockdown, September 2020 (5.8.iv).

Informing patient-centred care and clinical practice. 'MindReading' workshops in Dublin, Birmingham and Oxford (2017-20) **assisted patient-centred care and clinical practice**. The first workshop (approved by the College of Psychiatrists, Ireland) **enabled psychiatrists' and patients' reflection on how far they speak the same language, and how narrative can bridge gaps**. Dickson and Shuttleworth gave public talks exploring mental health through literature and self-narration and curated an exhibition at the dlr Lexlcon Public Library and Cultural Centre, Dun Laoghaire, Ireland, comparing literary and medical representations of mental illness (the Senior Executive Librarian welcomed 'something quite radically new for us', advancing the Centre's work in bibliotherapy, 5.9.i). Representatives of REFOCUS (Recovery Experience Forum of Carers and Users of Services) **found new ways to articulate experience of psychosis**, including 'A Healing Sonnet' (5.9.ii). A **MindReading online toolkit** created by Shuttleworth and Dickson with clinicians and patient groups **enabled psychiatrists to 'explore the patient experience through the prism of literature and personal narrative', informing 'self-care, patient-centred care, and ... clinical practice'** (toolkit introduction, 5.9.iii; clinicians'

endorsements, 5.9.iv). Two resource pages have been viewed 980 and 732 times; these include a YouTube video which has been viewed 60 times (average viewing time: 3.25 minutes, 5.9.v).

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

1. Contagion Cabaret/COVID Cabaret:
 - i. Final Activity Report on DML project for the European Research Council, 2019, containing audience data (2017-19), pp. 51-60.
 - ii. 'The Contagion Cabaret is a Must See ...', Ox in a Box, 17 July 2020.
 - iii. Emails from Director, Chipping Norton Theatre, August 2020, containing viewing figures.
2. Contagion Camerata:
 - i. 'The Contagion Camerata', concert programme listing student compositions, 2 February 2018.
 - ii. 'The Contagion Camerata (student interviews)', YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1saw-u1jZM>, quotes at 00:03:38-43, 00:04:05-12.
 - iii. 'The Contagion Camerata', YouTube video of performance, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sTB04UlynNU>.
3. 'Victorian Speed' event held at History of Science Museum, Oxford: indicative selection of 100 feedback postcard responses (full set available on request).
4. Sound and Light Projection, Oxford and Poole:
 - i. The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities (TORCH) webpage discussing 'Victorian Light Night', <https://www.torch.ox.ac.uk/victorian-light-night>, containing attendance figure.
 - ii. Selection of audience feedback collected by TORCH from 'Victorian Light Night' (original spreadsheet available on request).
 - iii. Letter from Projection Studio artists (3 July 2020), including audience figures for Poole event.
 - iv. *Oxford Preservation Trust Awards 2019*, <https://www.oxfordpreservation.org.uk/sites/www.oxfordpreservation.org.uk/files/2019%20OPT%20Awards%20Brochure.pdf>, including 'Victorian Light Night's certificate.
 - v. 'Light Up Poole' festival programme hosted at <https://lightuppoole.co.uk> (dedicated 'Victorian Speed of Life' event webpage: <https://lightuppoole.co.uk/r3-1-in-4-2/>).
5. Sound and Light Projection, Dunedin, New Zealand:
 - i. Testimonial from Public Programmes Developer, Toitū Otago Settlers Museum, 17 May 2020. (Audience figures from U Otago website coverage.)
 - ii. Selection of attendee feedback postcards (full set available on request).
 - iii. Email to Shuttleworth from popular history writer, 24 March 2020.
6. 'Impact Report: Working with Cheney School students as part of Victorian Light Night'.
7. Prose teaching resource:
 - i. 'Impact Report: Collaboration with The Thomas Hardy Society...', containing teacher and student feedback, pp. 2, 7-8.
 - ii. Feedback email from Teacher of English, Finham Park 2, Dorset, 5 January 2020.
8. *The Magic Mango* educational story for children:
 - i. Storyweaver webpage for *The Magic Mango*, <https://storyweaver.org.in/stories/27150-the-magic-mango/>.
 - ii. Screenshot of Free Kids Books page (close-up of downloads figure).
 - iii. Email to Bonea from Principal, Focus High School, Hyderabad, 18 February 2020.
 - iv. Poster advertising online performance on *The Magic Mango* (video available at <https://diseasesofmodernlife.web.ox.ac.uk/article/along-the-lines-event-and-blog-post>).
9. MindReading events and resources:
 - i. Video on DML website including testimony of Senior Executive Librarian, dlr LexIcon, Dun Laoghaire, Ireland, <https://diseasesofmodernlife.web.ox.ac.uk/mind-reading-conferences>, quote at 00:07:45-00:08:15.
 - ii. 'A Healing Sonnet' displayed on Action on Postpartum Psychosis website, <https://www.app-network.org/news/mind-reading-the-power-of-personal-story/>.
 - iii. MindReading online toolkit on University College Dublin School of Medicine website.
 - iv. Clinicians' endorsements: statement from Lead Clinician, Consultant Psychiatrist, 6 November 2019; news article on Arts+Health Ireland website, 20 October 2018.
 - v. Web analytics for DML YouTube videos produced by Oxplore, 7 February 2020.