

<b>Institution:</b> University of Exeter		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> UoA 26 Modern Languages and Linguistics		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Fostering Understanding of Disfigurement and Maxillofacial Surgery		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2013 - present		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b> Prof David Houston Jones	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b> Associate Professor (later Professor), French Literature and Visual Culture, College of Humanities	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b> 2005-present
Dr Marjorie Gehrhardt	Associate Research Fellow, Department of Modern Languages, College of Humanities	2013 to 2015
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2013 - present		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> N		
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>The roots of modern maxillofacial reconstructive surgery are little understood, while people with a disfigurement continue to be subjected to discrimination, their experience shaped by stereotypes, misunderstanding and fear.</p> <p>Research by Jones and Gehrhardt informed workshops and exhibitions that explored both medical documentation and artwork from WWI through to the present day to challenge negative representations of disfigurement. The two-year 1914FACES2014 project also revealed the debt owed by modern maxillofacial surgery to collaborations between surgeons and artists in the early 20th century.</p> <p>The project achieved the following impacts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Changed public perceptions</b> of both disfigurement and maxillofacial surgery via a series of exhibitions and events reaching more than 60,000 people</li> <li><b>2. Developed professional practice</b> of artists, educators and charities</li> <li><b>3. Inspired school students</b> to interact with academic research</li> </ol>		
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>The underpinning research was carried out as part of the EU INTERREG IV-funded project <b>1914FACES2014</b>. This analysed WWI collaborations between medicine and the arts, and the resulting new medical techniques and forms of artistic representation. The project, which ran between 2013 and 2015, took an interdisciplinary approach, bringing together researchers from history, art history, history of science and medicine. Together, they related contemporary artistic and medical practice to cross-disciplinary exchanges taking place during and immediately after the war. Dialogue between teams of researchers from the Universities of Exeter and Picardie Jules Verne was part of a UK-French consortium; core research was carried out by Jones (UK PI) and Gehrhardt (postdoctoral research assistant, University of Exeter).</p> <p>The project strand <b>Representing the Face</b> (dir: Jones) set out to examine the capacity of different visual media to challenge stereotypical representations. In <b>[3.2]</b>, Jones and Gehrhardt argue that artistic and sculptural techniques can engage productively with medical practice and that exhibiting medical documents can change perceptions and combat negative portrayals of disfigurement. In <b>[3.4]</b>, Gehrhardt combined a ground-breaking reassessment of the scale and nature of WWI facial injury with new insights into the social rehabilitation of those with disfigurements after the war. She also explored the cultural context of this social reintegration. Insights arose from comparative analysis of the differing social and cultural contexts of maxillofacial surgery and post-operative care in Britain and France, and of literary and visual</p>		

sources documenting contemporary attitudes to disfigurement. The long-term legacy of WWI facial injury and the interaction of surgical and artistic practice is investigated in the special issue of *Journal of War and Culture Studies* edited by Jones and Gehrhardt (2017), 'Assessing the Legacy of the Gueules Cassées: from Surgery to Art'. [3.3] The way audiences engage with disfigurement via visual media is investigated in Jones's work on Attia (2017) [3.1] and Hartley (Jones and Gehrhardt 2015) [3.2], in particular in terms of the perceivedly historical character of drawing and painting, and the capacity of 3D work to make disfigurement 'graphic'.

### 3. References to the research

[3.1] David **Houston Jones**, 'From Commonplace to Common Ground: Facial Injury in Kader Attia's *Continuum of Repair*', *Journal of War and Culture Studies*, special issue, *Assessing the Legacy of the Gueules cassées: from Surgery to Art*, ed. David Houston Jones and Marjorie Gehrhardt, 10, no.1 (January 2017), 66-81. DOI: [10.1080/17526272.2016.1219585](https://doi.org/10.1080/17526272.2016.1219585)

[3.2] David **Houston Jones** and Marjorie **Gehrhardt**, *Paddy Hartley: of Faces and Facades* (London: Black Dog, 2015). Available on request.

[3.3] *Assessing the Legacy of the Gueules cassées: from Surgery to Art*, special issue, *Journal of War and Culture Studies*, ed. David **Houston Jones** and Marjorie **Gehrhardt**, 10, no.1 (Jan 2017). <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ywac20/10/1?nav=toCList>

[3.4] Marjorie **Gehrhardt**, *The Men with Broken Faces: Gueules Cassées of the First World War* (Oxford: Lang, 2015). Available on request.

Grants: **1914FACES2014 INTERREG IVa (Manche)** award 4286 (ERDF) (2013-15) Université de Picardie / University of Exeter. Approximate value to Exeter: £192,000.

### 4. Details of the impact

1914FACES2014 examined how the mutilated faces of soldiers injured during WWI influenced medical practice, social and political history, the arts and philosophy. In particular, it considered how the radical forms of surgery pioneered at that time owed a debt to artists and, conversely, how the cultural legacy of 'les gueules cassées' (the 'broken faces', as they became known) continues to shape our experience and perception of disfigurement.

#### Challenging public perceptions of disfigurement and maxillofacial surgery

Two exhibitions foregrounded the debt of maxillofacial surgery to early 20th-century collaborations between surgeons and artists. A touring exhibition that visited Seale Hayne in Newton Abbot (June 5-29, 2014) and the University of Exeter Forum (February 25 to March 26, 2015) juxtaposed portraits and sculptural works made from military uniforms, while a three-month exhibition at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM) from January-April 2015 displayed medical materials alongside portraits, collage, drawings and sculptures. Both featured a variety of public events with speakers including surgeons, poets and veteran and disfigurement campaigner Simon Weston [5.1].



Veteran Simon Weston at the *Faces of Conflict* exhibition at RAMM, Exeter

Visitors' responses to the exhibitions offer powerful evidence of impact. 63,680 visitors were asked about their perceptions of disfigurement, likely reactions to disfigurement before and after the exhibition, and the ways in which artworks can influence these perceptions. 480 gave

questionnaire feedback demonstrating that the exhibitions' impact was to challenge 'assumptions of what a face should be/do/look like' [5.1: #132].

Comment cards show it helped people react to disfigurements in a more considered manner. *'Everyone should view this exhibition,'* said one. *'It helps us to understand and perhaps next time we see a disfigured person we will not rudely stare.'* [5.1: #8] Another said: *'It made me realise that it isn't a laughing matter.'* [5.1: #112] Overall, it changed opinions on disfigurement, with an indicative response being *'I now have more respect for disfigured people'* [5.1: #48].

Visitors with personal involvement in reconstructive surgery [5.1: #123, #134, #139, #140, #143, #148] suggested that it was productive to hear about its history [5.1: #143] and that *'the techniques pioneered by Gillies and McIndoe and others [are] still being practised today'*. [5.1: #134] They also noted that the exhibition showed an often-overlooked aspect of facial surgery: *'[It] is widely believed to be a vain specialty. However 90% of plastics is reconstructive post trauma/burns/cancer. This exhibition helps to change people's mis-held views.'* [5.1]

As well as providing insights on surgical history and practice, and eliciting a number of personal resonances, the responses illuminate two ongoing debates in our society: ways of representing war, and perceptions of beauty and disfigurement. Response 14 demonstrates visitors' realisation of the importance of this work: *'This should only be the beginning of a large cycle of exhibitions which should question images of "ideal faces" in the media which surround us.'* [5.1]

Significant regional media coverage attests to the high level of engagement, with pieces in the Western Morning News, Plymouth Herald, Mid Devon Gazette, BBC Spotlight, Radio Devon, ITV South West, Phonic FM and fashion blog ShowStudio. [5.2] Charity Changing Faces declared that 1914FACES2014 had 'contributed to raising awareness of disfigurement as a social issue and led to a change in perception from people who experienced the programme'. [5.3]

#### **Developing professional practice of educators, artists and charities**

The project team consulted with UK-based charity Changing Faces, the Imperial War Museum (IWM) and a teachers' focus group in May 2014, before creating a range of educational resources for students at Key Stage 3. Changing Faces identified the need to challenge negative and stereotypical representations of disfigurement as 'an urgent priority'. "Perceptions are bound up with long-standing traditions of facial expression and beauty, and these are shaped by visual media including painting, photography and film." The exhibitions and teaching materials were conceived to address the charity's assertion that "understanding these media is key to understanding, and reconfiguring, contemporary perceptions of disfigurement". [5.3]

The teachers' focus group identified that PSHE often raises questions of appearance, self-image and discrimination in a general way [5.4]. In response, the PSHE materials produced offer a focused case study [5.5]. In AQA History GCSE, the topic on 'medicine through time' includes a sub-section on surgery in the industrial modern world, which focuses on WWII pioneering burns specialist Archibald McIndoe but doesn't cover the key innovations of Gillies et al during/after WWI. [5.4] The resources address this, offering students insight into this important era. [5.5]

A pilot project was held with Year 8 students at Penrice Community College (St Austell, Cornwall) in 2014, followed by two sessions for Year 10 students at the University of Exeter in April 2015. Exhibition-related sessions for schools (run by Jones and Gehrhardt) involved students from King Edward Sixth College in Totnes, West Exe School in Exeter (January 2015) and St David's School, Exeter (February 2015). A further session at RAMM was run for members of Blackdown Hills Artists and Makers by project curator Cristina Burke-Trees in February 2015 [5.6]. Additionally, a two-hour session for Exeter University of the Third Age (U3A), an organisation for retired people with formal links to the University of Exeter, took place on July 5, 2016. Presenting FACES research and discussing the ways in which non-academic audiences have engaged with it so far, it included a Q&A session focusing on perceptions of disfigurement, user reactions to exhibition materials and how perceptions can be shaped by visual media. Questionnaires from the 24 participants were evaluated in July 2017 [5.7].

For the project's artist in residence, Paddy Hartley, the research-rich environment had deep implications for his practice: *'Presenting in both the conferences/ workshops and in Faces of Conflict helped place and contextualise my work alongside my artistic/academic peers dealing with complementary themes relating specifically to facial injury/surgery across conflicts and generations.'* [5.7] As well as recontextualising his work in a medical humanities context, installation of the Yeo crossword at RAMM led to *'a fundamental shift in the way in which I make artwork'*, including heightened emphasis on the implications of research findings and how media and materials can produce rich engagement with histories of disfigurement [5.8], as seen in his later residency and contribution to a permanent display at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich (2016-).

West Exe School staff created their own web page relating to Faces of Conflict, including extracts from the 1914FACES2014 Exeter website intended to stimulate discussion, both in class and in field study. These educational sessions also fed into development of Gehrhardt's professional practice, including undergraduate teaching and outreach activities [5.6].

The collaboration represented the first time Changing Faces had been involved in working on an education programme for this age group. *'It enabled us to understand how research can be communicated to schools, which subsequently led us to review our approach to formal education routes.'* Overall, the impact *'enabled [us] to build our knowledge of the historic context of the area and extend our campaign for face equality using new platforms'*. [5.3]

#### **Inspiring students to interact with academic research**

The Year 8 pupils in the Penrice pilot project, who were considered unlikely to achieve any GCSEs, showed a clear enthusiasm for contact with university research. Esther Oldrieve (teaching staff) noted pupils' fascination with individuals' stories, their willingness to contribute their own experiences and draw links to modern-day examples, and how it sparked debate within the group [5.6]. Teachers felt the human element of the lesson helped develop empathy and understanding and were keen to include similarly research-led teaching in future practice.

During the Year 10 sessions at the University of Exeter, students explored archival materials from IWM and visual sources prepared by Hartley. They discussed issues of morale, prejudice and visual representation which they said they had not previously considered. Teachers found it stimulating as it emphasised aspects not normally engaged with in class and noted the inspirational effect of academic research on the students [5.6].

#### **5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

[5.1] Visitor responses: A touring exhibition that visited Seale Hayne in Newton Abbot (June 5-29, 2014) and the University of Exeter Forum (February 25 to March 26, 2015); 'Faces of Conflict', a three-month exhibition at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM) from January to April 2015, visitor numbers 63,680\*.

[5.2] 1914FACES2014 Media coverage summary.

[5.3] Changing Faces (Leading UK charity) testimonial by Becky Hewitt, CEO.

[5.4] Teacher focus groups documentation.

[5.5] School resources.

[5.6] School Evidence Files: pilot outline and feedback; report on school-based sessions; school write-up and information sheet for schools.

[5.7] U3A Evidence files: questionnaires and evaluation.

[5.8] Paddy Hartley (Artist in residence, 1914FACES2014) testimonial.

\* Comments cards for the RAMM exhibition were unnumbered.