

Institution: University of Strathclyde		
Unit of Assessment: D28 History		
Title of case study: Using oral histories to create awareness of industrial heritage for social and economic benefit		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2001 - 2020		
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:
Arthur Mclvor	Professor & Director of SOHC	01/09/1984 – present
Ronald Johnston	Research Fellow; Tutor	01/1999 – 09/2000; 09/2001 – 06/2002
Juliette Pattinson	Senior Lecturer	01/09/2004 – 31/08/2013
Linsey Robb	Research Associate	21/09/2012 – 30/06/2015
Angela Turner	Research Associate	30/09/2011 – present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: August 2013 - December 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		
1. Summary of the impact		
<p>Through extensive research, training, consultancy, community and work placement activities, Mclvor's work ensured that the collection and interpretation of oral history was significantly enhanced across the museum, heritage and local community sectors in Scotland, with marked social and economic benefits. This deepened understanding of Scotland's industrial heritage and history of working lives, whilst marginalised voices were made more visible. A series of corporate oral histories enriched companies' perception of their workers' role in their development, and boosted their economic activities through adding heritage narratives to their marketing tools. Mclvor's research considerably augmented societal understanding of occupational disease and advocacy, created widely used open access cultural resources, whilst a new Massive Open Online Course (2019) deepened public and professional awareness of mining history and heritage.</p>		
2. Underpinning research		
<p>The research applied an oral history methodology primarily to better understand industrial heritage through lived experience, elucidating the meaning of working lives in the past (including impacts of work on health) and in contemporary society [R1-R6]. Key aims were to grow the intangible industrial heritage of Scotland, build up substantial new collections of oral interviews, interpret them and make them more accessible to the public.</p> <p>Mclvor's broader research aims were also to elucidate 'hidden histories', revealing forgotten or neglected aspects of the past, such as the health experience of coal miners [R1] or those working with toxic materials such as asbestos, or exposed to risk through 'family' or 'bystander' exposure [R3, R4]. Also, he sought to reveal and better understand what it meant to be disabled by an occupational injury or disease in the past and the legacies of such public health disasters (such as asbestos and pneumoconiosis) in the present [R3, R4, R6]. Early research (up to 2012) was undertaken in conjunction with Ronald Johnston.</p> <p>Several related externally funded research projects developed this programme of research from 2000, on which Mclvor was Principal Investigator or Co-investigator. An AHRC Knowledge Transfer Fellowship involved working with Glasgow Museums to develop new oral histories on working lives and to assist with digitising the museums' oral history collection. A second AHRC award focused on oral histories of industrial workers in the Reserved Occupations in the Second World War (with Juliette Pattinson and Linsey Robb). A Wellcome Trust grant: 'Disability and Industrial Society' explored the relationship between industrialisation and the body. Mclvor's remit under this project was Scotland, working with Dr Angela Turner as Research Assistant.</p>		

Key findings: Amongst the key findings were that intangible industrial heritage (oral history) has been relatively neglected in modern Scottish history and deserves to be utilised more in public history [R1–R6]. Mclvor’s research also pioneered the application of an oral history methodology to the study of occupational health history and work-related disability [R2, R3, R5, R6]. The asbestos study involved the interviewing of 31 workers exposed to asbestos in the workplace, whilst the black lung investigation involved interviewing 55 individuals, mostly ex-miners. For the ‘Men in Reserve’ project [R5], 56 ex-veteran Second World War workers were interviewed. The resulting rich witness testimony was then analysed and interpreted, in the last case using nVivo text analysis software. This approach crucially aided understanding, bringing the lived experience into focus and moving beyond research that prioritises the ‘body counts’ of industrial disease epidemics such as pneumoconiosis and mesothelioma [R1, R4, R6]. The damage and the legacies of these occupational health disasters have been elucidated, in relation to gendered identities (emasculatation) and in terms of economic, social and human deficits [R1, R3–R6]. This added other dimensions (personal; emotional; occupational) to the ongoing ‘Glasgow Effect’ research (dominated by epidemiologists) which has identified Clydeside as notably unhealthy [R3, R6], as well as offering perspectives applicable to the context of 2020’s COVID-19 crisis.

3. References to the research (Strathclyde affiliated authors in **bold**)

- R1 A. Mclvor** and R. Johnston (2007) *Miners’ Lung: A History of Dust Disease in British Coal Mining* (Ashgate Press; reprinted as paperback by Routledge, Sept 2016), 374 pages. ISBN 978-0-75-463673-1. [Available from HEI]
- R2 A. Mclvor** (2013) *Working Lives: Work in Britain Since 1945* (Palgrave/Macmillan), 360 pages ISBN 978-1-40-398766-2. [REF2 in 2014; Available from HEI]
- R3 A. Mclvor** (2014) ‘Industrial heritage and the oral legacy of disaster: Narratives of asbestos disease victims from Clydeside, Scotland’ in I. Convery, G. Corsane and P. Davis (eds), *Displaced Heritage: Responses to Disaster, Trauma and Loss* (Boydell Press), pp.243–50. ISBN 978-1-84-383963-7. [Available from HEI]
- R4 A. Mclvor** (2015) ‘Economic violence, occupational disability and death: oral narratives of the impact of asbestos-related disease in Britain’, in High S. (ed), *Beyond Testimony and Trauma: Oral History in the Aftermath of Mass Violence* (University of British Columbia Press), pp.257–84. ISBN 978-0-77-482892-5. [Available from HEI]
- R5 J. Pattinson, A. Mclvor** and L. Robb (2017) *Men in Reserve: British Civilian Masculinities in the Second World War* (Manchester University Press), 400 pages. ISBN 978-1-52-610069-6. [Submitted as REF2]
- R6 A. Mclvor** (2017) ‘Deindustrialization Embodied: Work, Health and Disability in the United Kingdom since c1950’, in S. High, L. MacKinnon and A. Perchard (eds), *The Deindustrialized World* (University of British Columbia Press). ISBN 978-0-77-483493-3. [Available from HEI]

Notes on the quality of research: All outputs are published by academic presses with peer-review processes. This research was supported with competitively awarded funding totalling GBP1,060,000 since 2010. Key funders include the AHRC (e.g. Mclvor (PI), ‘The Voice in the Museum: Personal Oral Narratives and Social Identities in Public History’, 01/11/2009-31/12/2011, GBP182,559), the Wellcome Trust (Borsay, Turner, Mclvor (CI) et al., ‘Disability And Industrialization: A Comparative Cultural History Of British Coalfields, 1780-1948’, 01/10/2011-30/09/2016, GBP972,501, Strathclyde share GBP158,303) and corporate funding (Mclvor (PI), Diageo, Inverhouse Distillers, Irish Distillers, Pernod-Ricard, ‘Oral Histories’, 2010-2019, GBP200,000).

4. Details of the impact

Through a sustained programme of training, consultancy and community outreach, since August 2013 Strathclyde’s oral history research has:

- Enriched corporate histories and associated marketing in Scotland and Ireland;
- Widened access to industrial disease resources and supported advocacy campaigns;

- Enhanced the collection and interpretation of oral history in Scotland;
- Augmented public and professional understanding and skills globally.

4.1 Enriched corporate histories and associated marketing in Scotland and Ireland

Approached because of their international expertise in the oral history of work (e.g. R1-R6), regular business sector requests to Mclvor and the Scottish Oral History Centre (SOHC) for historical research, attracting over GBP200,000 in fees between 2014 and 2020, included 5 major oral history interview projects with Clydesdale Bank; Diageo and Inverhouse Distillers (Scotland); and Guinness and Irish Distillers (Ireland). Giving the organisations a more nuanced understanding of working lives, gendered identities, product identification and worker's pride, the recorded interviews were used in various ways. For instance, Diageo incorporated employee stories into promotional films for their Lagavulin distillery's 200th anniversary in 2016, which were shared with a global audience via their brand website, social media channels and Malts.com platform. As outlined by Diageo's Archivist, their engagement with Strathclyde has resulted in the addition of 86 filmed interviews to their archive, enabling them to fill gaps in their corporate history *'to build a complete picture of what it was like to grow up, live and work in Scotland's whisky industry'*. Importantly, they found that many interviewees were *'pioneers within our industry, and capturing their experiences as they near retirement, especially when much of their early careers have not been well represented in our paper records, has meant that their knowledge will not be lost for future generations to learn from'* [S1]. Likewise, work with Irish Distillers Pernod Ricard between 2017 and 2020, led to the creation of 22 filmed interviews which, according to their Head of Archives, has *'enhanced the Archive in several ways - adding colour and emotion to the written record and filling in the blanks where a written record does not exist'*. In addition, it has extended *'a feeling of inclusion in the ongoing activities of the business by the interviewees'* [S2].

4.2 Widened access to industrial disease resources and supporting advocacy

Mclvor widened access to industrial disease resources by attracting extensive documentary archives to Strathclyde's Special Collections, developing oral history audio-visual resources, adding external interview-based projects, and digitising analogue cassettes. According to the University Archivist, Mclvor's work (R1-R4, R6) has been *'very important in relation to our thinking around industrial heritage and making such resources accessible to the wider public'* [S3]. The resources include 262 oral interviews on health-related matters, including respiratory and asbestos-related diseases, in 12 major collections. From mid-2013, the collection was consulted by 63 individuals, including lawyers in asbestos compensation cases, victims' relatives, company archivists/librarians, writers and journalists, and prize-winning French film director Stan Neumann. Lauded for his cultural/historical film documentaries, Neumann's subsequent four-part *Le Temps des Ouvriers* ('Worker's Times') aired in April 2020 (ARTE, France/Germany), with later international festival and DVD releases. Mclvor was a key expert contributor, featuring several times in three of the four programmes, and Neumann has commended him on his *'bright and moving'* input [S4].

Mclvor's research (R1, R3, R4, R6) has also shaped and strengthened advocacy campaigns. As noted by the Coordinator of the International Ban Asbestos Secretariat (IBAS), it has *'changed profoundly the way we think about asbestos-related disease and disability and how we campaign to eradicate this industry'* [S5]. Similarly, Clydesdale Action on Asbestos recognise his long-term influence on their advocacy work with and for people with asbestos conditions, citing him as *'a much needed source of knowledge and information for the charity to continue with its work'* [S6].

4.3 Enhanced the collection and interpretation of oral history in Scotland

Oral history training: The research (R1-R6) informed an extensive oral history training programme which has been delivered by Mclvor and others through Strathclyde's Scottish Oral History Centre (SOHC). From August 2013, more than 400 students, teachers, cultural sector professionals, community oral historians and others have benefitted from regular or bespoke training days conducted by the SOHC. Made freely available online, the training materials

(comprising 2 manuals and 10 podcasts) have also been accessed more broadly (448 page views and 312 downloads). Responding to COVID-19 public health measures, from March 2020 the sessions were moved online and augmented with training on remote online interviewing [S7]. Cultural sector attendees included curators and archivists from Glasgow Museums, the Royal Society of Surgeons and Physicians, Culture North Lanarkshire, Scottish Language Dictionaries, Scottish Archives Council, Scottish Transport & Industry Collections & Knowledge Network, the Scottish Maritime and Blairs museums. Among the community groups were Community Trusts from Inverclyde, Oban and Fife; Creative Visions (Moray); Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust; Ayr Gaiety Partnership; Fala Historical Society; ENABLE; the Workers' Educational Association; Action Old Kilpatrick; Chinese Community Development Partnership; Glasgow Film Theatre; Scottish Council on Deafness; and the Scottish Jewish Archives.

Overwhelmingly positive attendee feedback characterised the sessions as *'absolutely wonderful and incredibly useful'*; *'brilliant experience. Very engaging'*; and *'fantastic . . . for learning to practically carry out oral histories'*. Experienced practitioners reported improved skills, saying: *'I've been doing interviews for about 12 or more years and I've learnt so much!' and 'Good insight into interview practice and ethics. Section on consent particularly helpful'*. One vowed to share their learning with volunteers [S7a]. Accordingly, there was a significant expansion in the creation, collection and interpretation of oral history in Scottish/other communities, museums, and the heritage sector. These included traditionally marginalised voices such as migrants, poor workers, women and the disabled, as, for example, in post-training interview collecting at Glasgow Museums, Scottish Council on Deafness and Culture North Lanarkshire (Summerlee Museum). Interviewing standards also improved and ethical practice deepened.

Examples of its application at local level include the production of audio-trails infused with oral testimony extracts in Old Kilpatrick and Govanhill, and creation of an oral history archive on Rathlin Island, Northern Ireland. As confirmed by the Chair of Rathlin Development and Community Association, bespoke training *'had a profound impact, leading subsequently to the initiation of a full-scale oral history project on Rathlin Island, deploying the interviewing methods and exacting ethical standards promoted in Mclvor's training'*. This is the first *'island-led oral history project to collect and preserve islanders' memories'*, which has added a *'vitaly important dimension to the existing history of the island and will be added to the archives of the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Museum Services to inform exhibitions and other events, thus providing an important open access resource'*. Furthermore, the *'series of workshops on the island has had a significant impact on the participants in terms of developing their understanding, skills and confidence in relation to the process of collecting oral history narratives and the creation of the Rathlin oral history archive'* [S8].

Cultural sector employability partnerships: An AHRC Knowledge Transfer Partnership (Mclvor, PI) with Glasgow Museums (on working lives – see R2) and cultural sector relationships developed through the oral history training, led to a work and community placement programme (2014-19) with 18 participating organisations and groups, including major museums and libraries. Trained undergraduates joined existing oral history projects, giving 54 students work experience, augmenting collections, and deepening relationships between the University, the cultural sector and community groups. The 33 interviewing projects included: Glasgow show (fairground) people; Lanarkshire steelworkers, canal workers; NHS workers and patients; football veterans; the 2014 Commonwealth Games; and Jewish memory. Again, marginalised voices featured significantly here. Reflecting on the importance of this work, the Glasgow Museums Social History Curator acknowledges the valuable contribution made *'to building our oral history collection, public exhibitions, and collection artefact records'* and notes that the training of staff through *'workshops and regular seminars run by Mclvor at the SOHC, as well as the SOHC online resources...has transformed our practice, improved standards, and resulted in a step change in the way that Glasgow Museums undertake and utilise memories and the voice in our public museums, not least in relation to the ethical practice of oral history, before and since GDPR 2018'* [S9].

A key partner since 2014, CultureNL Museums, North Lanarkshire, have benefitted a great deal from the student placements and training for curatorial staff and volunteers. The curators for industrial and social history acknowledge that the work has been *'invaluable to CultureNL Museums in informing our oral history procedures and practice, and in contributing to the development and use of our archive'*. More specifically, the training and online resources, and *'open provision of informed consent and copyright forms'*, allowed museum staff to *'understand and adhere to best practice in undertaking, preserving and interpreting memories and the voice, not least in relation to the ethical practice of oral history'*. To date, recorded interviews with local sawmill and mining employees have been used in 2 CultureNL exhibitions [S10].

4.4 Enhanced public and professional awareness of mining history and heritage

Based on Mclvor's research (R1, R2), and in collaboration with Prof Kirstie Blair (English), a 4-week interdisciplinary FutureLearn MOOC entitled 'Working Lives in the Coal Mines' ran 3 times between October 2019 and July 2020, attracting 4,149 participants from 63 countries. The course focuses on the social and cultural history of coal mining communities and how they were represented. Oral history features significantly in it. Participant feedback indicated the course met or exceeded expectations (100%) and provided new knowledge or skills (96%). The 136 student reviews (to 27 July 2020), rating the course at an impressive 4.8 out of 5, with many describing it as *'excellent'*, *'informative'*, *'engrossing'*, *'well structured'*, *'brilliant'* and *'enjoyable'*. In lively forum discussions, one learner reported: *'If I thought I knew the mining trade . . . I sure woke up. This wonderful course . . . opened my eyes to everything within mining history and heritage'*. Another declared it *'one of the best MOOCs I have done'*, adding *'now I know how little I knew [about the history of mining], especially about the accident and disability figures'*. Many others commented on their new learning about trades unions, working class lives, and working conditions [S7b].

Others experienced particular resonances with their own family histories. One found it *'special to find the accident report of my grandfather's brother, who was tragically killed in 1897 following the flooding of his coal mine in Clackmannan'*. A descendant of a Welsh miner, calling the course *'fascinating, varied, rich'*, said: *'I now know more about the sort of life [my grandfather] had and this brings me closer to him. He died of dust related diseases'*. A New Zealander reported acquiring *'a much deeper appreciation of what life was like for some of my ancestors and the contribution mining has made to our society'*, while another was prompted *'to talk to my 95 year father about mining and my grandfather's experience of it'* [S7b].

One teacher declared her intention to use the reference list *'to enrich my own history lessons'*, and an Australian participant detected parallels with present-day political and social controversies: *'in Australia to mine or not mine coal is a topic that divides a nation'*. A FutureLearn aficionado with over 40 courses under their belt found it *'by far the most interesting'* course they had taken. [S7b]

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- S1 Factual statement from Archivist, Diageo, 28/2/20.
- S2 Factual statement from Head of Archives, Irish Distillers Pernod Ricard, 10/2/20.
- S3 Factual statement from University Archivist, University of Strathclyde, 24/2/20.
- S4 Factual statement from Stan Neumann, 15/1/20.
- S5 Factual statement from Coordinator, International Ban Asbestos Secretariat, 12/2/20.
- S6 Factual statement from Senior Welfare Rights Officer, Clydeside Action on Asbestos, 23/7/20.
- S7 a. Scottish Oral History Centre participant lists and feedback forms b. Future Learn 'Working Lives in the Coal Mines' MOOC participation figures, student forum posts and reviews.
- S8 Factual statement from Chair, Rathlin Development and Community Association, 17/2/20.
- S9 Factual statement from Social History Curator, Glasgow Life/Glasgow Museums, dated 1/1/21.
- S10 Factual statement from Industrial History Curator and Social History Curator, CultureNL Museums, 29/2/20.