

Impact case study (REF3)

Institution: University of Northumbria at Newcastle		
Unit of Assessment: 32 (Art and Design: History, Practice & Theory)		
Title of case study: Enhancing commemoration of the Holocaust through the performance of witness testimony		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 01/01/2011 - 31/08/2019		
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:
Jane Arnfield	Lecturer /Reader/ Associate Professor	01/01/2011 - present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 01/08/2013 - 31/12/2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>75 years after the liberation of Auschwitz, there is now an urgent need to find new, affective ways of communicating the lived experience of the remaining survivors. Research by Jane Arnfield combined innovative performance methodologies with interview techniques derived from sociology, to excavate and re-enact historic witness testimony, allowing audiences to 'inhabit' survivors' stories. Arnfield's 'Living Memorial Theatre Methodology' formed the basis for major theatrical productions, including <i>The Tin Ring</i> (performed by Arnfield in 16 countries world-wide, across diverse audiences). This work provided major commemoration organisations, including Marek Edelman Dialogue Centre (Poland) and the Defiant Requiem Foundation (USA), with new approaches to engage audiences in an affective memorial process. The research also underpinned Arnfield's reflective programme 'Suitcase of Survival', delivered to over 20 secondary schools across the North of England, including Holocaust Beacon institutions. With its emphasis on 'rehumanising' sensitive subject matter, the work improved understanding among education and creative practitioners, including those from the Holocaust Education Trust, enhancing traditional curriculum delivery methods. The insights transformed strategy at The Forge (UK Arts charity), enabling them to secure GBP150,000 National Portfolio funding from Arts Council England.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>The process of performance as Living Memorial has been developed by Arnfield to meet the pressing needs of Holocaust memorialisation, namely, how best to record and effectively convey the personal testimony of those remaining survivors. Arnfield's research within the Department of Arts, which draws on her expertise as a director, writer, and performer, centres on the Theatre of the Real – a field that includes a wide range of theatre practices and styles that recycle reality, be it personal, social, political, or historical. Her distinctive contribution to this area has been the development of a new practice-led 'Living Memorial Theatre Methodology', which deploys methodologies derived from sociology in order to address the specific relationship between reality, truth, and authenticity [R1]. This approach has enabled interdisciplinary research that specialises in the creation of monodramas (played by a single performer, often Arnfield herself) and choral works in ensemble, based on survivors' testimony and historical narratives.</p> <p>Through investigating discourses of memory and how its rendering can support acts of public commemoration, Arnfield's novel methodology enables performance participants to remember the past as filtered through the present. This approach was developed by identifying synergies between (auto) biographical theatre practice and ethnographic and archival study in the social sciences [R1]. The combination of performance with oral history and biographical research, serves both the arts and social justice in the process, enabling lost or silent voices within archives, community groups, and individual testimony to be reheard and re-experienced [R1-R3].</p>		

Arnfield's solo performance *The Tin Ring (TTR)* was developed from a reflective process, which sought to better understand the efficacy of verbatim testimony as a route towards improved understanding of the causes and consequences of genocide and mass violence. Co-adapted by Arnfield and theatre director/writer Mike Alfreds, *TTR* is based on the witness testimony of Holocaust survivor Zdenka Fantlová. This intense monologue places contemporary spectators in a position of 'active witness' to historical events [R2].

Arnfield worked with Fantlová using biographical narrative interviewing methods, a technique for accessing the life story of interviewees without bias from the interviewer (in this case, survival mechanisms Fantlová deployed throughout WWII). This approach incorporated material from Fantlová's personal memoir, deployed alongside archival research from the Imperial War Museum (London & North), the Living History Forum (Stockholm, Sweden), the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (Washington, D.C.), and Radegast Station Museum (Łódź, Poland) [R2]. Since 2013, *TTR* has been performed by Arnfield in sixteen countries worldwide, to a combined audience of approximately 10,000, and has been utilised by Arts Council England as a national case study for best practice in attracting new and diverse audiences (2013) [R2].

Extending the research methodologies of *TTR*, Arnfield developed the *Suitcase of Survival (SOS)*, a participatory programme run in tandem with the production of *TTR*, which explores human rights, human resilience, and well-being. *SOS* is a flexible programme that has been adapted for different contexts, including theatre-making with young people, creative resilience training schemes, workshops in schools, and public engagement activities. *SOS* was developed in collaboration with regional arts partner The Forge (a registered UK Arts charity and an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation). Funded by the Kobler Trust and Lord & Lady Shipley, *SOS* adapted Arnfield's performative and reflective methodologies to an educational environment, providing new routes by which the complex issues of genocide can be brought to new audiences [R1].

In 2019, research undertaken by Arnfield during her Leverhulme Trust International Academic Fellowship with the Centre for Biographical Research and Oral History (University of Łódź, Poland), formed the basis of *Ten to Ten (TTT)* a series of choral productions performed at 4 historically significant sites across the City of Łódź [R3]. These formed part of the 75th commemoration of the liquidation of the Łódź Ghetto. The libretto developed by Arnfield for *TTT* was based on the writing of Holocaust survivor and ghetto resident Chava Rosenfarb, the poetry of Czeslaw Milosz, and *SOS* workshops run by Arnfield with young patients recovering from addiction at the MONAR rehabilitation centre in Łódź. Pre-WWII, Łódź was home to the second-largest Jewish community in Poland, but today the city has almost no Jewish residents and is notably mono-ethnic, its past histories revealed primarily through low visibility static monuments. Arnfield worked with stakeholders to disrupt traditional modes of encountering history as mediated through fixed textual archives, monuments, and designated days. Instead, she sought to demonstrate the value of more embodied modes of engagement with the past and its subsequent definition.

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

R1. Jane Arnfield 'Suitcase of Survival: Performance, Biography and Intercultural Education' in Crutchfield, J and Schewe, M. (eds), *Going Performative in Intercultural Education: International Contexts, Theoretical Perspectives and Models of Practice* 216-232 (Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2017). ISBN: 9781783098545. Available on request

R2. Jane Arnfield 'The Tin Ring' Northumbria University (2011-2013) www.thetinring.com
Collection of Creative and Critical Work A mono drama co-created and performed by **Arnfield**, 70mins. Submitted as part of REF2 in 2014. Supported by two Arts Council England grants (2011 and 2012), performed in sixteen countries worldwide in theatres, museums, libraries, schools and at conferences to approximately 10,000 adults and children. Alongside the theatre production **Arnfield** has developed 'Suitcase of Survival' (SOS), multimodal education programme delivered with arts partner The Forge. Film of production available on request.

R3. Jane Arnfield 'Ten to Ten' Northumbria University (2019)

Collection of Creative and Critical Work. Director/librettist **Arnfield**; composer Katie Doherty; performers Choir Zydowski CLIL (conductor Magdalena Szymańska); set (designer **Arnfield**/printer Alfons Bytautas) commissioned by Marek Edelman Dialogue Centre, Łódź. Eight performances (25.09.19- 1.10.19) Audience 1,000 (estimate). Submitted to REF2021.

Research Funding

G1. PI Leverhulme International Academic Fellowship, 2018, GBP20,897

G2. PI Arts Council England, 2011, GBP9,000 (15973942); 2012 GBP30,000 (19951892)

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

Arnfield's novel methodology, which translates the voices of survivors into powerful dramatic and choral productions, has provided new ways to enhance the work of international commemoration organisations by connecting diverse audiences with the Holocaust memorial process, as well as supporting new educational approaches and learning practices.

4.1 Connecting with diverse audiences to support effective Holocaust commemoration

The Living Memorial Theatre Methodology, as deployed in Arnfield's adaptation of *The Tin Ring* (*TTR*) and associated *Suitcase of Survival* programme (*SOS*), has supported activities at an international level to commemorate and educate audiences about the Holocaust and critical themes associated with it – resilience, resistance, and reconciliation. Since featuring in the British Council International Edinburgh Showcase (August 2013), *TTR* has been performed on over 100 occasions, in a wide range of educational and cultural settings including important heritage sites [E1, E2]. The majority of these performances were invited commissions, with Arnfield's work requested to support key commemorative events such as Holocaust Memorial Day, the anniversary of the liberation of Terezín Internment Camp, and the anniversaries of the deportation of Western European Jews to the Łódź Ghetto and its subsequent liquidation. *TTR* has also been performed as part of specific exhibitions at museums specialising in the exploration of Genocide (including Sydney Jewish Museum, Imperial War Museum North, and POLIN Warsaw) [E1].

The effect of the *TTR* adaption has been to pass on the truth of the story to audiences. For instance, the *New York Theatre Guide* highlighted how the integrity of the solo performance and Arnfield's approach to it, allowed the central message of resilience and refusal to accept the role of victim to be conveyed with the power it deserves, *'the verbatim testimonial theatrical form allows Zdenka's words to flow through Jane ... the eyewitness account reverberated through the audience and we could collectively grieve for those who have been and continue to be tortured and dehumanized by genocide'* [E2].

Arnfield's collaboration with the Defiant Requiem Foundation (DRF) - a major, US-based creative arts charity - demonstrates the significant contribution that her research has made to major Holocaust commemorative programmes. DRF presented *TTR* for the 70th anniversary liberation of Theresienstadt Concentration Camp (May 2015), and a large memorial event hosted at the National Hall in New York (May 2016) [E3]. Arnfield's work directly supported the foundation's goal *'to provide new insights into our understanding of what it meant to resist and defy attempts to suppress the human spirit during the Holocaust'* [E3]. Praised by attendees, including those from among the 600 individuals who attended the event in New York, DRF confirmed that Arnfield's performance allowed them to *'connect directly with our target audiences'* [E3]. The foundation also noted that for many of the attendees this was their first contact with their work and mission, and Arnfield's role *'was very important... in terms of helping us to reach new audiences'* [E3].

Similar results were achieved through Arnfield's involvement in the *Defiant Voices* programme (led by DRF), which included a series of creative/educational workshops facilitated by Arnfield (in partnership with the Forge) that explored themes of memory and resilience [E3-E4]. DRF

confirmed how the work helped them to attract approximately 1000 visitors to the signature performance at Durham Cathedral during Holocaust memorial week (2018) [E3]. The event went on to be awarded 'The Journal Culture Awards, Performance of the Year' [E4]. Murry Sidlin, DRF President, noted how [Arnfield's] *exceptional use of a one-person/ witness-testimony format provided memorable results ...and proves that strength, elegance, and simplicity of storytelling can be just as effective as any large-scale production* [E3]. Indeed, the 'creative expertise' and novel techniques deployed in the TTR, inspired Sidlin to create a new drama, which since August 2019 has become '*an integral part of [their core programme] and is further demonstration of the positive influence that our collaboration with Arnfield has had on both [Sidlin personally] and the Foundation*' [E3].

Arnfield's work also played a key role in supporting other major commemorative operations. The Marek Edelman Dialogue Centre (MEDC), a secular-cultural institution based in Łódź, Poland that promotes the multi-cultural legacy of the city, has worked in close partnership with Arnfield since 2016. Her research supported a city-wide programme, led by MEDC, to mark the 75th anniversary of the deportation of Western Jews to the Litzmannstadt Ghetto. MEDC confirmed how Arnfield's novel approach helped to '*animate and bring a personal resonance to the difficult events/issues that we aimed to educate our audiences about*' [E5]. This supported their main organisational aim of improving awareness and education relating to the Holocaust, '[Arnfield] *played an invaluable role in ensuring that the inspirational story of Zdenka Fantlová is never forgotten, whilst also raising profound questions about the human condition and how to respond to traumatic episodes of mass violence*' [E5].

In 2019, during the 75th Anniversary of the Liquidation of the Łódź Ghetto, Arnfield collaborated with MEDC again to create and stage *Ten to Ten* (TTT). The MEDC Director, noted how Arnfield's work was '*extremely well received by those who engaged with our commemorative programme*' [E5]. MEDC recognised that Arnfield's unique methods '*works outside the normal Holocaust Education routes to raise awareness of individual Holocaust testimony*' [E5]. The success of this novel approach however, '*has certainly changed [MEDC's] approach to future learning/ memorialisation activities. It is the adaptability of Jane's performative and directorial work, underpinned by clear academic rigour, that makes it such a powerful tool for spreading awareness about the Holocaust and the issues/ personal stories associated with it*' [E5].

4.2 Commemoration of the Holocaust with new educational approaches

Arnfield's work on the *Suitcase of Survival* (SOS) programme, in partnership with *The Forge*, has been delivered to more than 20 secondary schools across the North of England since 2014, helping to enhance traditional curriculum delivery [E4]. One of the most successful programmes was with Y9 students in the Hermitage Academy, County Durham [E4]. A designated Holocaust Beacon School (UCL Centre for Holocaust Education), the Academy is committed to enhancing teaching and learning about the Holocaust. The Executive Director of *The Forge*, has detailed how Arnfield's adaptation of TTR formed the basis of a full term of work for a six-month period in 2017-18, and noted the success it had as a learning tool, '*we frequently conduct post-project evaluation to inform future activity and the response is invariably positive*' [E4]. For instance, *The Forge* confirmed how the use of SOS with another institution, Durham Sixth Form college, had '*influenced curriculum design [at the school] and undoubtedly developed student knowledge/understanding of the Holocaust*' [E4].

As an organisation, *The Forge* have outlined how they '*benefited immensely*' from Arnfield's involvement [E4]. Working with Arnfield '*has placed the examination of Holocaust, exclusion and intolerance at the centre of our creative programme*'. The Living Memorial Methodology is now central to the Forge's core delivery, '*it has been built into our strategic business plan, the impact of which since 2013 has been transformative for us as an organisation. [Arnfield] has helped us to develop a dynamic process enabling artists from all disciplines to create meaningful and challenging artwork with participatory practice at its heart*' [E4]. *The Forge* confirmed how their collaboration with Arnfield was instrumental in the organisation securing National Portfolio funding from Arts Council England (GBP150,000), with Arnfield's creative practice element representing a key component of their ACE Creative Case for Diversity [E4].

Further examples of benefits to educational practice are demonstrated by Arnfield's work with the Holocaust Education Trust (HET), which used her living memorial approach to expand the knowledge-base of their nationwide cohort of freelance educators. Her work provided the team with 'a *different and effective way of engaging with survivor testimony*', with its emphasis on personal experience of particular importance: '*rehumanising is a key tenet of good Holocaust education ... The performance has certainly ensured that we are more aware of the beneficial uses of theatre in Holocaust memorialisation and education*' [E6]. In addition, the lessons of tolerance and resilience arising from the research have been applied in other learning settings, including a community programme (Durham) to foster improved dialogue between residents and re-located migrant families from Syria, [E7], and schemes to support communities in Cambodia who are confronting the legacy of the Khmer Rouge [E8].

Taken together, these multiple examples illustrate the direct benefits that audiences, participants, as well as creative and learning practitioners around the world have derived from Arnfield's research. Murry Sidlin from the DRF concluded, '*When the circumstances of history have created something cataclysmic, we know the facts almost immediately, but what we don't know is the truth, and that's what we get from Art. Jane's work is a powerful example of this, demonstrating how innovative creative techniques can support the vital process of commemoration, reconciliation, and learning*' [E3].

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

Ref.	Source of corroboration	Link to claimed impact
E1	Full details of performance dates, venue, audience numbers for <i>The Tin Ring/SOS</i>	Supporting Holocaust commemoration, connecting with diverse audiences
E2	News Coverage and Review of Arnfield's productions	Supporting Holocaust commemoration, connecting with diverse audiences
E3	Statement, Murry Sidlin (President, Defiant Requiem Foundation)	Supporting Holocaust commemoration
E4	Statement and SOS Evaluation, Tony Harrington (Executive Director, The Forge)	Supporting Holocaust commemoration and learning activity
E5	Statement, Joanna Podolska (Director, Marek Edelman Centre for Dialogue)	Supporting Holocaust commemoration and learning activity
E6	Statement and Workshop Feedback, Tom Jackson (LFA Education Officer, HET)	Supporting Holocaust learning activity
E7	Statement, Malcom Fallow (CEO, East Durham Creates)	Supporting community reconciliation and dialogue
E8	Statement, Jenny Pearson (VBNK Director)	Supporting reconciliation process