

## Piloting Runnymede into the 21st Century

On 10 December 2008 at the River Room of the House of Lords, hosted by **Baroness Whitaker**, a reception was held to celebrate **Michelynn Lafèche's** long and successful tenure as Director of Runnymede, and to wish her well for her return to Canada in 2009. This is an edited version of Michelynn's speech on that occasion.

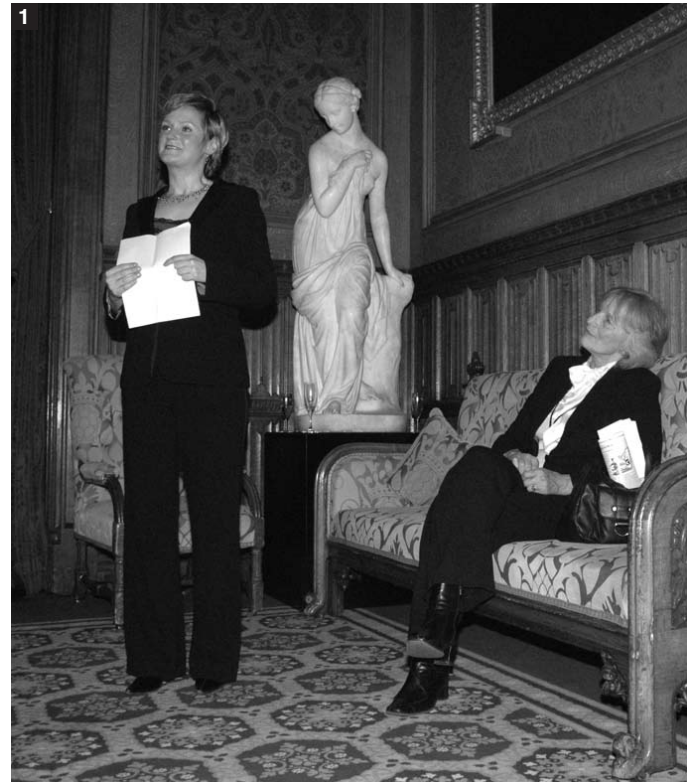
I have most probably worked with everyone in this room at some point during my years at the Runnymede Trust. I am delighted therefore to have this opportunity to thank you for the strength of your support for Runnymede, and acknowledge the particular pleasure it's been to work alongside you all.

Being at the House of Lords brings back pleasant memories of my first Trustees' meeting as Director, held in February 2001 in a committee room, and on that occasion also hosted by Baroness Whitaker, then a Trustee, now a Patron. My formal introduction as Director in the spring of 2001 was also held in a House of Lords reception room, this time hosted by Baroness Amos. It feels as if, here today, I have come full circle – but not as the same person I was then, thanks to the very special experiences I have had as Director of the Runnymede Trust.

Leaving an organization after so long naturally induces self-reflection, in me at least. It is entirely coincidental, but fortuitous, that we

are currently conducting an oral history of the Runnymede Trust in its 40th year. Before I leave, I will have had the honour of interviewing two previous Directors – Dipak Nandy and Usha Prashar – and of listening to tapes of the other interviewees recorded so far. Many of them are here tonight, and I want to say to them that I am still in awe of what these key players of their times – interesting times, terrible times – lived through, fought for and were eventually able to welcome as monuments of social change. But thinking about my own time here, I began to realize that these times, the 11 years since I first joined Runnymede as a researcher, have been equally charged and remarkable.

When I joined in 1997, it was the European Year Against Racism, which spawned the critically important Race Directive and Framework (Employment) Directive – both of which put increasing pressure on the UK Government to move towards the single equality bill that is now finally coming forward. Indeed these



directives were in many ways the impetus behind a Single Equality Body, achieved in the UK when the Equalities and Human Rights Commission was established, and the Commission for Racial Equality, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Disability Rights Commission were wound up in 2007.

Another landmark event for me in 1997 was the establishment of the UK Race in Europe Network (UKREN). Runnymede's close

**1. Michelynn Lafèche gives her leaving speech, watched by Baroness Janet Whitaker, one of Runnymede's patrons, who hosted the event at the House of Lords by kind permission of the Lord Speaker.**



## HOUSE OF LORDS RECEPTION

**2. Dr Samir Shah OBE, Runnymede's Chair, thanks Michelynn for the major contribution she has made to the development of the Runnymede Trust.**

**3. The Right Hon the Baroness Hayman, Lord Speaker in the House of Lords welcomes guests to the reception.**

**4. Rob Berkeley, Michelynn Lafièche and Verna Wilkins at the Reception.**

involvement with the work of both UKREN and ENAR (the European Network Against Racism), which came into being in 1998, has kept us informed and active in the field of European anti-racist legislation and policymaking.

Also in 1998, the Primary Purpose Rule was abolished, something that Runnymede and so many others had long campaigned for.

Year 2000 saw the introduction of the Race Relations Amendment Act – again, long campaigned for, but really propelled into existence following the devastating charge of institutional racism within the public services levied by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report two years earlier. For Runnymede itself, the publication in October 2000 of *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*, the report of the Commission chaired by Lord Parekh, brought the important issues of equality, diversity and cohesion to the forefront of public debate. The framework of that crucial report continues to inform our thinking on these inter-related issues today.

2001 took us to the fraught World Conference against Racism. Held in South Africa, it had already been preceded by disturbances in the northern towns of England. It was then followed by the suicide bombings at the Twin Towers, New York, the impact of which we still struggle with, exacerbated by the London bombings in 2005 and similar events in other EU countries.

The early 2000s saw almost continuous changes being made to the immigration rules. These have persisted right up to the present day with the introduction of the Immigration Bill in 2008 – on this



subject I will just say that an awful lot of work awaits Runnymede, and others.

I could elaborate by taking you through policy area after policy area, media story after media story, year after year. My point is that the times have been interesting – sometimes tragic, sometimes frustrating, sometimes encouraging – and that Runnymede's measured and thoughtful voice has been as necessary now as when it was established in 1968. And so it will continue to be. And I am glad to have played my part in making that voice heard.

We were and are a small team. Looking back, what pleases me most is the way we learned to work. By securing our financial and operational base, we have been able, during the last six years, to fulfil a comprehensive strategic plan. Taking a clear focus on our objectives, and acting in a coordinated, interconnected fashion, we built a coherent and impactful programme of work covering our key themes of:

1. Race and the equalities agenda
2. Markets, choice and BME communities
3. Balancing cohesion, diversity and equality
4. Hyper-diversity (including mixed heritage)
5. Human rights and race
6. Voices of the next generation

Many projects, reports, papers and events have been delivered – too many to mention, but all a terrific testimony to the exceptional team at Runnymede. And the main outcome of this has been the re-creation of an organization that consistently demonstrates its unique capacity to:

- work with *all* communities
- conduct robust research *and* policy analysis
- maintain a strong focus on policy *and* practice
- navigate the issues of both race equality and social cohesion
- engage minority ethnic communities directly in its work
- and, perhaps most importantly, offer an independent voice to the public debate

I am intensely proud of our achievements and the role that I have played in bringing our organization to this point. This event marks a bitter-sweet moment for me. I have gained so much from everyone I have worked with. I have never stopped learning, and I have made so many good friends over the years. Runnymede has been a home and a family of sorts for me. And, while I am excited and happy about my return to Canada, to my family and friends there, I am also sad to be leaving.

I cannot thank by name everyone I would like to acknowledge, but I must take this opportunity to make some specific mentions.

The Runnymede Team must be first. What I have achieved for Runnymede has been done with all of them and I thank them for their support, collegiality and friendship. Some of them have been associated with Runnymede almost as long as I have – Rob, Sarah, Debbie, Omar and Ros – and I am grateful for that stability and continuity.

Working with my Board of Trustees has been an almost uniquely positive experience. As Chair, Samir Shah has offered me continuous and unfaltering support. Criticism too when he thought I was heading in the wrong direction, but his help was always there when I needed it. Among the other



## Changing terrain: legislation during Michelynn's time as Director

### **Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000**

Extends the 1976 Race Relations Act to the police and other public authorities. Under the Act the named public authorities have to review their policies and procedures to ensure the removal of discrimination and the possibility of discrimination and to actively promote race equality.

### **Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002**

Amends existing legislation on immigration and nationality. The changes include the introduction of accommodation centres and support for asylum seekers, the simplification of the process of detaining or removing those who have no right to stay in the UK and the restructure of immigration and appeals procedures.

### **European Union (Accessions) Act 2003**

Incorporates new European Union member states (Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovak Republic). It also made provisions in relation to the entitlement of nationals of certain acceding countries to enter or reside in the UK as workers.

### **Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc) Act 2004**

The Act introduces a new appeal system, deals with removal and detention, further immigration offences, prevention of sham marriages, treatment of claimants and enforcement powers.

### **Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006**

Creates an offence of inciting hatred against a person on the grounds of their religion.

### **Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006**

Creates a number of changes to existing legislation, such as new civil penalties on employers of illegal workers and provides a new criminal offence of employing a person knowing that they are not legally entitled to work in the UK. Other changes concern the appeals process, and allow immigration officers to ask for biometric data from arrivals, and give the Home Secretary power to deprive a person of British citizenship if it is 'conducive to the public good'.

### **European Union (Accessions) Act 2006**

Incorporates two new European Union member states (Bulgaria and Romania) and allows the Government to set terms on which nationals from these states will be granted access to the UK labour market after accession, for a maximum of a seven year transitional period.

### **Equality Act 2006**

Attempt to simplify equalities bodies and legislations. It created the Equality and Human Rights Commission in place of the Commission for Racial Equality, Equal Opportunities Commission and the Disability Rights Commission.

### **UK Borders Act 2007**

Introduces a number of immigration controls, such as compulsory biometric documents for non-EU immigrants, and allows certain Immigration Officers to detain anyone for up to three hours if they think the person may be liable to arrest by the police, increases immigration officers' powers of search and arrest in connection with criminal offences relating to dishonest claims for asylum support and illegal working, and allows the seizing of documents to a country where the person may be deported when the person is arrested.

### **Immigration and Citizenship Bill 2008 released in part**

Trustees, Kate Gavron and Clive Jones in particular have worked very closely with me for many years, and together we have developed a vision for Runnymede. I have learned a lot from all of them and I hope that I have upheld not only our vision but all our shared hopes for Runnymede.

And I must also remember in my thanks someone who helped



**HOUSE  
OF LORDS  
RECEPTION**



me stay focused on my own vision. Every Director needs a mentor. Mine has been Josephine Seccombe, at whose kitchen table over the last seven years I have been able to talk, listen, laugh and cry – then leave with a calmer certainty of what I needed to do next.

Finally, I thank my partner, Benedict Hilliard. Not only has he put up with the long and unsocial hours, my incessant talk about what we were doing and my morning arguments with the radio – he has taken our cause on himself and given his time and skills to us. You may have spotted him photographing many of our events, or noticed that we look good in our staff portraits courtesy of Ben. He is also the one who puts furniture together and fixes things in the office, creates activities for our annual team day, and is the first one on the scene in a crisis, like the disastrous office flood we suffered in 2006. Someone asked me if I had drawn up a job description for Partner of the Director – I haven't, but I do have the blueprint.

It has been an honour and privilege to serve Runnymede as its Director. I leave it in good health and good hands. And, courtesy of the electronic times we live in, I can look forward to watching its progress from afar. □

**5. Pam Rose, widow of Jim Rose, co-founder of the Runnymede Trust, with Rob Berkeley and the Lord Speaker in the House of Lords.**

Dr. Rob Berkeley has been appointed as Runnymede's Director



## PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

# The 2008 United States Presidential Election

On 4 November 2008 Barack Obama was elected the 44th President of the United States of America. His election as the first African American President has been widely covered in the media and celebrated as a watershed event for race equality in the United States. Those celebrations extended to the UK as well, and, as **Omar Khan** reports, Obama's victory has been further discussed in the UK and elsewhere in Europe in the context of whether a similar leader could be elected Prime Minister or President in Europe.

In the 2008 US Presidential Election, Barack Obama defeated John McCain by 53% to 46%, and by roughly 9 million votes. Although the final tally was still not confirmed by mid-November, Obama's likely total of 68 million votes significantly surpassed President George W. Bush's previous 2004 record of 62 million votes, whereas John McCain could only match John Kerry's 59 million from that same 2004 election. Compared to the 2000 and 2004 contests, the 2008 Election was fairly decisive, with the share of the popular vote most closely matching George H.W. Bush's victory over Michael Dukakis in 1988 (and, much less recently, Franklin Delano Roosevelt's win over Thomas Dewey in 1944). Obama's electoral margin is similar to Bill Clinton's win in 1992.

### The biography of Barack Obama

Among the many compelling aspects of Barack Obama's election is that he is the first African American to win the Presidency. In the United States this is historically significant not only because most African Americans had ancestors who were slaves until the 1860s, but also because African Americans faced systematic legalized discrimination until the 1960s and the effects of this continue to the present day. The experience of racial discrimination in the United States is perhaps the most globally recognized form of

ethnic discrimination, but that phenomenon is sadly quite familiar throughout the world. This partly explains the positive global reception to Barack Obama's election, especially for those committed to the ideals of equal opportunity and democratic participation in multi-ethnic societies.

Obama's biography – his absent father's Kenyan background, his white mother's educational perseverance through financial difficulties, his time spent as a child in Indonesia, his election as the first African American President of the *Harvard Law Journal*, his community activism, his inspiring oratory and his calm manner – seem to make the ideals of equal opportunity and globalization a reality in his very person. The details and implications of this background have been considered elsewhere, including in Obama's own books,<sup>1</sup> but from the point of view of race equality in the British context two aspects of his success are worth highlighting.

First is that whatever Obama's talents and skills, he is neither the first prominent African American public figure nor the first to run for President. More generally, while African Americans remain the worst-off group overall in the United States, there is now a significant African American middle class and indeed an elite. While Obama of course faced many difficulties and his candidacy was (in his own words) 'improbable', the idea of an African American

public leader is now far less anomalous than it would have been even 10 years ago, and Obama was able to build on the achievements of previous elected officials. As Obama himself has further noted, he is also less personally affected by the worst experiences of racial injustices as he was born in 1961 in Hawaii, but this is not simply a question of his own psychological makeup. Rather, white Americans are now significantly less prejudiced (polls reveal significantly more discriminatory views among older white Americans), especially among those young enough to have attended university since the application of affirmative action has made it more likely for middle class whites to interact with middle class African Americans. These developments – a significant African American middle class, and increased interaction among ethnic groups – are probably crucial for the success of a British or European Obama.

The second interesting feature of Obama's win that may have relevance for UK or European politics is that his mother was white while his father was from Kenya. While Obama has never denied his background (a fact brought into relief when he visited his dying white grandmother just days before the election), some observers believe that he has downplayed his 'mixed race' (the favoured UK term) or 'biracial' (more common in the US) heritage. Whether in terms of his personal

1 B. Obama (2008) *Dreams from My Father*. Edinburgh: Canongate; B. Obama (2008) *The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream*. Edinburgh: Canongate; B. Obama (2008) *Change We Can Believe In*. Edinburgh: Canongate.

identification or in how voters (black and white) understand his candidacy, Obama has been variously viewed as 'too black' or 'not black enough' (a point he underscored during his campaign). These criticisms indicate that we cannot simply craft personal identities independently of how others in society perceive us. And given the experience of race in the United States – where a solitary black ancestor could lead to pervasive societal discrimination – Obama's lived experience of race in terms of how other Americans interpreted him was unlikely to have been wholly distinct from that of African Americans. While such experiences are of course different in the UK and elsewhere in Europe, we should not assume that colour-racism has entirely disappeared, nor should we be surprised if the first minority ethnic candidate for prime minister or president in the UK or Europe is the child of professional immigrants or a 'mixed race' person.

### **The popular vote and the electoral college**

Whatever the high-profile race-related issues in Obama's historic win, and their potential relevance for the UK and Europe, Obama's election underscores some important trends, aspects and history of US Presidential Elections. First is that the actual victor of presidential elections is the winner of the Electoral College, an indirectly elected group selected by each state roughly in proportion to their population; eight small states have 3 electors each whereas California has 55 electors, more than the smallest 15 states combined. In 2000 this system famously resulted in Al Gore winning the popular vote by over 500,000 votes, but losing the Electoral College to George W. Bush by 266:271.

This system generally results in significantly greater

electoral vote margins than the popular vote share. In 2008, for example, Barack Obama won 365 electoral votes – 67% of the total – on a 53% popular vote share. However, the two elections that most nearly match 2008 in terms of *popular vote* share (1988 and 1944) saw even larger *electoral vote* margins of over 80%. A major reason for this is the much-noted polarization of the American electorate into 'red' (Republican) and 'blue' (Democratic) states. This tendency is sometimes exaggerated, as much of California is 'red' whereas part of Texas is 'blue', but compared to 20th century elections there are indeed fewer close or 'swing' states at least since the 2000 election. In 2008, only 8 states out of 50 were decided by margins less than 7% whereas 28 had margins over 15%.

### **Historic trends of party voting**

Remarkably, Obama is one of only three Democrats to garner over 50.1% of the popular vote since the American Civil War and 1860 Election; the other two were Franklin Roosevelt (who did it four successive times between 1932 and 1944) and Lyndon Johnson (in his landslide in 1964). This is partly explained by the fact that between the Civil War and 1932, the Republicans dominated Presidential elections, even as the relatively sparsely populated and more agrarian South consistently voted Democrat for nearly a century.

One reason that the South consistently returned Democrats was that that region denied African Americans the right to vote from Reconstruction till the 1960s. African Americans strongly supported the Republican Party following Lincoln's famous Emancipation Proclamation (1863) and the passage of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments between 1865

and 1870 that legally abolished slavery and provided African Americans with the right to vote. Those rights were however unrealized following the end of Reconstruction in 1877, and legalized segregation and Jim Crow laws resulted in unequal rights and citizenship for African Americans at least until the 1960s.

This pattern of American voting behaviour began to be disrupted during FDR's long period in the Presidency when the New Deal and Eleanor Roosevelt's liberal sympathies offered some opportunities for African Americans, but a more significant breakdown occurred in the 1948 Election following Harry Truman's desegregation of the military. In that year's Presidential election the Democratic Party lost states in the South for the first time since Reconstruction, although not to the Republicans but to the third party segregationist Strom Thurmond of South Carolina. In the next few elections the Democrats were able to win fairly regularly in the South, but their increasing weakness was confirmed in 1964 with the passage of the Civil Rights Act and then the Voting Rights Act in 1965, after which Lyndon Johnson – himself a Texan – noted that the Democratic Party had probably lost the South.

Johnson's prediction has now been confirmed for nearly three generations, as Democrats remain weak in the South. In Johnson's 1964 landslide, his only defeats were in Barry Goldwater's home state of Arizona and – at the time surprisingly – in the formerly solid Deep South. The southern Democrat Presidents Jimmy Carter (Georgia) and Bill Clinton (Arkansas) were able to win some southern states in their victories in 1976, 1992 and 1996, but the Republican Party's so-called 'Southern strategy' – based on an appeal to southern whites' fear of African



## **PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION**



## PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Americans – has been quite successful since the 1960s. No Democrat since Lyndon Johnson has won a majority of the white vote, although Obama's 43% total surpassed John Kerry and matched that of the southerners Al Gore and Bill Clinton.

### Regional and demographic voting patterns<sup>2</sup>

However, these aggregate figures mask important regional differences. Whereas 30% of white voters in the South voted for Obama, 50% did so outside the South. In fact, at a state level the numbers are even starker. In the three southern states with the highest numbers of African Americans – Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana – only 10%, 11% and 14% of white voters voted for Obama, whereas in Hawaii, Vermont and Oregon he won 70%, 68% and 60% of the white vote respectively. The southern states where Obama won the greatest share of the white vote – Virginia (39%) and North Carolina (35%) – were also the two that he won.

While the division of the United States into red states and blue states has some force in analysing the 2008 results and more recent elections, the general trend at a more local level is more accurately described 'purple'; in most areas Democratic or Republican vote share varies between 40–60%. Other demographic groups, perhaps most prominently urban or rural areas, are arguably better indicators of Democratic or Republican support. For example, while Obama did worse than Clinton in Texas at a statewide level, he became the first Democrat since Johnson to win its largest cities, Houston and Dallas. More densely populated urban and suburban areas throughout the country gave Obama his convincing victory; he won the 50 largest metropolitan areas and 87 of the top 100 most populated

counties in the US by more than 12 million votes (and by a 62:38% margin), significantly greater than his overall popular vote margin.

These shifts in urban and indeed suburban voting were earlier noted, in particular the increasing tendency of college graduates and professionals to vote Democratic. This explains Obama's success in North Carolina and Virginia, southern states that have gained many jobs (and new residents) in the IT, financial and service sectors but that might otherwise appear difficult territory for a Democrat. On the other hand, the Republican victories in 2000 and 2004, and their electoral and policy success since Reagan, seemed to confirm Karl Rove's claim that they might win 'permanent' majorities. This strategy relied in large part on appealing to a socially conservative 'base' on such issues as abortion and gay rights and on a better 'get out the vote' organization.

The seeming success of the Republican 'southern' and 'hot-button' mobilization strategies have led to some widespread misperceptions. Some commentators seem to believe that poor people, especially poor whites, vote Republican, or at least didn't vote for Obama on racial grounds. However, it is simply *not* true that poor people vote Republican and the wealthy vote Democrat. In exit polls, voters' income distribution was divided into 8 groups. The group with the strongest party identification was the lowest, 0–15k, almost 75% of whom voted for Obama. Over 60% of the \$15–30k group and 55% of the \$30–50k group also supported Obama. Together these groups total more than 55% of the population, with white people numbering 80% of this total. This means that Obama won among the poorest white voters (as well as among 60% of union voters), and in

fact *increased* his vote share among the bottom half of voters compared to John Kerry's totals in 2004.

Interestingly, the next most strongly Democratic group was the wealthiest, namely those earning over \$200k a year. This group was also the demographic that swung most sharply towards Obama, by over 34%. Obama narrowly won among voters making \$75–100k, and narrowly lost among those making \$50–75k, \$100–150k and \$150–200k. Significantly, Obama outperformed Kerry by 10% among all of these groups, but more refined state-level analysis also confirms a recent thesis that rich voters in 'blue' states have long voted more Democratic than those in 'red' states.<sup>3</sup> In fact, Obama outperformed Kerry among almost every demographic group; the only exceptions were those living in small towns, late deciders and gay or lesbian voters (though the latter two groups still voted very strongly Democrat). In addition to the very rich, the biggest swings towards Obama were among Latinos and first-time voters, a trend we pick up below.

### Demographic and attitudinal changes

While the Republican strategy of mobilizing the socially conservative base aimed for winning a 51% majority in the short-term, it was unlikely to thrive given longer-term changes in American society, both in terms of demographics and in terms of voter attitudes. In terms of attitudes, the electorate today is notably less conservative on the fair treatment of lesbian and gay people, less likely to disapprove of interracial dating and far more likely to accept government regulation of financial services.

Turning to demographic changes, the most prominent is arguably the shrinking share of the white vote. In the 1980s

2 The analysis that follows has been informed by Charles Franklin's useful posts at [http://www.pollster.com/blogs/white\\_vote\\_for\\_obama\\_in\\_the\\_st\\_1.php](http://www.pollster.com/blogs/white_vote_for_obama_in_the_st_1.php)

3 See Gelman et al. (2008) *Red State, Blue State, Rich State, Poor State: Why Americans Vote the Way They Do*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

whites were roughly 90% of the electorate, but were only 81% in 2004, and dropped further to 74% in 2008. This is due to increased turnout among African Americans and Latinos, but also to increased numbers of citizens among the foreign-born population, a group that now stands at 12% of the total US population, the highest since early in the 20th century, and a number that has been rising every year. Partly because of this increased foreign-born population, and partly because of the higher birth-rate among some minority groups, the overall share of the nonwhite population will hit 50% around 2043. The upshot is that the nonwhite vote proportion will further increase in future elections, especially among the 22 million voters that will be added to the rolls every decade until then.

Significantly, the nonwhite population is unevenly distributed across the United States. States such as New York, California, Florida and Texas attract a preponderant share of immigrants and already have the largest numbers of ethnic minorities. These states are the most electorally rich states, and are all already more Democratic than a generation ago; with most of the growth occurring in urban areas the McCain–Palin appeal to rural voters is obviously going to be a losing proposition. Fast-growing states such as New Mexico, North Carolina and Georgia are also attracting larger numbers of nonwhite residents. And even states such as Arizona and Texas – formerly Republican strongholds – may become Democratic given these demographic trends. To see how these changes are already impacting vote share consider the following comparison: McCain's winning margin in Texas was 11%, the same as Obama's margin in the supposedly 'swing' states of New Hampshire

and Pennsylvania, and he won surprisingly large margins in Nevada and New Mexico.

Much has been made of Obama's 95% vote share among African Americans, but given the long-term African American support for Democrats (including nearly 90% for Kerry), this was not as much of a shift as Latinos: 54% supported Kerry but 67% voted for Obama, and Latinos will become even more influential as they increase to 30% of the population by 2050. In fact, over 80% of the population growth between now and 2050 is likely to come from immigrants and their children and grandchildren. Combine this with the enormous margin Obama won among the young, and it is easy to understand why some Republicans are concerned about their prospects in future elections.

### Conclusion

Barack Obama's election as the 44th President of the United States is certainly a momentous event for that nation and for liberal democracies worldwide. It also has induced reflection among UK and European observers on what it might take for a similar leader to emerge here. Three points are worth underlining. First is that Obama is in many ways a unique politician, not only because he has great oratorical abilities that inspire voters but also because he has a dedicated and sure manner that makes him highly appealing in difficult economic times. Very few politicians of any background in the US or Europe match his abilities.

Second is that Obama has not emerged from nowhere. An earlier generation of African American politicians had paved the way, and furthermore a growing black middle class was increasingly likely to interact with white Americans in part because of affirmative action. If the UK and Europe are to have its own Obama, we should

probably expect that he or she may not yet be an elected official and will need to build upon the success of minority ethnic people. This arguably means that we need to take more proactive steps to increase the numbers of minority ethnic people in elected office and in positions of power and influence in our society.

Third and lastly is that the demographic trends this article has described are also relevant in the UK. Urban and minority ethnic voters here also vote disproportionately for Labour. And just as the African American population votes Democrat not because of some tribal commitment but rather because of policy positions and consideration of their legitimate interests, similar considerations apply in the UK and Europe. The Conservatives have placed a number of black and minority ethnic candidates in winnable seats, and following the next election may have more BME MPs than Labour. This improvement is at once a way of improving their appeal to BME voters and a way of demonstrating to white voters that they are a socially liberal and modern party, especially in places such as London where the Conservatives have seen formerly safe seats become unwinnable – in part because of demographic change. Whether the Conservatives' strategy will succeed remains to be seen, but it is undoubtedly one that right-leaning parties throughout Europe will need to emulate if they wish to gain the votes of minority ethnic people. And although those voters are unlikely to influence national elections like they did in the US in 2008, greater mobilization of BME voters, increased opportunities for BME people and greater numbers of minority ethnic people in positions of power are prerequisites for a British or European Barack Obama. □



## PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION



EUROPE

# Time for More Anti-discrimination Legislation from Europe

The extreme right has once again established a strong position in Austria following the recent elections. Sarah Isal finds some parallels with 1999, when two anti-discrimination directives were swiftly adopted by the EU. This time, however, with extreme right views more entrenched in European politics, it seems likely that much-needed additional anti-discrimination legislation will only be achieved with strong lobbying by NGOs and civil society.

History has a strange way of repeating itself. ... On 3 October 1999, Jörg Haider and his extreme right Freedom Party came second in the Austrian elections, thereby entering government in a coalition with the centre right Austrian People's Party (ÖVP). This was seen as a major political earthquake in the European Union which, under the Portuguese Presidency, led the EU member states to suspend their diplomatic relations with Austria between February and September 2000. This unprecedented decision - made by all EU member states - reflects a number of political realities of the time, including the real concern of member states that a party whose values were against those of the European Union had gained power. In addition, the EU Presidency was held by the Portuguese government, itself having a not-so-distant history of dictatorship and anti-democratic government, and was keen to send a strong message to Austria (and the rest of the EU).

In this context, two anti-discrimination directives (the so-called 'Race Directive' and the 'Framework Directive') were adopted in record speed, a mere seven months after they were presented by the European Commission to the European Council. The 'Race Directive' outlaws discrimination on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin in employment, goods and services, whilst the 'Employment Directive' prohibits discrimination on grounds of age, disability, religion and belief, and sexual orientation, in employment and training. It is commonly thought that the added impetus of the Austrian election results helped to speed up the adoption of EU anti-discrimination legislation, as the EU countries were keen to show a renewed commitment to the values of democracy, anti-discrimination and anti-racism.

Nine years later, and the EU finds itself in a strangely similar, yet very different situation. Recent Austrian elections held in September have led to an alarming surge of the extreme right again, echoing the results of 1999. The FPÖ party, that was so successful in 1999, took 18% of the vote, with Jörg Haider, former head of the FPÖ,

getting a further 11% of the vote with his breakaway party, Movement for Austria's Future, thus bringing the total of extreme right votes to 29%, a mere 1% behind the Social Democrats (30%) and ahead of the Christian Democratic Party (26%). It looks like the two latter parties might form a new government together, like they did in 1999, thus preventing the extreme right from entering government. This doesn't take away the fact, however, that the extreme right is a strong force to be reckoned with in Austria, even after Haider's recent death.

Parallel to this, in July the European Commission put forward a new proposal for anti-discrimination legislation, which would outlaw discrimination in goods and services on grounds of age, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation (race and gender being covered already in separate pieces of legislation). If adopted, this directive would mean that all the grounds of Article 13<sup>1</sup> would be and brought up to the same level of protection that currently exists for race and gender. It would be particularly important for EU member states that are not living up to the appropriate standards of protecting minority groups against discrimination in their territory. It is also important because some EU countries have anti-discrimination laws only as a result of European legislation.

This time, however, there is no guarantee that this proposal will be adopted by member states with the same speed as in 1999. Indeed, it seems now that the EU is not so alarmed at the rise of an extreme right party in one member state. There have been many instances between 1999 and 2008 where this has been the case, with populist parties considered by many to be at the extreme of the political spectrum taking part in government coalitions across Europe (the latest example being the Italian government, with the Northern League and the Alleanza Nazionale). Situations such as that seen in Denmark or the Netherlands, where far right populist parties have been dictating much of the countries' policies as a result of being a vital coalition partner in government, is both the symptom and a result of the mainstreaming of extreme right views in European politics today. The strongest signal of such a mainstreaming can be seen in current discourses on integration that are advocated by so-called 'centre' or 'moderate' governments, in particular the additional requirements put on migrants to demonstrate they are integrated even before entering the host country!

How hopeful can we be that additional anti-discrimination legislation will be adopted in the course of the next year at EU level? We know that many EU countries are not averse to it, although this adoption still requires a unanimous vote from the 27 member states (obviously more of a challenge than in 2000, when 'only' 15 countries had to agree!). We also know that some countries, such as Germany and Ireland, are against the EU legislating on anti-discrimination any further, so it will be important for NGOs and civil society to do the lobbying needed in their respective countries and push for this proposal not to be vetoed when it is discussed by the Council of EU ministers in months to come. A strong signal by the EU on equality is needed now more than ever! □

<sup>1</sup> Article 13 of the Treaty of Amsterdam states that "... the Council, acting unanimously on a proposal from the Commission, and after consulting the European Parliament, may take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation".

# Reflections on the 'New Politics of Belonging'

Margaret Wetherell<sup>1</sup> outlines the key messages from the ESRC-funded Identities and Social Action research programme.

December 2008 sees the end of a five-year research programme investigating emerging identity trends in the UK funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. The *Identities and Social Action Programme* consisted of 25 research projects (see [www.identities.org.uk](http://www.identities.org.uk) for details) and involved over 90 social scientists. Not all of this large swathe of work is relevant to the theme of the 'new politics of belonging', but a great deal is, and in this article I want to reflect on some of the main findings from the research projects stimulated and challenged by the recent Runnymede Trust and Cumberland Lodge conference on belonging. I will focus on national belonging and national identifications in Britain, on the identity dynamics which foster good group relations, and on the convivial post-colonial identity conjunctures emerging in London.

## Is there a Crisis in British Identity?

Recently, Britishness has been placed at the centre of government policy. A strong sense of Britishness is thought to act like a sticking plaster. British identity will pull together the ragged edges of the devolved nations, and for the Scots, Welsh and the English it will act as a common point of affiliation in the face of nationalisms which might otherwise pull Britain apart. The sense of belonging engendered by British identity has also been proposed as a panacea for community

divisions. It will act as a super-ordinate rallying point for all new and previous generations of migrants, increasing community cohesion. And – as one further benefit – it has been argued that a strong sense of Britishness will remedy the 'bowling alone' syndrome identified by the American sociologist Robert Putnam which became a concern of New Labour. It will prevent communities from fragmenting and will increase our collective sense of responsibility for each other, our social solidarity and investment in society.

These are all reasonable assumptions. A sense of belonging routinely does have these effects. But it is also assumed that Britishness is no longer delivering all of these social goods. National belonging, it is thought, is in trouble. So, is there some kind of crisis in British identity? For those who see a dangerous identity deficit, the contrast tends to be with an imagined British society of 40 or 50 years ago and the national pride and patriotism of the Second World War. In comparison to that golden age of British identity, contemporary Britishness is thought to be under attack from globalization, increased ethnic diversity, migration and technological advances as well as devolution and is assumed to be not holding its own in the face of these.

Research reveals that the patterns, as always, are more complicated than these simple stories imply. They do not suggest a large-scale loss of national identity or

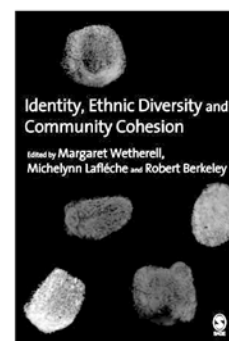
that a renewed emphasis on Britishness will act as a kind of social glue in any uncomplicated way. Research conducted by Anthony Heath and Gabriella Elgenius at Oxford University and John Curtice at Strathclyde University for the Identities Programme, for instance, examined changes in people's levels of identification with being British over time using survey data from the 1960s to the present day. They found that although there has been some shift away from a British identity towards separate Scottish and Welsh identities, and to a lesser extent towards an English identity, the great majority of the population continues to subscribe to British national identity and most have a dual sense of identity – e.g. British and Scottish. The great majority continue to feel either fairly or very proud of Britain and to feel very or fairly attached.

These are important findings. The authors conclude that the speed of change in British identity is glacial. Intriguingly, their research also shows that over the last 40 years there has only ever been a weak association between feeling British and feelings of civic duty. British national belonging, then, in itself has not and may not magically create social solidarity. The authors argue that concerns about declining social responsibility and social cohesion are exaggerated and a modest decline in British identity is unlikely on its own to have major implications for social cohesion or effective citizenship.

The finding from this study – that people these days live very comfortably with dual identities (e.g. British and Scottish) – is also crucial and



## IDENTITIES



A book of Runnymede's collaborative project with the open University is available from SAGE Publications, 1 Oliver's Yard, 55 City Road, London EC1Y 1SP. [[www.sagepub.co.uk](http://www.sagepub.co.uk)] at £22.99 (ISBN: 978-11-4129-4617-9)



<sup>1</sup> Professor Margaret Wetherell is Director of the ESRC Identities and Social Action Programme, Social Sciences Faculty, Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA



## IDENTITIES

**‘Communities which were otherwise secular tended to reach for Christianity to mark Englishness.’**

worth stressing. Britishness is often thought to be an exclusive identity. I can only be properly British, for instance, if that identity entirely dominates to the exclusion of any other possible national or ethnic identification I might have. This is not the case. Identities we now know are multiple and they intersect. We know from research in Northern Ireland (which I discuss further below) that a multiplicity of possible affiliations and identifications can lessen the all-embracing power of any single identity. But even given this moderating effect, dual or multiple identities do not render any particular sense of belonging necessarily socially ineffective or make any single identity de-motivating as a basis for social action.

Heath, Curtice and Elgenius found that this holds true for ethnic minority communities in particular. They found no evidence that Muslims and people of Pakistani heritage, for instance, were less attached to Britain than other groups. Ethnic minority groups also show clear evidence of dual identities, e.g. Indian and British, analogous to the dual identities of British and Welsh and British and Scottish. Many members of ethnic minority groups tend to feel a strong sense of belonging to their own ethnic groups but also to Britain. The exceptions were people born overseas in a non-Commonwealth country or recently arrived in Britain. Young Black Caribbeans and Black Africans were also less likely to feel very strongly that they belong and around 20% had a relatively weak sense of belonging. Heath et al. suggest that contrary to the current media and policy focus on Muslim groups, the lack of attachment among young Black Caribbeans born in Britain is more worthy of serious thought and investigation. But, in general, although British

identity is multi-layered, there seems to be no obvious crisis of the kind which is often pessimistically projected.

### **‘Fragile’ and ‘Defensive’ White English Identities**

The importance of dual identities suggests that the nationalisms linked to devolution will need to be considered as well as the force of Britishness in any new politics of belonging. Currently, Scottish and Welsh national identities are exceptionally vibrant and powerful forms of belonging for those who can identify with them. Research conducted on Welsh identity by Russell Spears, Tony Manstead and Andrew Livingstone at Cardiff University for the Identities Programme, for example, clearly showed the power and intensity of Welsh identity for people in Wales. Crucially, in contrast, White English identities do not seem to be faring as well, as an overt, visible and alternative source of attachment and belonging alongside Britishness. The lack of salience of Englishness as a point of attachment may reflect simply the ways in which being English is taken for granted by white English citizens. For members of ethnic minority groups, Englishness has been difficult territory because of the exclusionary ways in which it has been actively mobilized and symbolized at various points by groups such as the National Front. Whereas, for instance, many with Pakistani heritage living in Scotland are content to describe themselves as Scottish Pakistani, most living in England prefer the more neutral combination British Pakistani to English Pakistani.

Research conducted by Steve Garner, Simon Clarke and Rosie Gilmour at the University of West of England on working-class and middle-class white communities in the West Country found that

white English participants were often struggling to articulate what Englishness meant for them while feeling resentful that Englishness was not more emphasized. It was defined by its absence rather than its presence, through, for example, complaints about ‘political correctness’ and complaints that traditional festivals were being renamed (such as Christmas time becoming ‘winter festival’). Communities which were otherwise secular tended to reach for Christianity to mark Englishness. As the social theorist Paul Gilroy has argued, the legacy of Empire seems to have left white English people ‘melancholic’, unclear how to define and celebrate their national identity. Interestingly, Scottish and Welsh nationalism has managed to almost entirely divorce itself from Empire which has become seen as an English problem despite the intensive involvement of those regions in colonialism.

Garner, Clarke and Gilmour noted the effects on their sample’s perceptions of ethnic minority communities. There was resentment at their perceived stronger senses of identity combined with feelings of ‘identity theft’ or ‘identity injustice’ in comparison. Massive information deficits were evident with many interviewed, for example, using the term ‘migrant’ or ‘asylum seeker’ for every member of an ethnic minority community including second, third and subsequent generations. Understandings of resource allocation were particularly weak and led to intense resentment of ‘special treatment’ and complex confusions over entitlements. Overall, it seemed that although British national identity might be sustaining at a more global level, when white English communities focused on their particular local senses of identity what was

available was a more fragile, negative and defensive sense of collective belonging with an often divisive 'zero sum' quality. It could be argued that issues with belonging are felt most intensively and unproductively among a group whose feelings of belonging are most taken for granted. More positively, those studied by Garner and his colleagues were deeply committed to the idea of community in general and saw cultural diversity in positive terms.

### **Ethnic Diversity, Contact and Multiplicity**

A number of studies in the Identities Programme investigated the conditions which foster positive or negative relationships between ethnic and religious groups. The very clear message that emerged was the importance of high quality contact. A longitudinal study, for example, of a large sample of primary-school children in Kent and Sussex aged 5 to 11 years led by Rupert Brown from Sussex University and Adam Rutland and Charles Watters from Kent University found that the ethnic composition of the school had a substantial effect on ethnic minority children and on majority/minority relations. Greater ethnic diversity in schools led to increased contact between groups and was associated with increases in self-esteem and pro-sociality, more balanced cross-group friendships, and reductions in emotional symptoms, peer problems, perceived acculturation discrepancies and experiences of discrimination. The authors conclude that their data speak strongly against policies which lead to reduced ethnic diversity such as promoting single-faith schools.

Research in mixed (Protestant and Catholic) neighbourhoods versus segregated neighbourhoods

in Belfast conducted by Miles Hewstone (Oxford University), Jo Hughes (Queens University Belfast), Ed Cairns (Ulster University), and Richard Jenkins (Sheffield University) produced equally striking results. They found that the segregated neighbourhoods showed the greatest community cohesion and solidarity and the highest level of 'bonding social capital' in Putnam's terms, displaying strong familial and social networks. But people in these neighbourhoods held considerably more simplistic and negative attitudes to the other religious community. In contrast, the mixed neighbourhoods showed a higher level of 'bridging capital', less prejudice and had a much more complex view of other communities. This was a striking example of the Janus face of belonging – strong solidarity correlates with xenophobia and prejudice against outsiders. For community cohesion, there needs to be diversity and high quality contact with singular senses of belonging and identification tempered and multiplied.

It is particularly important that minority groups can operate from what are perceived to be safe spaces and that the psychological costs for ethnic minorities of maintaining contact are appreciated. To many policy makers, strong ethnic minority communities and cultural groupings are seen as a problem in itself. But a robust both/and or dual identity and a strong and viable cultural grouping can be a source of security allowing and supporting movement outwards. The longitudinal study in Kent and Sussex described above, for example, found that the majority of ethnic minority children had what the researchers called an 'integrationist' attitude, that is the both/and identity just mentioned, and wished to

maintain their ethnic identity and interact with other groups. This attitude was predictive of later social acceptance and self-esteem but was also more psychologically difficult to maintain than other senses of identity and associated with more emotional symptoms. In general, ethnic minority group children, especially first generation migrants, reported less peer acceptance, lower self-esteem and more peer problems and discrimination experiences than white British children. This suggests the burdens of integration borne by ethnic minority children are mitigated by strong own-group community and family networks.

Similarly, a study of Somali refugee young people in Sheffield compared with a group in Aarhus, Denmark conducted by Deborah Sporton (Sheffield University) and Gill Valentine (Leeds University) found that community space for these migrant groups to define their own identity was very important in perceived security and giving these groups a foundation from which to feel they could belong to Britain. Britain, in this sense, offered a much more positive environment than Denmark which was more insistent on Somali groups being just 'Danish'. Somali in Sheffield may be less likely to describe themselves, initially at least, as 'British', but felt more at home and a greater sense of belonging and attachment to Britain as 'home' than Somali in Aarhus.

These findings suggest a complex picture. For good relations identity needs to be both secure and offer a reasonable level of 'bonding' social capital as long as the social context also encourages a great deal of contact, familiarity and respect for diversity, encouraging 'bridging' capital to develop across



## **IDENTITIES**

***'This was a striking example of the Janus face of belonging – strong solidarity correlates with xenophobia and prejudice against outsiders.'***



## IDENTITIES

***'London is now one of the most ethnically diverse cities on the planet.'***

group boundaries. Absence of contact and lack of diversity are problematic even if, and perhaps especially where, internal group solidarity is high. For ethnic minority groups who face discrimination and racism, contact without a secure and strong cultural identity is a particularly tall order. For new migrant and refugee groups, building up bonding social capital and a distinctive and secure community can be an essential starting point for future belonging, identification and attachment even if in the short term such 'separateness' seems problematic in relation to the demand to put being British first.

A further study in the Identities programme conducted by Jane Wills (Queen Mary, University of London) emphasizes these points. Wills was studying London Citizens as an example of a high engagement social movement which has organized some very effective campaigns including the campaign for a living wage. What is striking about a community-based alliance such as London Citizens is its very diverse base. It brings together over 100 different educational, faith, labour and community groups, including groups with some very profound principled differences. Wills argues that the alliance works because it follows the identity principles just described. Local group affiliation, group uniqueness and people's varied identifications are recognized and people are also enabled to 'scale-up' their identity to identification with the more global cross-community alliance without losing their original attachments. Interestingly, cohesion within London Citizens does not particularly depend on people getting to know each other thoroughly on a deep personal level. Rather, more superficial interaction

***'Living with diversity was largely accepted as the norm for both white and ethnic minority prisoners.'***

is preferred, which is nonetheless mutually respectful and enriching, not dwelling on potentially threatening differences, or believing these could be resolved.

### **Conviviality and London Life**

Finally, analyses of the new politics of belonging in the UK need to recognize the specificity of London (and some other metropolitan centres). London is now one of the most ethnically diverse cities on the planet. Sue Jackson, Rosie Cox, Dina Kiwan, Yasmeen Narayan and Meena Khatwa (Birkbeck, University of London) who researched women's social lives in London argue that the city is a complicated intersecting set of postcolonial spaces experienced simultaneously as local and global. As Nira Yuval-Davis and Erene Kaptani (University of East London) demonstrated, in their research, attachment to diaspora communities and transnational attachments to, and traffic with, communities of origin combine with often intense attachments to local neighbourhoods, to cosmopolitan London life and to the larger city itself.

Studies within the Identities Programme found considerable evidence for the kind of hybrid identities, new ethnicities, mixing and complex multicultures predicted by sociologists and social theorists. Crucially, these forms of belonging are very different from the usual policy and political analyses of 'multiculturalism' which assume self-contained, separate cultural groups and traditional bounded communities. There was also considerable evidence for what Paul Gilroy has described as new forms of conviviality. Ben Rampton, Roxy Harris and colleagues from Kings College London found in their study of urban classrooms, for example, that instead of causing

trouble, young people routinely treated racial and ethnic differences as uncontroversial and ordinary. Adolescents recognized differences but treated them as secondary in conversations about far more insistent matters (friendship responsibilities, male–female relations, popular media culture, etc).

Coretta Phillips and Rod Earle (LSE) in their research with young offenders in prison similarly found that ethnic differences were a banal and unremarkable aspect of prisoners' lives both in their home communities and in prison. Living with diversity was largely accepted as the norm for both white and ethnic minority prisoners. For this group what was much more insistent and dominant as a source of identification for self and others were 'post-code' affiliations or territorial investments in particular neighbourhoods or estate-based identities. Equally, working with a group with very different social origins, Diane Reay (Cambridge University), Gill Crozier (Sunderland University) and David James (University of the West of England) found that the white middle-class parents they studied in London highly valued (some) ethnic 'others' and the cultural capital which would accrue when children became socially adept at mixing in multicultural contexts as future privileged globalized citizens. This is not to say, of course, that racism has been eliminated from London, that conviviality supersedes conflict, exclusion, distrust and exploitative social relations. But it does suggest that any analysis of a new politics of belonging has to keep pace with social change and recognize the very different configurations of belonging to be found in the British metropolis, in provincial cities, small towns and in rural life. □

# Reflections on UK Identities Today

David Faulkner<sup>1</sup> gives his personal view on what identity means to people, and how people respond to difference.

Identities matter. We all want to know who we are and where we have come from. We like to know the same about other people who may be important to us. To know those things helps us to have confidence in ourselves and trust in other people.

A person's identity has several different aspects – gender, ethnicity, nationality, age, religion, class, occupation, where they live, whether they are a parent or have a partner. A person may claim or be given an identity as a leader, intellectual, liberal, insider or outsider, victim or criminal. Some of those are matters of fact; others are matters of opinion or judgement. Some are permanent, others may change over time.

Perceptions of someone's identity will affect the person's own behaviour and other people's behaviour towards them – respect, affection, admiration, fear, hostility, contempt. They can be an important element in bullying, harassment and discrimination. There are connections with moral, social and political values – for individuals and for communities and society as a whole.

The reports from the ESRC Programme on UK Identities and Social Action, and the conference which the programme held on 24 September 2008 (see Margaret Wetherell's article on pp. 9–12 of this issue of the Bulletin), have illuminated many of those aspects and have shown their practical significance for modern life and citizenship. Most of them have implications for government, but they are equally and perhaps more important for civil society and for those situations and relationships

where different identities come together and have to be accommodated and sometimes reconciled. Those are not always matters in which government should be involved or in which its involvement can be effective or helpful.

Several of the studies show the importance of recognizing and respecting the identities of other people. People's attitude towards and sometimes fear of difference have an important influence on how individuals, communities and the country as a whole manage difficult issues not only of discrimination and unequal opportunities, but also politically and emotionally sensitive issues such as immigration and the treatment of offenders. Both are subjects where there is ignorance and often prejudice, too often exploited by the media. Other research has shown that a better knowledge of the facts and of the people who may be involved can reduce hostility and prejudice in personal contacts and help towards a more constructive argument. It is disappointing that government policy now increasingly treats offenders and immigrants as people who have an identity which is less than that of a full citizen – a status which they have lost or which they have to earn.

Not much has been said about the growing number of people who have not only a dual identity but also mixed racial, cultural or religious backgrounds. The mixture may bring confusion or even conflict about where a person belongs. It may be a source of pride or strength, for example if it gives them a second language. It may

sometimes give them a special aptitude for mediating between different groups in situations of difficulty or conflict. It would be interesting to know more about their experience.

It would also be interesting to know more about the experience of 'growing up in modern Britain'.<sup>2</sup> A study might look at people's experiences in childhood and adolescence and how they are affected by their sense of identity – their own, and how they perceive and react to the identity of others. Subjects might include how they choose their friends, how friendship groups (or 'gangs') are formed (following up Runnymede's important report *Re(thinking) 'Gangs'* published earlier this year), how they choose or do not choose to spend their time, those whom they do or do not respect among peers and significant adults, how all those things can change over time and what influences them to change, what interventions might be possible to affect those influences.

Religion seems to have been rather dismissed as a subject of declining significance as the total number who practise a religion continues to fall (except in the highly contested context of faith schools). Faith is acknowledged to be an important part of many people's own identity and of the identity they ascribe to others. It may be one of increasing importance, not only because of the issues connected with terrorism but also because of the assertive stance which some Muslims and some evangelical Christians take in setting themselves apart from rules and practices that are accepted and sometimes expected in secular society. Faith can work either towards or against social harmony, as it always has. It is a difficult area for academics to research or politicians to interfere, but its importance should not be underestimated. □



IDENTITIES

<sup>1</sup> David Faulkner is Senior Research Associate, University of Oxford Centre for Criminology

<sup>2</sup> This would add to the work by Richard Layard and Judy Dunn, *A Good Childhood: Searching for Values in a Competitive Age*, published by The Children's Society on 4th February 2009.



## IDENTITIES

# The New Politics of Belonging

A Cumberland Lodge and Runnymede Trust conference on 6 October 2008 considered 'The New Politics of Belonging'.



sense of belonging.

Professor Bhikhu Parekh chaired a session on representation and political engagement. On the panel were Sunder Katwala, General Secretary of the Fabian Society, Farah Pandith, Senior Adviser, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, US Department of State, and Simon Woolley, Director of Operation Black Vote.

Bharat Mehta, Chief Executive of the City Parochial Foundation, then chaired a session on citizenship and civic society. On the panel were Tariq Ramadan, Professor of Islamic Studies, University of Oxford, Gerry Stoker, Professor of Politics and Governance, Southampton University, and Mary Hickman, Professor of Irish Studies and Sociology, London Metropolitan University.

The concluding session was chaired by Professor Bhikhu Parekh with a panel comprising Baroness Usha Prashar, Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission, Professor Margaret Wetherell of the Open University, and Michelynn Lafèche, Director of the Runnymede Trust.

The after dinner speaker was Kwame Kwei Armah, the British actor, playwright, singer and broadcaster. □

**1. Professor Bhikhu Parekh, Chair of several sessions.**

**2. Simon Hughes MP and Baroness Usha Prashar.**

**3. The panel for the concluding session.**

**4. Rob Berkeley and the after dinner speaker, Kwame Kwei Armah.**

A highly visible sign of the 'new politics of belonging' is the sight of Union flags flying from government buildings all year round, which was one of the first things that Gordon Brown initiated when he became Prime Minister. This decision was made against a background of fears about national security in the face of unorthodox terrorist threats, increasing speed of change in migration patterns, longstanding inequality facing settled visible ethnic minorities, and globalization trends mixed with localism and further political devolution.

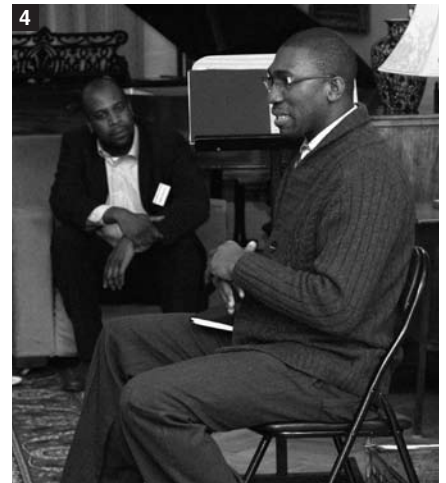
The conference examined what might be a real and more concrete role for politics in the new politics of belonging. The speakers and delegates were concerned with

what changes were needed in our democratic structures, civic society, constitutional arrangements and political activism in order to bring about a sense of belonging which can lead to effective citizenship. The conference also addressed the question as to how politics can re-engineer the relationships between citizens, and between citizens and the state, to contribute to the creation of a 'society at ease with itself'.

The conference formed part of the celebrations of the Runnymede Trust's 40 years of work to promote race equality, and aimed to generate new thinking about the agenda for the next 40 years on the way towards a successful multi-ethnic society.

Delegates were welcomed by Dr Alastair Niven, Principal of Cumberland Lodge and Dr Samir Shah, Chair of the Runnymede Trust, and then presented with a preview of 'Belonging', the latest in the Runnymede Trust and Manifesta series of one-minute and short films using multimedia to give voice to young people's experiences and understanding of 'belonging'.

A panel of speakers – Baroness Usha Prashar, Claude Moraes MEP, Simon Hughes MP and Paul Goodman MP – considered the role of government in creating a



# Hate Crime

Following a period of consultation with Victim Support Enfield, Middlesex University's Forensic Psychological Services held an interdisciplinary forum in September 2008 to steer current debate on hate crime. The symposium aimed to incorporate an analysis of current thinking, trends and initiatives at local and national levels and was regarded as particularly timely, almost 10 years on from the publication of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report.

**Sarah Marsden** describes the presentations and workshops that took place that day.

The Hate Crime Symposium brought together practitioners, academics and victims of hate crime to share their knowledge and experiences of researching, offering advice and support in relation to hate crime under four over-arching themes:

1 Victims' voices; 2 Criminal justice responses; 3 Academic approaches; and, 4 International perspectives. Speakers included: Len Duvall, the (then) Chair of the Metropolitan Police Authority; Professor Joshua Castellino, Head of Law at Middlesex University; Superintendent Paul Giannasi, Office for Criminal Justice Reform; Nathan Hall, Senior Lecturer, Portsmouth University; and Rose Simkins, Director of StopHateUK, an organization which provides support for victims of hate crime. The day also provided an opportunity to raise awareness of the various agencies working to support victims of hate crime and offered them the chance to build links with colleagues from other agencies.

In addition, a number of experts ran workshops throughout the day. These included a session delivered by Elena Noel of Southwark Mediation Centre, exploring the role of mediation in engaging with victims, perpetrators and potential offenders. Rasheed Sadegh-Zadeh from Victim Support Enfield ran a workshop which discussed some of the issues facing victims, including the reporting of hate crime and the impact of the role of the media in facilitating or hindering reporting. In another workshop, Hywel Ebsworth, a Senior Crown Prosecutor from the Crown Prosecution Service, provided examples of how hate crime was managed in his field, focusing on hate crime motivated by the victim's sexual orientation. Liz Dixon, the Hate Crime Coordinator for London Probation Services, examined 'what works' in challenging offending, and considered some evaluations and evidence-based research.

Two workshops considered academic evidence in relation to hate crime. The first, run by Professor Tony Goodman, of Middlesex University, used his fieldwork on hate crime in Haringey to stimulate discussion about the role of schools in facilitating community cohesion and in challenging latent prejudice. He also highlighted areas requiring further research. Dr Theo Gavrielides discussed ROTA's "Restoring Relations" project, a London-wide initiative aimed at reducing hate crime through restorative justice and at encouraging multi-agency partnership. Manoj Barot from the Holocaust Centre delivered a workshop considering the challenges faced by police officers in dealing with hate crime. Finally, Abdul

Tanko of Stockwell Green Community Services ran a workshop looking at the Muslim communities' experiences of hate crime, and community-centred initiatives engaging with the issue.

## Victims' voices

In providing an overview of the often harrowing experiences of the victim of hate crime, Rachel Griffin of Victim Support firmly positioned the victim at the forefront of the day's proceedings. This sentiment was often reflected throughout the day by both speakers and delegates. The effects of hate crime were seen to be wide-ranging and destabilizing to both the individual and the wider community. The element of fear was one of the most obvious and sometimes debilitating consequences of hate crime, as well as physical and psychological effects such as lowered self esteem and depression. These were described as leading to potentially very serious restrictions on the individual's lifestyle; in some cases leaving people housebound and unable to remain in employment. At a wider level, the negative impact of hate crime on community cohesion was considered by a number of speakers. Its incidence was said to contribute to the creation of 'no-go' areas for some residents, and to increase the segregation and polarization within and between communities. In addition, the negative impacts on schools, healthcare and other support services when dealing with the practical, psychological and physical effects of hate crime were discussed.

**The Morning Panel, consisting of Rachel Griffin (Victim Support), Superintendent Paul Giannasi (Office for Criminal Justice Reform) and Professor Joshua Castellino (Head of Law, Middlesex University), together with (on right) Dr Joanna Adler, Project Manager of Forensic Psychological Services and Principal Lecturer at Middlesex University, who organized the symposium.**



**CRIMINAL  
JUSTICE**



Several speakers and workshops discussed the issue of the reporting of hate crime. Under-reporting was considered to be due to issues such as victims' lack of confidence in the police and other key authorities, and poor knowledge of how and where to report the crime. Language was also a potential barrier to increased reporting. In relation to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) victims there may be the added concern of formally disclosing their sexuality or status. A lack of knowledge about support services was also raised as an issue faced by victims, as well as a possible reluctance to admit that they have been subject to hate crime.

Recommendations proposed to increase reporting, included improving access to mediation organizations and other support services, such as Victim Support. In addition, the presence of easier reporting mechanisms such as third party reporting centres was considered important. Two other key themes were recognized as central to tackling hate crime: preventative work, including developing a better understanding of the root causes of hate crime, and the need for greater partnership work. The latter was viewed as particularly important, as agencies were seen to overlook opportunities to work collaboratively, therefore not maximizing funding activity and project initiatives.

### **Criminal justice responses**

The forthcoming 10th anniversary of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report provided a clear context within which to position debates in relation to criminal justice especially since this period saw the introduction of legislation on hate crime in the form of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The evolution of hate crime policy was perceived to mirror the gradually increasing profile of hate crime: where initial legislation focused on racial and religiously motivated crime, later legislation led to the criminalization of crimes motivated by the sexual orientation of the victim.

The role of the victim was also highlighted by those from criminal justice organizations, as was the importance of the victim's perception of whether an incident was indeed a hate crime. This, explained Superintendent Paul Giannasi in his speech, was the common stance employed by police officers who regarded the views of the victim as vital to an accurate and appropriate engagement with hate crime.

Gaps in service provision were also highlighted by several speakers and delegates, including the lack of protection for transgender victims. In addition, it was said that other groups such as Traveller and Gypsy communities and asylum seekers and refugees were currently neglected in much of the wider policy and professional discussion of hate crime. Those with disabilities were also seen to be ill-served. The increase in the number and nature of crimes committed against the latter group was seen as

extremely concerning and was exemplified by the tragic murder, in 2007, of Brent Martin, a 23-year old man with learning difficulties who was beaten to death by a gang following a £5 bet on who could knock him out.

### **Academic approaches**

There was seen to be a need for much more academic research on hate crime. The research which was discussed corroborated the general views expressed through the symposium about under-reporting and the experiences of the victim. The continued difficulties in establishing a coherent definition were also seen to affect the incidence of reporting.

The need to target resources and research at preventing hate crime was stressed throughout the day. The importance of schools and their engagement with those considered at risk of committing hate crime was described as central to preventative work. In a similar vein the applicability of mediation in trying to prevent hate crime was raised. This was seen to be especially useful in combating negative behaviour before it escalated, particularly in young people.

However, the consensus was that the major gap in knowledge was in relation to understanding the behaviour of perpetrators, without which the understanding of the incidence and pattern of hate crime was seen to be impossible. Perpetrators' resistance to the label of 'hate crime offender' and the related problem of engaging with this group for research purposes was highlighted. In addition, the prevalent view that offenders are most likely to be white working class males was contested by practitioners, who argued that in their experience anyone could be a perpetrator of hate crime.

Other avenues for research that were discussed included the impact of hate crime on secondary victims, for example, the children of victims and perpetrators; the use of restorative justice and mediation in hate crime; and the role of law in regulating, rather than trying to change attitudes and behaviour. In addition, there was a call by some community and voluntary groups for their academic research findings to be better disseminated and utilized.

### **International perspectives**

The universal nature of hate crime was highlighted in the speech by Nathan Hall, who stressed that hate crime occurred across all societies. International responses to hate crime varied, with stark differences in reporting and recording rates between countries. In particular, it was noted that New York recorded between 261 and 484 hate crimes per year between 1994 and 2004, whereas London recorded between 5862 and 23,346 racist incidents per annum over the same period.

The horrific potential for hate crime to escalate

was illustrated by Professor Castellino who discussed the role of hate speech in the genocide in Rwanda. In addition, the issue of 'hate' in multicultural societies was considered. It was seen to impact everything from short term increases in ethnic tension to long term effects on community isolation and the possible movement towards terrorist activity. In an increasingly globalized world, the intrinsic value of diversity was stressed by many, within which the implications for legislation on free speech and international responses were discussed.

There was broad recognition that the symposium was successful in bringing together a wide variety

of individuals and organizations engaged with the issue of hate crime. This is particularly important as one of the main messages that emerged from the day was the need for the better exchange of information and improved partnership work. It was acknowledged that 10 years on from the publication of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry some progress had been made. However, it is clear that there is still some considerable way to go to improve understanding of hate crime and to challenge it. It is hoped that the momentum gained as a result of the symposium will be instrumental in effecting this change. □



**CRIMINAL  
JUSTICE**



## **MULTIVERSE** exploring diversity and achievement

### **‘Achieving Race Equality in Schools’ – Teacher Training Special Offer**

The Training & Development Agency (TDA) and Multiverse have made funding available to support local authorities in their delivery of training on race equality to NQTs.

The comprehensive one-day programme, devised and delivered by the Runnymede Trust, engages newly qualified teachers in a range of practical and creative activities to support their understanding and teaching of race equality and cultural diversity within schools.

The training aims to help NQTs to:

1. Identify ways of thinking about cultural diversity across the curriculum and school practice and learn how to make it an everyday part of teaching and learning;
2. Examine the historical evolution of policies and changing perceptions of cultural diversity in the area of education;
3. Provide an overview of the legislative framework that focuses on race equality in schools.

The costs of facilitators' fees, training packs, accommodation and travel will be covered by the TDA and Multiverse. We only ask that you provide:

- Minimum 10 NQTs to participate in the training (maximum 30 participants);
- Training space (with PowerPoint facilities);
- Access to computer (internet) facilities;
- Purchase *Complementing Teachers: A Practical Guide to Promoting Race Equality in Schools\** handbook for each participant to use on the day.

Please note that this is a limited offer only available for the first 12 sessions booked & delivered to authorities outside of London by Friday 3rd April 2009.

For further information or to make a booking, please contact:

Nicola Rollock – [nicola.rollock@runnymedetrust.org](mailto:nicola.rollock@runnymedetrust.org) – 020 7377 9222

\* Available from Letts Educational [01539 564 827; [www.lettsed.co.uk](http://www.lettsed.co.uk)].

Discounts available for bulk purchases.





## PERSPECTIVES

1 S. Milne (2008) 'Either Labour represents its core voters – or others will', *The Guardian*, March 13. Available under: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/>

2 Quoted in J. Kirkup and A. Pierce (2008) 'Harriet Harman: Social class is still most important divide in Britain', *The Daily Telegraph*, 10 September. Available under: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/2712372/Harriet-Harman-Social-class-is-still-most-important-divide-in-Britain.html>

3 G. Brown (2008) 'Rising to the challenge', *Parliamentary Monitor* 162. Available under: [http://www.housemag.co.uk/index.php?id=315&tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=8113&tx\\_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=92&type=editorial](http://www.housemag.co.uk/index.php?id=315&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=8113&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=92&type=editorial)

4 J. Cruddas (2008) *Voting system not fair*. Available under: <http://fabians.org.uk/general-news/general-news/cruddas-working-class>

5 A. Heath (2008) Presentation given at the ESRC Identities conference 'Identities and Social Action: Contemporary Identity Practices', 24 September, 2008.

6 Office for National Statistics (2008) *Income Inequality – Increase between 2004/05 and 2006/07*. Available under: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=332>

# Race Equality and the White Working Class

Since the 1990s, class has been more or less absent from the political agenda. However, this does not mean that class-based inequalities have disappeared from British society.

In the press and broadcast media, there appears to be a renewed interest in class, exemplified by the BBC's 'White Season'. How does this restored focus on the white working class fit into a race equality agenda? Kjartan Páll Sveinsson summarizes Runnymede's forthcoming Perspectives Paper, *Who Cares about the White Working Class?*

Since the 1990s, class has been more or less absent from the political agenda. However, this does not mean that class-based inequalities have disappeared from British society. In the press and broadcast media, there appears to be a renewed interest in class, exemplified by the BBC's 'White Season'. How does this restored focus on the white working class fit into a race equality agenda? Kjartan Páll Sveinsson summarizes Runnymede's forthcoming Perspectives Paper, *Who Cares about the White Working Class?*

Whatever happened to class distinctions? Did they fizzle out during the 1990s? Are we all middle class now? Judging by some sections of the media, as well as both Tory and Labour politicians, one could be forgiven for thinking this was actually the case. For a good decade now, 'class' has been something of a swearword in British politics, almost taboo. The Government seldom talks about class, preferring terms such as 'hardworking families' and 'social exclusion'.<sup>1</sup> While this may have been part of a broader strategy to woo middle class voters and occupy the political centre, this may have come at the cost of alienating core working-class voters. However, if a small, but significant, number of statements made recently by senior Labour politicians are anything to go by, the Labour Party is taking heed of this loss of support, and

their tone might be changing as a result. Much fuss was made about Harriet Harman's 2008 TUC speech, where she intended to say that the most important predictor of an individual's life chances 'is where you live, your family background, your wealth and social class'.<sup>2</sup> Prime Minister Gordon Brown declared ahead of the 2008 Labour Conference that the party needs to be honest with itself: 'while poverty has been reduced and the rise in inequality halted, social mobility has not improved in Britain as we would have wanted. A child's social class background at birth is still the best predictor of how well he or she will do at school and later on in life'.<sup>3</sup> And at a fringe meeting at the same Labour Conference, Jon Cruddas MP said: 'There was an ideology within New Labour – in the work of Charlie Leadbeater and so on – which has brought diminishing returns politically: that there would be no working-class: technological change would mean the end of unskilled work'.<sup>4</sup>

If class inequality is making its way back onto the political agenda, this is because there are legitimate issues and grievances to be discussed and debated. Socially, Britain remains dominated by class divisions, with class identities relatively similar in shape and strength to those that existed 40 years ago.<sup>5</sup> Classism and candid scorn for poor white people and their perceived 'culture' is rampant and deemed

to be socially acceptable, with 'chavs', NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training) and hoodies publicly reviled and ridiculed. Economically, income inequality remains historically high,<sup>6</sup> and Britain remains at the lower end of social mobility levels amongst comparable nations, and is actually declining.<sup>7</sup> After 11 years of economic growth under a Labour Government, people on low or modest incomes are legitimately wondering why their share of the pie has not increased. Class is still at the centre of how people see their place in Britain today. Returning to the issue of class inequality is therefore long overdue.

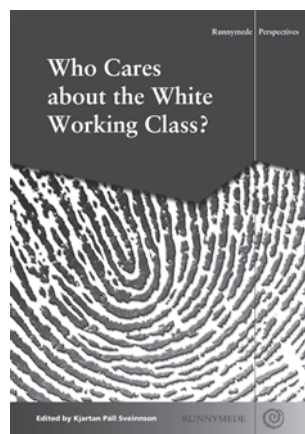
But there is a danger that a muted and repressed debate on class could be counterproductive and harmful. This was certainly the case when Margaret Hodge, MP for Barking, argued last year that the Government 'should look at policies where the legitimate sense of entitlement felt by the indigenous family overrides the legitimate need demonstrated by the new migrants'.<sup>8</sup> The recent media interest in the white working class follows this trend. The interests of the white working class are habitually pitched against those of minority ethnic groups and immigrants, while larger social and economic structures are left out of the debate altogether. The media's effort to acknowledge and discuss white working class grievances has excluded issues such as the legacy of Thatcherism and deindustrialization, or the rise of the super-rich under Labour. Instead, there is a fairly consistent message that the white working class are the losers in the struggle for scarce resources, while minority ethnic groups are the winners – at the *direct expense* of the white working class. In these terms, the white working class has been left behind by multiculturalism, or indeed *because* of it: white residents can't get social housing because migrants and refugees have

priority; white boys are failing in school because minority ethnic pupils are disproportionately allocated additional funding; white patients get reduced services at the hospital because the NHS can't cope with pressures caused by migrant 'health tourists'; white workers' wages are undercut by migrant workers who are prepared to work for less; and so on.

In this context, those promoting race equality urgently need to get involved in the current discussion on whiteness. It is important to take the grievances of members of the white working class seriously, but the terms of the debate need to be widened to include the deeply ingrained hierarchical class structure which remains one of the hallmarks of British social life. This is why Runnymede asked eight prominent thinkers on race, class and inequality to reflect on the state of class in 21st century Britain, and its relationship with race equality. The running

### Runnymede's latest Perspectives paper, *Who Cares about the White Working Class?*

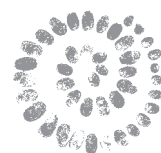
by Kjartan Páll Sveinsson, will be published in January 2009 and circulated with the March 2009 issue of the Runnymede Bulletin (ISBN 978 1 906732 10 3). Contact Runnymede for printed copies, or download an electronic version from the website [www.runnymedetrust.org].



theme throughout the volume – entitled *Who Cares about the White Working Class?* – is that the plight of the white working class is constructed by the media, politicians and anti-immigrant groups – as either the fault of immigrants and minority ethnic groups, or the cultural deficit of the underclass itself, or both, while leaving the hierarchical and highly stratified nature of Britain out of the equation.

The contributors write about

a host of different issues, ranging from education and youth culture to health and housing. It is Runnymede's hope that the papers will shed some light on the relationship between class and race equality; this volume is intended to represent a starting point for further discussion. Our aim is to initiate a dialogue to ensure that a re-emergence of class onto the political agenda will not feed divisions, but promote equality for all. □



PERSPECTIVES

7 J. Blanden and S. Machin (2007) *Recent Changes in Intergenerational Mobility in Britain*. London: Sutton Trust.

8 M. Hodge (2007) 'A message to my fellow immigrants', *The Observer*, 20 May. Available under: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2007/may/20/comment.politics>

## Right to Divide? Faith Schools and Community Cohesion

Rob Berkeley discusses the launch of the Runnymede's two-year deliberative study of faith schools and their role in community cohesion.

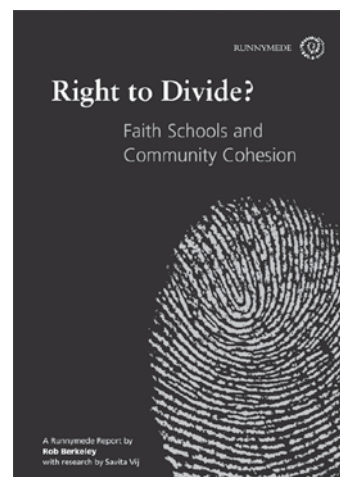
Faith schools have been an integral part of our education system in the UK since its earliest days. Increasingly, they have been the subject of debate as religion has re-asserted its role in public life. A third of our schools have a religious character and over the past decade the diversity of religious organizations that sponsor schools has grown to include Muslim, Hindu and Greek Orthodox schools alongside the longer-established Jewish, Roman Catholic, Methodist and Church of England provision.

We were interested in considering the role that faith schools play in a modern education system, in which issues of equality of cohesion need to be balanced with diversity of provision. In December, we launched the results of a two-year deliberative study of faith schools and their role in community cohesion. Our investigations involved over a thousand respondents including pupils, parents, religious and those with no faith. Our conclusions were widely

reported in the press and contributed to public debate about the role that faith organisations play as deliverers of public services. Our primary conclusion that faith schools should no longer be able to use faith as a criterion for admissions came as a reminder that faith schools are for the benefit of all in society and should therefore be open and relevant to all citizens. For many this conclusion is very challenging and over coming months we will be involved in a series of events to explain our position further and encourage others to engage with the ideas and challenges in the report.

As noted in the report, 'Any reform which impacts on one third of the schooling system is likely to be radical and difficult. However, the status quo is no longer an option.'

The summary of the report *Right to Divide* is distributed with this Bulletin and is available for free download online at [www.runnymedetrust.org](http://www.runnymedetrust.org) □





ORAL  
HISTORY

# Harambee: Inner-city Race Relations and the Voluntary Sector, Islington, 1971-8

To commemorate its 40th Anniversary, Runnymede instigated an Oral History Project to track key moments in race equality over the last 40 years. The Trust therefore welcomes **Stephen Tuffnell's** research into the Harambee project, which was founded in Islington in 1970, and acted as an island of stability in the maelstrom of London's racial tension and as an anchor for the lives of young black people in the shifting vicissitudes of Britain's transition to a multiracial society.

British race relations assumed a newly explosive character as the 1960s began. Visceral outbursts in Notting Hill and Nottingham in 1958, followed by the murder of Kelso Cochrane by a group of white youths in Notting Hill Gate, were just the most visible manifestations of mounting racial tension.

The popularity of Enoch Powell and the apparent buoyancy of the political right created further hyper-sensitivity to issues of race in the UK. 'It's England who put me down and say you're a black man even though you're born in this country and you can't do this and you can't do that,'<sup>1</sup> remarked one of many discontented black youths in 1973.

The Harambee project, of which the aforementioned youth was a member, emerged from black voluntary activism. Founded in Islington in 1970 by a charismatic Antiguan immigrant named Brother Herman, Harambee aimed to alleviate a number of interlinked social problems in Islington.

The project arose from a combination of the effects of socio-economic conditions in Islington, reflected across Inner London as a whole, and the political ramifications engendered by these conditions. The arrival of New Commonwealth immigrants - into the austere and bomb-damaged communities in areas characterized by high degrees of social deprivation - created

new challenges for the British government and local authorities.

Concomitant with the rise of new black communities was a political climate governed by a pervasive uncertainty amongst British politicians as to how best to resolve the social problems that characterized black communities. This in turn resulted in the formulation of tentative social policy frameworks that reflected the political sensitivity of being seen, on the one hand, to be discriminating in favour of immigrant communities, and the desire not to configure immigrant communities as the root cause of social deprivation on the other. The lack of a strong lead on this from national government profoundly influenced local government's relationship with Harambee.

The Harambee project acted as a barometer of social distress within Islington's black community. It represented a response to the need for more adequate hostel and welfare provision for a generation of young blacks who had become alienated by low levels of attainment in school, a dearth of employment opportunities, and the experience of racial discrimination.

For the borough authorities the project served the additional function of being 'action research'. Subsequently, they were more than willing to partake in the 'arms-length' secondment of resources to the project provided for in Section 11 of the 1966

Local Government Act. Provision under Section 11 was designed to address the financial impact of immigration in underprivileged areas through the provision of central government funding, therefore providing a loose and tentative framework within which local authorities might act.

This framework enabled Islington Borough Council to be seen to be engaged with the process of solving the issues afflicting the West Indian community, but allowed them to defer to the expertise of the black voluntary sector and consequently to shed the responsibility and potential political risks of being seen to be discriminating in favour of the black community.

The inadequacy of statutory frameworks, however, allowed for the flourishing of the ideological *leitmotif* underpinning Harambee's approach to welfare provision and its understanding of the black community. Harambee's perennial struggle for funding from the voluntary sector further reflected the idiom of self-sufficiency that stood at the heart of its governing philosophy.

The communal experience of living within the hostel itself would, it was hoped, inculcate a sense of responsibility and self-sufficiency amongst the second generation of British black people. In addition, Brother Herman attempted to provide the hostel's inhabitants with the practical skills necessary to be successful in an

1 P. Gillman, 'I Blame England: Young Black People', *The Sunday Times Magazine*, 30 September 1973, p. 32.

employment environment that was inimical to the interests of black youths.

As the Reverend Wilfred Wood, the project's chairman, described it, Harambee's aim was to 'help them [young black people] to come to terms with society by helping them to come to terms with themselves – their own defeatism, or resignation, or self-contempt'.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the project's emergence within a vocal sphere of black politics in Islington (Brother Herman was previously the welfare officer at Michael X's controversial 'Black House') gave an additional political element to the project's ideology, but one that broke with prevailing approaches in the borough.

Harambee's ascription as 'an attempt at Juvenile-Parents-Police Co-operation' stressed the notion of conciliation between the immigrant and host community, implicitly revealing that dialogue was to lie at the heart of its approach to race relations. Brother Herman was committed to a belief in the necessity for fundamental structural changes in society. The principal difficulty, he described, was that 'the white boy is a part of the structure of society, he is either the bricks, the mortar, the nails or the wood'.

'The little black boy', however, is left 'outside with a hammer chipping away trying to be a part of the structure of society'.<sup>3</sup>

The announcement of the Urban Programme's Circular 12 in 1974 marked a sea change for black voluntary projects in Britain. It was to be the first phase of the programme designed to fund projects in areas 'particularly under strain because of the high concentration of immigrants'.<sup>4</sup> Thus, it was to be a concerted statutory effort to resolve the urban deprivation afflicting immigrant communities in Britain. Yet, as Harambee's experience illustrates, the potential for huge capital injection presented a stark dilemma over the political legitimacy of the project to its black community.

Under the programme Harambee was awarded the largest grant ever to have been given to a single project. Under the stipulations of the programme, contained within the 1969 Local Government Grants (Social Need) Act, the Home Office agreed to pay 75% of a total grant of £281,050, with the borough council making up the remaining 25%.<sup>5</sup>

The expansion would have expanded the outreach capabilities of Harambee to an

unprecedented degree. The capital grant was to fund a huge expansion of the project beyond its premises on the Holloway Road in North Islington to create two new additional hostels for both men and women.<sup>6</sup> Yet, Brother Herman felt compelled to reject the grant 'because of the strings attached'.<sup>7</sup>

This apparently dogmatic stance may have led allies to suggest that Brother Herman was 'rather too proud of retaining his PURITY!'.<sup>8</sup> But, the project's ideology demanded that independence and existence as an institution were synonymous. This represented a major crisis for Harambee and its leaders, as its drive to succeed brought it into closer contact with official organizations, and yet it was constantly pulled in the opposite direction by its black membership who perceived the state as the root cause of their distress. It struggled on until 1978, by which time the council announced the termination of its involvement.

The stance which Harambee advocated had the effect of rendering the project a political liability for council officials; in their view, the pejorative connotations associated with 'black power' diminished its suitability as a model for racial integration. □



## ORAL HISTORY

2 W. Wood to J.R. Price, 16 November 1972, Enclosure I, in: London Borough of Islington Council Minutes Report, Appendix "J", p. 1/4.

3 HMSO, Parliamentary Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration, *Police/Immigrant Relations*, London, 1972, p. 608.

4 Home Office Circular No 87/1974, Urban Programme Circular No. 12: Areas with a High Concentration of Immigrants, ILEA/CL/PRE/15/21, LMA.

5 London Borough of Islington Council Minutes, 11 February 1975, pp. 250 & 261.

6 'Application for Running Costs Under the Urban Aid Programme for the Development of Harambee', Undated, Hilden Charitable Fund.

7 T. Connelly to G. Wilson, 13 May 1975, RRB, CK2/307, TNA.

8 Bailey to Johnson, 1 June 1975, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust.

## The Runnymede Trust's Oral History Project

Over its 40 year history, Runnymede has been witness to some of the most important events and developments in relation to race relations and tackling racism in the UK – from drafting and implementing anti-discrimination legislation, to reporting on and analysing the causes of riots and disturbances, to significant policy shifts, to major and ongoing changes in the demography of the country to name but a few.

During its history, Runnymede has benefited from the support, participation and input of activists, campaigners and policy makers and others, many of whom have moved on to other influential and important roles, including Lord Lester, our founder.

To commemorate Runnymede's 40th Anniversary, the Oral History Project will track the key moments in race equality over the last 40 years through personal testimonies from individuals who were involved with Runnymede's work – either directly or indirectly. This project will provide an opportunity to reflect on Runnymede's past, and, using new technology, be a primary source for historical study, and curriculum resources for use in schools and other educational settings.





HOME  
OFFICE

# Forced Marriage

## The Risk Factors and the Effect of Raising the Minimum Age for a Sponsor, and of Leave to Enter the UK as a Spouse or Fiancé(e)

In November 2008, the marriage visa age rose to 21 in an attempt to 'crack down on forced marriage', following a consultation by the Home Office. Recent research has not, however, found statistical or qualitative evidence that the raising of the age of sponsors and spouses is likely to have any significant impact on the incidence of forced marriage. Reporting on the findings of the research study,<sup>1</sup> **Dr Khatidja Chantler** and **Dr Geetanjali Gangoli** discuss the risks and benefits of raising the age, and recommend measures that will address forced marriage and offer support to victims.

This article presents the results, conclusions and policy recommendations of a research project commissioned by the Home Office, and carried out between March 2006 and February 2007. The research was conducted in the context of debates in the UK and in the European Union about the consequences of increasing the age for a sponsor or spouse or fiancé(e) as a measure to prevent cases of forced marriage. In April 2003, the Immigration Nationality Directorate (IND, now called the Border Agency) raised the age at which a person could sponsor a partner to enter the UK for marriage from 16 to 18 years. In December 2004, as part of cross-governmental measures to tackle forced marriage, the age of spouses seeking entry to the UK was also increased to 18 years. The rationale behind this was that it would give extra time for young people to mature which would help them to resist family pressure to marry.

<sup>1</sup> Research conducted by Professor Marianne Hester, Dr Khatidja Chantler, Dr Geetanjali Gangoli, Jasvinder Devgon, Sandhya Sharma and Ann Singleton. Marianne Hester was Project Manager for the research, Khatidja Chantler and Geetanjali Gangoli were co-ordinators of the Manchester and Bristol teams respectively and are listed alphabetically. The other researchers and advisers are listed alphabetically. Dr Bipasha Ahmed, Dr Melanie McCarty and Dr Nicole Westmarland contributed to phase one of the research. Professor Erica Burman acted as adviser.

stakeholders and survivors, focus groups with members of different communities, a mapping survey with community organizations and database analysis. Phase one, the pilot stage, was conducted in Manchester and Tower Hamlets. This phase involved familiarization interviews, interviews with stakeholders and survivors, and identification of databases that might provide useful sources of data on forced marriages. Phase two built on the successful methods used in phase one, and extended the research to include Birmingham. It involved further familiarization, stakeholder and survivor interviews and identification and exploration of existing databases. In addition, a mapping survey and focus groups were carried out. Overall familiarization interviews were conducted with 13 organizations, including a range of government departments, statutory sector organizations and NGOs; stakeholder interviews with 45 organizations across Birmingham, Manchester and Tower Hamlets; in-depth interviews with 38 survivors of forced marriage (33 women and 5 men); a mapping survey of 79 community organizations across Birmingham (n = 25), Manchester (n = 24), and Tower Hamlets (n = 30); 28 departments/projects interviewed about the content and structure of their databases; and 15 focus groups carried out with a wide range of communities involving 97 individuals (82 women and 15 men) with ages ranging from 15 to 60. The methodology chosen generated rich data on issues related to forced marriage, and also examined the research questions from different angles and in relation to different communities. The variety of methods used provided a degree of triangulation, and also enough breadth to allow general patterns to emerge.

### Aims

The research addressed four main issues:

1. The impact and outcome on forced marriages of the recent increase in the age of sponsorship and entry into the UK of a spouse or fiancé(e) from 16 to 18 years;
2. The benefits and risks of increasing the age of sponsorship or entry to 18, 21 and 24;
3. The range of communities in which forced marriage happens; and
4. The factors which are perceived to increase or decrease the risk of forced marriages.

### Methodology

The research was carried out in two separate phases, and used mixed methods, including one-to-one interviews with



HOME  
OFFICE

## Findings

**Raising the age:** The research found no statistical or qualitative evidence that the raising of the age of sponsorship or entry from 16 to 18 had any significant impact on the incidence of forced marriage cases. There was limited support for a wholehearted endorsement to the raising of the age of sponsorship or entry further to either 21 or 24. The potential benefits of raising the entry age were seen as being the possibility of greater maturity, access to education and financial independence for young people, all of which were viewed to leave them in a stronger position to resist forced marriage. However, these benefits were also perceived as being largely outweighed by the risks.

Risks cited centred on three key themes: the increased and direct risks of physical and psychological harm to victims of forced marriage; the discriminatory nature of the proposed increase in age; and the human rights implications. Increased risks to survivors included young British women being taken abroad to marry and kept there forcibly until they could sponsor their spouses. During this time the victim may have borne children (possibly under pressure) as children often have a positive impact for immigration purposes. Increased personal costs to the person and exacerbating the trauma were also cited as the victim may have been subject to regular abuse during this period without access to support services. Therefore the age increase could increase, rather than decrease, violence against women. Concerns were also expressed that increasing the age could lead to an increase in self-harming amongst potential victims as they would have to spend a longer time being in a controlling environment even within the UK.

Another concern was that the proposed raising of the age of sponsorship or entry of spouse or fiancée was a measure to restrict immigration and that it had human rights implications. It was suggested that it would be discriminatory as it restricted the right to family reunification for couples where one or both were non-EU citizens, and would impose a dual system of marriage ages within the UK. It would also impact on 'genuine' arranged or love marriages, and would have a disproportionate effect on minoritized communities. Further, there was a contradiction that some British citizens and residents were legally allowed to marry with parental consent at 16, or without it at 18, but not to be able to live with their partners in the UK until they were 21 or 24 years of age.

A number of agencies also expressed a concern that raising the minimum age would

lead to an increase in falsification of documents to circumvent any legislative changes, and that this would also have wider implications for the survivor of forced marriage, who might not even know that the basis on which they were in the UK was illegal. Organizations working specifically with young people were concerned about the potential impact on child protection of raising the age of sponsorship or entry. In the context of social services, in theory 16-year-olds would (or should) be offered protection under child protection legislation. Increasing the age to 18 would remove young people from this safety net. Many respondents were concerned that increasing the age of sponsorship or entry would not tackle the issue of domestic or EU-based forced marriages.

**Communities experiencing forced marriage:** While forced marriage was often conceptualized as primarily affecting South Asian communities, the research indicated that it was an issue in a wide range of religious and other communities outside the South Asian Diaspora. These included orthodox/fundamental religious communities in the UK, Irish traveller women, Armenian, Turkish, and some mainland Chinese communities, Eastern European communities, African countries including Eritrea, Sudan, Sierra Leone and Mozambique, and African Caribbean communities.

The study also revealed that these different communities experienced a range of routes into forced marriage, including: poverty and bride price primarily in African communities; control over sexuality in South Asian, Middle Eastern, Chinese and African communities; immigration in South Asian, Middle Eastern, Chinese and African communities. These were often linked to structures of inequality; for instance, the inability of certain nationalities to easily migrate to the UK as economic migrants was seen as linked to an increase in forced marriage for the purpose of sponsoring a spouse. Forced marriage was often linked to 'religious' and 'cultural' expectations, including honour-related violence, and notions of sexual propriety and control over women's sexuality for a number of communities. Control over sexuality as a route in forced marriage also included gay women and men being forced into marriage, and this was manifest widely.

A blurring between arranged and forced marriage, as well as distinctions between them, was highlighted in relation to most of these contexts. For example, in contexts where arranged marriages are the norm, it can be the case that some marriages that were originally thought of as arranged were retrospectively understood as forced.



## HOME OFFICE

2 Individuals who enter the UK as spouses or long-term partners of a British national or someone settled in this country are subject to a two year probationary period before they can apply for residency and have no recourse to public funds during that period. That is, they are unable to access statutory help for housing or related public funds for housing costs or living expenses.

**Factors perceived to increase or decrease the risk of forced marriages:** These included negative actions associated with an increase in the age of sponsorship or entry of a spouse to 21 or 24. Other factors included: lack of appropriate services, no recourse to public funds,<sup>2</sup> and wider socio-political processes leading to more 'traditional' Muslim identities being adopted. Decreasing the risk of forced marriage was largely the reverse of factors that were thought to increase the risks. In large part, better support to victims (at home and overseas), as well as preventive work, was thought to be crucial, as were increased resources for education and awareness for practitioners, young people and communities as well as academic/vocational education for young people.

### Recommendations

1. A further increase in the age of sponsorship or entry to 21 or 24 is unlikely to prevent forced marriage, given the range of communities and ages that are affected. The research therefore does not support a change in policy to increase the age.
2. Forced marriage affects a range of communities, and there are a variety of routes into forced marriage. Any policies around forced marriage need to take this into account.
3. Increased funding and capacity is needed at a strategic, management and practitioner level for organizations charged with responsibilities for supporting victims of forced marriage.
4. Specifically targeted services are also needed, including specialist refuge support and appropriate mental health support.
5. Forced marriage is already a form of domestic violence, and women subject to the two year rule should not be required to prove further domestic violence in order to be eligible for the domestic violence concession.
6. Community awareness and education initiatives regarding forced marriage as well as community development with parents and young people are vital.
7. Anti-discriminatory practice is needed in generic and specialist agencies to improve access to services for survivors of forced marriage.
8. Improved services are needed internationally in cases of forced marriages, including establishment of women's groups, helplines and campaigns for women's rights as well as poverty alleviation programmes targeted at women.
9. There is a general paucity of statistical information required to monitor the effects of legislation in this field. Recommendations for possible improvements to the availability of data are included in the report. □

## Gurinder Chadha in Conversation

An evening presented by the Runnymede Trust in partnership with the British Film Institute

On 15 December 2008, friends and supporters of the Runnymede Trust gathered at the BFI for an evening in conversation with British film director Gurinder Chadha, who spoke about the influence of race and ethnicity on her work and how she addressed these themes in her work, from her first hit, *Bhaji on the Beach*, to her current success with *Angus, Thongs and Perfect Snogging*. The conversations and questions from the audience were moderated by Shami Chakrabarti, Director of Liberty and BFI Governor.



## 'Hafu'/Half Japanese: A photographic exhibition by Natalie Maya Willer and Marcia Yumi Lise, the Bodhi Gallery, 214 Brick Lane, London E1 6SA, 24-30 October 2008

Leili Sreberny-Mohammadi discusses a recent photographic exhibition that explored the intricacies of half Japanese or *Hafu* identity from a transnational perspective. The exhibition featured the work of half Japanese women. The exhibition is a registered event with JAPAN UK 150 – a scheme run by the Japanese Embassy, celebrating the 150-year anniversary of diplomatic relations between the UK and Japan, and is supported by the Japan Society, Suntory and Clearspring. For more information see: [www.hafujapanese.org](http://www.hafujapanese.org).

Mixed, mixed race and multiple heritage are all widely used and recognized terms for people of different cultural, ethnic, and faith backgrounds. A number of recent articles in the press considering the mixed experience, along with the election of a mixed heritage man as US President, and the realization that those identified as mixed are increasing in number, has pushed this group into the spotlight. Runnymede published a Perspectives Paper on 'Mixedness' in 2007.<sup>1</sup>

Although it is now clear that there is an identifiable and growing number of people identified as mixed, the information as to who makes up this population remains unclear. According to the 2001 census, 50% of those identified as mixed are under 16. As young people increasingly use social networking sites to find and communicate with friends, it seems the internet is becoming an important social space for young people developing a sense of community around particular interests or identities. As well as more formal on-line communities like People in Harmony and Intermix,<sup>2</sup> encompassing wide-reaching mixed experiences, more specific groups are also emerging. Websites such as Facebook and Myspace are populated with a variety of groups for 'mixed race' people and people of specific ethnic mixes. A quick search on Facebook will find Half Chinese, Half Egyptian, Half Mexican, Half Persian, and Eurasian groups, amongst many more. The possibilities of identifying with any number of ethnic groups, specific or otherwise, are seemingly endless on the internet.

Online spaces seemed to be important for the participants in the *Hafu* project and exhibition. An example of an online community formed for a specific ethnic mix is [halvsie.com](http://halvsie.com); which states that it is 'for, by and about half Japanese'. With a membership of 1500 and counting, the site seeks to bring together people who identify as being half-Japanese – or *Hafus* – regardless of their location, either through virtual or physical space. In Britain, people who are of mixed Japanese backgrounds are among those underrepresented in research and debates on 'mixed-race' studies, which have focused on White and Black Caribbean/African heritages. Marcia Lise and Natalie Willer explored the intricacies of half Japanese or *Hafu* identity through their exhibition. It featured photographs taken by Natalie of *Hafus*, accompanied by quotes from interviews conducted by Marcia. Speaking about what motivated them to create the exhibition, they said:

'Our shared interest in half Japanese identity inherently stems from our experience of being in between different cultures. Like many other half Japanese people

we have been making an enquiry into our mixed cultural experience. This questioning of our own identity has its roots in our appearance and "mixed" upbringing as well as how we sit in the racially designated society we live in.'

Willer and Lise found that *Hafus* were increasingly using online spaces such as Mixi, Halvsie, Hapa Japan and Facebook to connect with each other to share experiences of being mixed, and created the exhibition to represent the fluidity of half Japanese identity and the very different experiences of the respondents. Location played a key role in how they identified themselves; those brought up in Japan felt mainly Japanese and had little exposure to their non-Japanese heritage, and those raised in Britain mainly felt culturally British. The pair found that:

'...some of these *Hafus* felt the necessity to fill the gap, the allegedly empty "half" of themselves, with activities embracing the other culture more distant to them. This is evident in a number of forms. For instance a *Hafu* who was mainly raised in Britain may attend Japanese related events/societies, learn Japanese or intend to live or have lived in Japan for a period of time. On the other hand a *Hafu* who feels mainly Japanese may leave Japan to explore their non-Japanese side of roots. This stems from their desire to tie up racial roots and the associated cultural knowledge (e.g. 'I am half Japanese and half British, so I ought to know about both Japan and Britain'). So matching up race and culture is a definite theme that emerged from a number of interviews.'

The responses of the participants indicate how location and surrounding culture impacts on identity choices; there isn't a necessarily intrinsic feeling of being Japanese. The *Hafu*/Half Japanese exhibition helps to highlight the variety within one specific group, and also reminds us how people of mixed heritage are organizing themselves along their own lines, and mobilizing to seek wider recognition in the mainstream, both within the boundaries of the mixed debate, and outside. □



### REVIEW

1 *Mixed Heritage – Identity, Policy and Practice*, Runnymede Perspective edited by Jessica Mai Sims (Runnymede Trust, 2007).

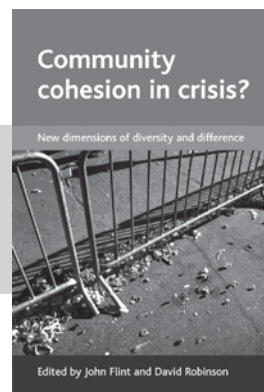
2 People in Harmony was set up 35 years ago to provide a platform and support network for parents of mixed-race children, while another forum, Intermix, exists as a resource and space to meet people or families of mixed backgrounds, and any other interested individuals.



Two of the photographs from the exhibition.

# Critical Relief

**Community Cohesion in Crisis? New Dimensions of Diversity and Difference**  
**John Flint and David Robinson (eds)**  
**Policy Press, 2008**  
**Pp. 288; £19.99, pbk; ISBN: 978 1847420 23 7**



## BOOK REVIEWS

Reviewed by  
Rob Berkeley

We have been waiting for this collection for a long time. There has been little more frustrating in recent years than being unable to respond to the misprisions and dis-information that too often is used as justification for policies labelled as 'community cohesion'. This collection puts the meat on the bones of a critique that has been developing in academia and policy research over recent years which laments the lack of evidence at the heart of the cohesion agenda and yearns for credible policy and practice which truly meets the needs of citizens and communities. Taking a neighbourhood level approach, this collection is replete with examples of where policy has been constructed 'on the hoof' in response to problems that are imagined rather than real.

In the opening chapter David Robinson notes 'the new politics of community appears to have an indifferent attitude to evidence and, like all political ideologies, it seeks to avoid questions that call into doubt its 'comprehensive vision'. At our anniversary conference 'The New Politics of Belonging' we attempted to discern where the politics lie in the cohesion agenda – giving voice to the ideological assumptions at its base rather than acquiescing in the face of the managerial approaches which attempt to measure the immeasurable, and reduce the complex interactions which typify our social relationships to bi-modal constructions. The broad range of academic approaches in this collection

includes qualitative and quantitative analyses. They highlight the fact that simplistic understandings of a drift to segregation (sleep-walking or wide awake) are not helpful, that relationships with 'faith-based communities' are not entirely unproblematic (Furbey), that the third sector can be a barrier as well as a route to effective change in deprived neighbourhoods (Wells), and that the welfare state (in particular schools and housing associations) plays a part in shaping interactions as well as 'enhancing the legitimacy of the cultural capital of ethnic and religious minorities' (Flint).

The collection usefully reintegrates debates about class, social capital and power into discussion about community and cohesion – an area of discussion too often omitted. The neighbourhood focus also enables an understanding of local traditions and dynamics to be included. Kintrea and Suzuki's discussion of young people's territoriality is an engaging account of generational patterns of conflict with roots that date back far beyond current teenage behaviours. Burrows highlights the ever more nuanced differentiation within neighbourhoods, while Blandy looks at the phenomenon of gated communities in order to introduce some consideration of the impact of affluent citizens on cohesion.

This collection is highly recommended to all those who are engaged in work to promote cohesion. □

# Racist Incidents and Bullying in Schools

**Racist Incidents and Bullying in Schools: How to Prevent Them and How to Respond when They Happen**  
**Robin Richardson and Berenice Miles**  
**Trentham Books, 2008**  
**Pp. 156; £15.99; ISBN 978 1 858564 28 9**

The title of this book suggests protocols and processes and whilst such guidance is contained within these pages it belies the emotional engagement and accessibility that are the striking features of this book. The opening paragraph looks at name calling in schools through an article in the *Daily Telegraph* in 2006. This immediately hooks into the difficulties schools and society have in understanding how racism and racist bullying differs from other hurtful jibes and taunts in the school playground.

This book helps to unravel and clarify what we mean by racist incidents and bullying and how we can meaningfully and practically care for and support not only 'perpetrators' and 'victims' but also the 'henchperson' and 'bystanders'. It distinguishes between the four broad approaches in responses: a) dismissive; b) punitive; c) corrective; and d) transformative. It is particularly and usefully concerned with describing and commending the fourth approach. This focuses on preventing re-offending and ensuring care and support for all those involved in an incident through drawing upon restorative justice practices. There is a chapter on the complexities and efficacies of recording racist incidents that provides reflections and suggestions on the methodology of recording incidents and how we might better analyse them. There are specific chapters given to the prevention of racist incidents and bullying that look

at the needs of a diverse society and how we learn and teach about these issues, including how we promote active citizenship. The chapter title 'The Table of Shared Responsibility' conveys the approach towards staff training and development that encourages a climate for learning where all staff can feel valued, appreciated and work together in this area. This section contains practical ideas of how a supportive climate can be created, and activities that will help 'us think about love and care and concern and kindness'.

It is words such as these that linger after the book is closed because this slim book has managed to think about preventing and responding to racist incidents and bullying in terms of skills, knowledge and understanding but it has also managed, as it suggests training should, to 'engage hearts and minds'. Quietly ringing in my ears is 'Ask children if they're OK' a suggestion from the chapter on listening and learning from young people; its simplicity is poignant because we are reminded that we could do this more and do this better. □

**RACIST INCIDENTS  
and bullying  
IN SCHOOLS**

How to prevent racist incidents and bullying when they happen

Robin Richardson and Berenice Miles



Reviewed by  
Shaila Sheikh

# Racism and Education: Coincidence or Conspiracy?

*Racism and Education: Coincidence or Conspiracy?*

David Gillborn

Routledge, 2008

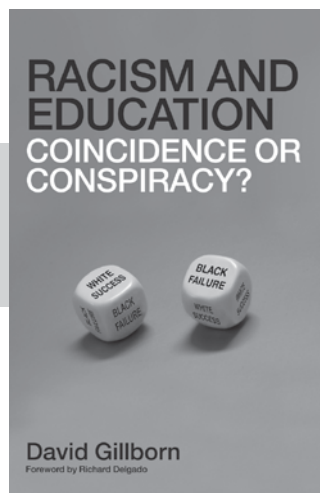
Pp. 255; £22.99; ISBN: 978 0 415418 98 0

David Gillborn's keenly awaited new book does not disappoint. The task he sets himself is ambitious: to demonstrate unequivocally that 'education policy is not designed to eliminate race inequality but to sustain it at manageable levels'. Furthermore, his aim is not to preach to the converted, nor to target only academics working within the field, but to engage 'community activists, students and teachers who want to make a difference and *really* pursue race equality' (p. 196). To this aim, *Racism and Education* introduces a refreshing way of getting complicated academic theories across to audiences that may not be particularly interested in academic writing. Drawing on the various innovative and accessible approaches of Critical Race Theory (CRT) – such as a fictional conversation between a professor of education and his activist protégé – one of the many strengths of the book is that readers relatively new to studies on race and racism will learn not only how racism works within the British education system, but also how it works in other parts of society as well. At the same time, the subtleties and nuances of Gillborn's arguments mean that those well versed in anti-racist theory will learn something new as well.

Gillborn advances a stinging critique of the New Labour mantra of 'evidence-based policy making'. He goes further than merely stating that British educational policies are seldom evidence based; he asserts that policy makers have long known the evidence quite well, but made a conscious decision to ignore it. The Professor, Gillborn's fictional character, explains that educational policy makers 'knew about the likely

outcomes – or at least they had plenty of people *warning* them. Activists, parents' groups, academics – I even know of civil servants who made similar warnings behind the scenes at quite senior levels. Policy makers could have taken those warnings seriously and changed the policies before they were announced – no need to lose face with the White public and media' (p. 12). This is a pretty heavy claim, but by adding layer after layer of evidence to demonstrate this point, Gillborn paints a comprehensive picture of what can only amount to conscious and wilful neglect of minority ethnic pupils. Thus, the subtitle of the book, *Coincidence or Conspiracy?*, is very much a rhetorical question.

Gillborn's book is not only a valuable contribution to the debate on race equality in education. It is also an important introduction of Critical Race Theory into the mainstream of British academia. Gillborn forcefully shows the utility and relevance of this approach, which remains relatively unexplored in the UK. Although he applies it specifically to educational policy, the CRT framework could usefully be applied to other policy areas as well. Hopefully, Gillborn will achieve his double aim to, on the one hand, inspire fellow academics to employ this promising doctrine and, on the other, inspire people to resist and oppose White Supremacy in education. □



BOOK  
REVIEWS

Reviewed by  
Kjartan Páll  
Sveinsson

# Schools and the War on Terror

In *Educating against Extremism*, Lynn Davies examines the role of formal education in challenging violent extremism. Professor Davies' forthright style may be challenging for some readers, but in this book she brings some crucial analysis to the rather ethereal hopes of government and others that schools are appropriate locations in which to counter dangerous forms of extremism. Davies' breadth of sources for her arguments is truly impressive – ranging from the comedian Mark Steel to 'The Islamist' Ed Husain, via Amnesty International and UNICEF. Davies' work is a timely, critical and evidence-based intervention coming in the months before a flurry of government publications aimed at engaging schools in preventing violent extremism – primarily the threat posed by Al-Qaeda influenced violence.

Davies engages the reader in a discussion about the nature of extremism in such a way as to contextualize extremist action outside of the current 'war on terror'. Usefully she provides definitions of terms such as extremism, terrorism, fundamentalism and radicalism that plot a means of navigating through the debates. She argues forcefully that the hub of the problem is

*Educating Against Extremism*

Lynn Davies

Trentham Books, 2008

Pp. 208; £16.99; ISBN 978 1858564 26 5

absolutism, quoting Desmond Tutu's definition of extremism as 'when you do not allow for a different point of view; when you hold your own views as being quite exclusive; when you don't allow for the possibility of difference'. The author's response is to advocate for what she terms 'critical idealism'.

Taking a wide-ranging internationalist approach does not prevent the author from discussing issues relevant to classroom practice; from educating pupils who are members of the BNP, to the role of faith schools in cohesion debates, to the 'appropriate' use of humour. In this book Davies provides an engaging and useful resource for all who are interested in understanding how to translate the government's preventing violent extremism policies into progressive classroom practice. □



Reviewed by  
Rob Berkeley



## BOOK REVIEWS

# Tell Me What I Need to Know

Shaila Sheikh describes the booklets recently launched to provide information to help Black and Minority Ethnic, Refugee, Asylum-seeking and Traveller parents support their children in education.

In 2006 the Runnymede Trust carried out an online survey to explore the barriers to parental involvement. Over 200 parents and teachers responded. The vast majority of the parents (88%) felt it was very important to support and be involved in their children's education. Both parents and teachers provided feedback on their concerns and the barriers to involvement that they experienced. What emerged from this research and other research in this area is that although BME parents reflect many of the same concerns as other parents, there are particular factors that affect them more than others.

One concern consistently repeated by parents is that they don't have enough information: they don't understand how the education system works and they don't know their rights. It is clear, too, that there are areas of misunderstanding, mistrust, sensitivity and lack of communication on the part of both parents and schools. Also evident, though, are signs that government, local authorities, schools, teachers, independent agencies as well as parents are searching for – and finding – creative solutions to the perceived problems.

The Runnymede Trust designed *Tell Me What I Need to Know* to help parents from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME), Refugee, Asylum-seeking and Traveller communities to support their children's education more confidently and effectively. The information can be viewed and downloaded from [www.realhistories.org.uk](http://www.realhistories.org.uk) – look for the section called 'For Parents'.

**Vastiana Belfon with research by Jessica Mai Sims**

**The Runnymede Trust, 2008**

**All downloadable, free of charge, from [www.realhistories.org.uk](http://www.realhistories.org.uk)**

**Foundation Stage booklet, ISBN 978 1 906732 02 8**

**Key Stages 1&2 booklet, ISBN 978 1 906732 03 5**

**Key Stage 3 booklet, ISBN 978 1 906732 03 5**

**Key Stage 4 booklet, ISBN 978 1 906732 05 9**

**Good Practice, ISBN 978 0 954838 93 5**

Although this information and guidance will be relevant for parents from all backgrounds, the booklets concentrate on these groups because statistics repeatedly show that, while some children from these groups do extremely well, many others fail to achieve their potential. There are a number of reasons for this, but it is clear that if parents do get involved in their children's learning, both in school and at home, that can make a difference. As the Runnymede research shows, there is no question that parents and carers in these target groups want to achieve the best for their children.

*Tell Me What I Need to Know* is a series of booklets that provides information to parents on the education system in England from when a child's formal education begins at the age of three until compulsory education comes to an end. The education system is constantly changing and complex. There is a lot that parents seek to understand, particularly those parents who have not been through the system themselves. There are four booklets, covering the Key Stages of a child's education:

Foundation Stage	Age 3 - 5
Key Stages 1&2	Age 5 - 11
Key Stage 3	Age 11-14
Key Stage 4	Age 14 -17/18

Each booklet gives the information parents need to understand what happens in their child's school as well as guidance and suggestions to help them prepare for the next Key Stage. Examples of 'good practice' are drawn from across the country. Since parents are often in the best position to identify and understand

their children's needs, the hope is that this information will give them increased confidence to engage more effectively with their children's schools.

There is a great deal of information in the booklets, covering topics such as admissions, school uniform, managing behaviour, and support for language needs and cultural identity. Essentially all the information parents require can be found within these pages. This can also make the documents appear dense but they do not need to be read in one session. It is more likely that the headings will be scanned through and parents will elect to focus on sections relevant to their needs or concerns. They will probably find it helpful to read ahead on the next Key Stage when the children are approaching transition times.

As well as individual parents accessing these booklets it is hoped that local authority advisory services, schools, community groups and parent support groups will all find these booklets helpful. The documents can be adapted to meet the needs of specific communities or amended to reflect the school or local authority perspective.

There is an additional booklet called *Good Practice* which brings together the creative ways in which parents' concerns are being addressed. It offers suggestions and real case study examples about how parents, schools and local authorities have tried to overcome the barriers. It is a hugely encouraging document which reflects the positive difference that can be made from the inclusion of parents as co-educators of our children. □

# Film Review: 'The Class'

'The Class' (2008) is the film adaptation of co-screenwriter François Bégaudeau's book about his personal experiences of being a teacher in Paris' 20<sup>ème</sup> district. It is directed by Laurent Cantet. It offers the viewer an artful, engaging, thought-provoking and mostly non-judgmental portrayal of the issues affecting France's disaffected youth. The main protagonists are François Bégaudeau himself and a class of mainly non-professional actors from similar backgrounds to their characters. This gives the viewer the impression that they could be watching a documentary. It is almost entirely set 'Entre les Murs' or 'between the walls' of the classroom – the French title of the book and film – and the cameras never stray from the school grounds.

The film follows a multi-ethnic class of 13-14 year olds for a school year during their French language and literature lessons and culminates with the expulsion of Souleymane, one of the main 'characters' of the class. The film isn't plot-lead however. Rather, it

has several strong undercurrents that keep on resurfacing. The interaction and banter amongst the students themselves and with their teacher provide a naturalistic environment in which the issues affecting the youth from Frances' 'banlieus' or 'suburbs' can be explored. By drawing on questions and struggles that take place within the school environment, the film manages to deal with issues present in society as a whole.

On the difficulties of migration and the fragility of situations we see: Wei successfully making his way through the education system while waiting to find out if his parents might be sent back to China because of their immigration status; the fight to assert difference as a young Goth pleads for acceptance; intolerance as the class quizzes their teacher on homosexuality; issues of belonging as the young people express their affiliation to their country of origin, their resistance to feeling French and their approach to multiple identities. There are also questions of

equality and fairness as, ultimately, the exclusion of Souleymane raises dilemmas as to whether personal circumstances should be taken into account within the institutional framework of the school.

In the context of l'École de la République, often a battleground between two of the central principles of the French Republic, freedom and equality, all pupils, teachers and parents have to strive to confirm their identity and find their place. The difficulty lies in how to make one's own way, get on with those around us, and be one's self while conforming to the norm. This struggle is presented from both sides of the desk as it is a challenge for both teacher and pupils. The film is not a critique of the education system in deprived areas, however, even if the dramatization of the banal provokes pessimism. Indeed, the viewer is confronted with lack of communication, disillusion, intolerance and the frustrating sense that hardly any of these teenagers will be able to fulfil their potential.



## FILM REVIEW

Reviewed by Anne Gumuschian and Rebecca Waller

## New Real Histories Directory Website

Vastiana Belfon describes the updated *Real Histories Directory* website which has a brand new look.

More than 8500 unique visitors now make use of the website each month, with over 2500 of them visiting the 'Topic of the Month' and the 'Website of the Month' features. The continuing increase in the number of people accessing the site is encouraging but we're always looking at ways to make the site more user friendly and to increase its impact. We therefore studied the website statistics and have responded to comments and feedback. The new site is brighter, cleaner and, we hope, more accessible.

Visitors can still search the more than 850 resources on the site by Subject, Region, Name or Type of resource and we have added search facilities for the 'Topic of the Month' and 'Upcoming Events' sections. Our events listings pages now have a calendar feature so that, as well as viewing events for the current month, visitors are able to find out what's happening on specific dates in the future.

We have also added a new section aimed at parents – particularly those from BME, Refugee, Asylum-Seeking

and Traveller Communities. *Tell Me What I Need to Know* (reviewed by Shaila Sheikh on page 28) aims to help parents to support their children in education.

The Directory also now has a RSS feed so you can subscribe to automatically find out when the site is updated. Please do visit the new site and let us know what you think. As you can see from the improvements to the site, your comments are important to us and we do try to respond to your feedback. Please email us at [realthistories@runnymedetrust.org](mailto:realthistories@runnymedetrust.org).

**The Real Histories Directory**

Find a resource  Any age range

The Real Histories Directory	Website of the Month	Topic of the Month
<p>The <b>Real Histories Directory</b> is a resource tool for teachers, parents, pupils and the wider community to support them in teaching and learning about cultural diversity in the UK.</p> <p>Find a resource by using the search box or click on 'The Real Histories Directory' link above and browse by subject, name or type of resource. You can also suggest a resource by clicking on 'Submit an entry' on that page.</p> <p>As well as the varied resources, each month we add a topic that's of particular interest. Just click on 'Topic of the Month'. You'll also find suggestions for using the Directory in the classroom and at home.</p> <p>Check on what's happening around the country in our <b>Upcoming Events</b> section. You can also tell us about</p> <p>...more</p>	<p>November's Website of the Month is <b>Moving Here</b>, a site that explores, records and illustrates why people came to England over the last 200 years and what their experiences were and continue to be.</p> <p>...more</p>	<p>The US elections are dominating the news agenda and Ruth Fairclough examines how the campaign can be used as a focus for the teaching of diversity through the Citizenship curriculum.</p> <p>...more</p>



**BELONGING**



In December 2008, young people from urban neighbourhoods in three European cities met to compare perspectives of identity and belonging

Hosted by the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, a museum which was opened a few months ago, this debate has become part of the final celebrations in Paris of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue under the French EU presidency, which represented a cumulative moment of a very special initiative, *BELONGING*.

Using their film as a starting point, the young people looked at each other's work, a series of imaginative videos of one to three minutes each, made between August and October 2008.

**1. A filming session in Paris with workshop facilitator Atisso Medessou**

**2. A photograph on an apartment door – from the 'Cinescaliers' exhibition, Paris.**

**3. Outdoor screening in 'Les 3 Fuchsias' housing estate in Paris.**



1 The round table is financially supported by Connect Youth.

2 The local partners are Forest Gate City Learning Centre and NewCEYS in London - Newham; Vende-Se Filmes in Lisbon; Collectif Tribudom in Paris.

intercultural dialogue grounded in the specificity of personal and social opportunities, as well as the challenges which arise around new migrations and the making of new communities and to deliver youth voices and perspectives on these major issues on video.

Thanks to the support of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, this initiative was able to start in May 2008, in specific urban locations where we knew we would find young people from culturally mixed backgrounds living



in London/Newham, Lisbon suburb/ Casal da Boba and Paris/20th arrondissement.

Having identified and secured key local partners,<sup>2</sup> the project organized a series of video workshops, one in each location. Focusing on themes around migration, identities and the making of new communities, the project has explored how young people talk about belonging, how layered migrations shape communities, and how young people manage multiple, flexible identities while belonging to more than one place. We also wanted to see how the young people would approach issues of sharing space (conviviality, territories) in culturally mixed urban neighbourhoods.

The process of the workshops themselves, and how the young people went about making their

films in the course of one intense 5-day period, was of paramount importance to us. Achieving a high quality of the final films was also important to the *BELONGING* initiative, as it helps in disseminating the work more widely, especially on broadcast media. The tension between these two aims - focusing on the process and producing broadcast quality outputs was both challenging and beneficial. Day after day, we witnessed the development of the young people and the workshop teams interacting, developing and growing together working with and learning from each other. The workshops helped to transform some young individuals and the enthusiasm generated around the project has been remarkable.

The 43 short films that resulted from the workshops provide an interesting picture of life today and a valuable insight into the contemporary thoughts of young people in city places. Interestingly, the films show how the idea of belonging has been interpreted in a wider sense in both Portugal and France: belonging is sometimes about neighbourhoods, sometimes about social experiences, and sometimes about personal existential attitudes, as well as cultural identities in the UK case.



What we have learnt is that the way young people feel is determined by intergenerational issues, male/female relationships, fear and danger in the streets, the role of the police (especially

manifesta



CALOUSTE GULBENKIAN FOUNDATION



the former improvised houses. People of different generations relate what they feel has been lost and gained in terms of belonging, as they explain their nostalgia for the place where they used to live. At the same time, music and dance, and young people's smiles give a positive feel to this series

in Paris) and other facets of life. A recurrent theme in all three locations is doing nothing, having nothing to do and being bored; so too are issues relating to peer pressure, and being influenced and manipulated by others. Unsurprisingly, scenes of habitual prejudice and daily life racism are also represented in some of the films.

Chosen for their distinctive nature, each location has its own local history, which is considered below; this individual nature appears in the background in most of the films, and in some it comes very much to the fore.

*Newham* was chosen for its diversity and the films represent the mix of the borough, with a strong presence of young people of Asian origin, as well as a new generation of migrants from Eastern Europe. The London videos represent a colourful account of what belonging means for young people who live in the borough. The diversity of clothes, food, fabric and people provides a vivid picture of the Asian community of Newham. At the same time, some young people talk about what it takes to feel part of where they live, including the struggles to create new communities.

*Casal da Boba* is a Lisbon district that is home to people whose families came from the Cap Verde Islands. They used to live in slums, but apartment flats with gas and electricity have now replaced

of films.

*Paris 20th* is one of the poorest districts within the walls of the city, near the back-door of Paris, a working class area where successive groups of immigrants have settled. Amongst the social housing estates, we are shown the roughness of life,



its difficulties and its dark aspects. Humour, however, is never far from this contemporary snapshot. Here and there, the young people know how to find ways of talking about serious issues while having fun at the same time they discuss loneliness, being bored, and how absurd it can sometimes seem to be asked to name a country you belong to.

A week after the Paris workshop, an outdoor screening took place on a big screen in the big courtyard of *Les 3 Fuchsias*, a housing estate which is home to some of the young film-makers. More than 200 persons

came together and stood outside to watch the films produced during the French workshop. At the same time, 'Cinescaliers' a photographic project produced by Collectif Tribudom (our *BELONGING* French partner) was showcased. They had helped them use photography to



**BELONGING**



reclaim the public spaces in their buildings the hallways, stairways, etc. as meeting spaces for social interaction with their neighbours. The outcome is a series of photographic prints the size of the inhabitants front doors.

Similarly, after the London and Lisbon workshops, a local community screening was organized in Stratford Circus in London, as well as in the *Casal da Boba* Library. The next stage in the execution of *BELONGING* will see exhibitions and screening of the combined video works in museums and cultural centres, online, and on television, in all three cities. Amongst these final stage animations was a special screening in Lisbon at the end of November, at the Calouste Gulbenkian

4. A filming session with workshop tutor Luisa Homem.
5. Workshop participants in *Casal da Boba*.
6. Filipa Reis and João Miller Guerra from *Vende-Se Filmes*, Lisbon.
7. Young people interview the police in *Casal da Boba*.



# CONTENTS

<b>Piloting Runnymede into the 21st Century</b> Michelynn Lafèche	1
<b>The 2008 United States Presidential Election</b> Omar Khan	4
<b>Time for More Anti-discrimination Legislation from Europe</b> Sarah Isal	8
<b>Reflections on the 'New Politics of Belonging'</b> Margaret Wetherell	9
<b>Reflections on UK Identities Today</b> David Faulkner	13
<b>The New Politics of Belonging</b>	14
<b>Hate Crime</b> Sarah Marsden	15
<b>Race Equality and the White Working Class</b> Kjartan Páll Sveinsson	18
<b>Right to Divide? Faith Schools and Community Cohesion</b> Rob Berkeley	19
<b>Harambee: Inner-city Race Relations and the Voluntary Sector, Islington, 1971-8</b> Stephen Tuffnell	20
<b>The Runnymede Trust's Oral History Project</b>	21
<b>Forced Marriage</b> Khatidja Chantler and Geetanjali Gangoli	22
<b>Gurinder Chadha in Conversation</b>	24
<b>'Hafu'/Half Japanese: A Photographic Exhibition</b> Leili Sreberny-Mohammadi	25
<b>Book Reviews</b>	26
<b>Film Review: 'The Class'</b>	29
<b>New Real Histories Directory Website</b> Vastiana Belfon	29
<b>BELONGING Project</b>	30

Bulletin No. 356, December 2008  
ISSN 1476-363X

In 2009, The Bulletin, Runnymede's Quarterly newsletter, will be published in the months of March, June, September and December by:

**The Runnymede Trust**  
7 Plough Yard, Shoreditch  
London EC2A 3LP  
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7377 9222  
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7377 6622  
Email: [info@runnymedetrust.org](mailto:info@runnymedetrust.org)  
Url: [www.runnymedetrust.org](http://www.runnymedetrust.org)

Annual subscription in 2009 is £37.00

Typeset and printed by:  
St Richards Press Ltd, Leigh Road, Chichester,  
West Sussex PO19 2TU. Tel: 01243 782988



## RUNNYMEDE TEAM

Michelynn Lafèche  
Director

Robert Berkeley  
Deputy Director

Sarah Isal  
Senior Research and Policy Analyst

Debbie Weekes-Bernard  
Senior Research and Policy Analyst

Shaila Sheikh  
Acting Senior Research and Policy Analyst

Omar Khan  
Research and Policy Analyst

Jessica Mai Sims  
Research and Policy Analyst

Kjartan Páll Sveinsson  
Research and Policy Analyst

Vastiana Belfon  
Real Histories Directory

Robin Frampton  
Publications and Website Editor

Rebecca Waller  
Administrator

All the photos on pages 1-3, 14 and 24, and the photos numbered 10 and 11 on page 32 are © Benedict Hilliard 2008. Photos on page 25 are © Natalie Maya Willer 2008. The photo on page 15 is © Rasheed Sadegh-Zadeh 2008. The photos on pages 30-32 (except photo 4) are © Manifesta 2008. Photo 4 on page 31 is © Vende-se Films 2008.

Museum of Modern Art, followed in December by a premiere of the films representing each project location, at the Gulbenkian Cultural Centre in Paris.

The Paris screening was part of the Round Table mentioned earlier, at which young people from the London Borough of Newham and a suburb of Lisbon travelled to Paris to meet French counterparts to discuss



(in schools and in other non-formal settings) in debates about anti-racism, identities, citizenship and the making of new communities.

The *BELONGING* films will now be promoted and disseminated as widely as possible online, on television, at festivals, as well as in special events and conferences. *BELONGING* Portuguese broadcast partner RTP2 (national public service television) is likely to broadcast all 43 films, and additional approaches are being made to broadcasters in the UK and France.

Thanks are due to all the project's partners and participants for their collaboration in making *BELONGING* such a fascinating and rewarding experience in three European cities.

*BELONGING* is devised and led by Manifesta in association with the Runnymede Trust. It is supported by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

and compare their positions on belonging. We will report on this in the March 2009 issue of the Bulletin.

The round table discussion in Paris will be used to produce a policy report as well as *BELONGING* educational materials in early 2009. These will be used alongside the films to engage other young people

### 8. Shooting in Lisbon.

### 9. Young workshop participants in Casal da Boba.

### 10. Michelynn Lafèche, Runnymede Director, and Marion Vargaftig, Manifesta Director, introduce the screening in Stratford Circus, London.

### 11. Young people receive their films after the screening in Stratford Circus.



For more information, or to talk about how you can screen these films, please contact Marion Vargaftig, Manifesta Director: [marion@manifesta.org.uk](mailto:marion@manifesta.org.uk)

manifesta