MAKING THE CASE FOR RACIAL EQUALITY

The potential and limits of ‘framing’
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Voice4Change England was set up in 2007 to support the Black and Minoritised Ethnic (BME) voluntary, community and social enterprise sector. Its aim is to build a strong and inclusive civil society that improves the life outcomes for BME and other populations subject to disadvantage. We do this in a number of ways, including developing BME-led self-organised action and contributing to a constructive discourse about race inequality and racism.

Runnymede is the UK’s leading independent think tank on race equality and race relations, set up in 1968. Through high-quality research we identify barriers to race equality and good race relations; provide evidence to support action for social change; and influence policy at all levels.
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Summary

Despite the longstanding efforts of race equality advocates and activists, there is still a need to make the case for meaningful action for race equality.

Like other causes, that of race equality needs to win support in order to make progress. However, doing so presents particular challenges as talking about ‘race’, race equality and racism appears to generate a degree of discomfort and resistance among ‘mainstream’ audiences. Today, basic concepts are still contested, such as the continued existence of racism and the embedded and structural nature of race inequalities.

‘Framing’ is a method used to win support for causes. It involves numerous steps, including clarifying what advocates want to achieve through their efforts; researching public thinking on a cause; and developing and testing messages to help move target audiences in a particular direction on an issue.

Framing approaches do not stand alone and should be seen as potentially change-making alongside other change strategies, including efforts for institutional reform, organising and movement-building; research and insights into social problems; and policy innovation.

Race equality advocates have long been carrying out elements of framing and have given careful consideration to how to argue their case. The impetus for more formal framing efforts is based on a number of insights that are increasingly evident:

1. Being morally right and having the facts on one’s side is not enough to gain support;

2. Language and messaging matters, and can be significant in persuading audiences;

3. Arguments and messages dearly held by activists may not be productive in making the case for a cause.

Following on from these ideas, advocates may need to act with greater focus and intentionality in how they make their case, as they are unlikely to be able to rely on the morality of their cause or on longstanding arguments to win the day.
Lessons from framing research on a variety of social causes in the UK lead to two main recommendations for more effective advocacy for race equality. The first is that the case for race equality can be strengthened by observing a set of emerging general advocacy principles. These include advocates being clear about the purpose of every communication effort that they undertake; making the moral case for race equality by appealing to ‘public-spirited’ values; and showing that action on race equality is compatible with a decent life for all.

The second recommendation is for investment in a specific programme to frame/reframe race equality. This would help to provide advocates with better understanding of what and how the public think about ‘race’ and why. It would also enable the development of specific language, metaphors and messages to help to make the case for race equality, while staying true to the ethos of racial justice work.

In addition, due to the specific nature of both race equality activism and discussions of ‘race’, a further recommendation is that the process of framing race equality should be driven by Black and Minoritised Ethnic experiences, voices and perspectives. This will help to ensure both that reframed advocacy messages reflect and respond to real needs and that the language and messages that might emerge from a reframing process will be carried into the world by race equality advocates.
1. About this project

Social change requires making the case and winning support for causes. ‘Framing’ is an approach that can help advocates to identify and articulate the kinds of arguments, language and messages that can call audiences to a cause. Framing can include steps such as researching public thinking on a cause, and developing and testing different metaphors and messages with target audiences in order to find those that are most effective in helping advocates reach their goals (see Section 4 for more detail on framing methods).

This review seeks to better understand if and how framing might help advocates to secure more support for meaningful and long-term progress on race equality. It is the result of an ongoing dialogue between race equality organisations and the Funders for Race Equality alliance. The shared interest across race equality organisations and Funders for Race Equality is in funding effective efforts for race equality.

‘Communications’ appeared as an agenda item in a meeting between race equality organisations and members of Funders for Race Equality in December 2016. Part of the impetus behind the agenda item was the potential for race equality advocates to benefit from (re)framing efforts across a range of causes in the UK – some of which had been supported by members of Funders for Race Equality. Underlying this interest was a sense that, though there have been gains in race equality, progress is not assured and some basic ideas are still contested, such as the existence of racism. Furthermore, some public and policy discourse seems inconsistent with ideas of anti-racism and belonging for all. For example, there were powerful and problematic messages in the 2016 European Union referendum campaign and the Trump campaign in the 2016 United States presidential race, encapsulated in the respective slogans of ‘taking back control’ (Longlands, 2017) and ‘America First’ (Calamur, 2017).

Such events bring into sharp focus the ongoing need to call people to the cause of race equality.

A sub-group of race equality organisations (from Croydon BME Forum, Race Equality Foundation, Runnymede Trust and

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1 Sometimes the term ‘strategic communications’ is used to describe what we call framing. However, strategic communications may cover a broader approach, as it can be defined as anything that relates to ‘the purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfill its mission’ (Hallahan et al., 2007). This includes decisions such as selecting communications channels; deciding on and developing activities, events and materials; establishing partnerships; and plan implementation (WK Kellogg Foundation, 2006).
Voice4Change England) met with funders from Barrow Cadbury Trust, Big Lottery Fund, Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the LankellyChase Foundation in January 2017. It was agreed that Runnymede and Voice4Change England would jointly develop a bid to examine how lessons on improving advocacy across a range of social causes might help in making the case for race equality.

This bid focused on a scoping review. The proposal included a limited literature scan, and interviews and roundtable discussion with cause advocates and practitioners of framing interventions. The proposal was approved and funded jointly by Barrow Cadbury Trust, Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the LankellyChase Foundation.

This non-technical report is the core output of the review. It examines the potential and limits of framing approaches in helping race equality advocates to better make their case. The report also identifies a set of immediate practical lessons for race equality advocacy, as well as a set of suggested future actions.

This report was originally completed in August 2017 but has been updated as part of a second small project, funded once again by Barrow Cadbury Trust, Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the LankellyChase Foundation. This project will result in two published outputs: this report, and a poster that summarises key general lessons for race equality advocates as they seek to ‘make the case’. The third element for the additional work is to develop a proposal to be put to Funders for Race Equality for further specific framing work for race equality based on lessons contained in this review.

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2 Advocates for race equality may operate in different modes, including as activists, researchers, organisers and policy specialists. Framing is relevant across these modes, as they all involve, to differing degrees, engagement and persuasion.

3 See [www.voice4change-england.co.uk/content/making-case-race-equality-handy-guide-framing](http://www.voice4change-england.co.uk/content/making-case-race-equality-handy-guide-framing)
2. Introduction: The continuing struggle for race equality

Making the case for race equality

In the half century since the UK’s first racial discrimination legislation, the path to racial justice has been long, twisting and turning. While progress has been made, it has not been inevitable or irreversible. Black and Minoritised Ethnic (BME) people as a group, compared to their white British peers, still experience highs that are less high and lows that are lower across a range of measures, such as employment, health and criminal justice (Equalities and Human Rights Commission, 2016).

From the abolition of the slave trade to decolonisation to the fight for civil rights, progress towards racial and social justice has been hard won. Struggles for equality have met – often fierce – resistance and advocates for race equality have always had to make and remake the case for their cause.

Continued investment in making the case for race equality is based on the ideas that, despite the efforts and imagination of race equality activists, there is more to do to advance racial justice and that more support is required in order to make further progress.

At the same time, making the case for race equality is only one strategy employed to combat racial disparities. It operates alongside and feeds other strategies and priorities for change, including transforming institutions; building and organising BME and pro-race equality power, e.g. in the form of civil society action/institutions; innovating in policy development; and producing new knowledge and insights about race equality and racism (Espinoza, 2017).

At its heart – like causes such as the right to be ‘queer’ – race equality is a struggle for freedom. This is in the form of economic, legal and social rights, but also something more. The movement for race equality is in part the fight by racialised peoples to be accepted as fully human in a context where this status is consistently questioned (Khan, 2007)."
Despite difficulties, progress can be made in ‘winning over’ audiences to aspects of race equality. Indeed, race equality advocates and organisations have spent and continue to spend considerable time and effort thinking with care about what they say to persuade people of the importance of their cause.

There have been some successes for race equality and anti-racist activists in these efforts of persuasion. They have helped to delegitimise certain forms of overt racism. Even the clichéd sentence that begins, ‘I’m not racist but …’, followed by a dubious racialised or xenophobic assertion, is a victory of sorts – as the speaker feels the need to emphasise their non-racist credentials in order to be given a hearing.

But curtailing overt racism is not the same as winning the argument that racism is an ongoing structural force in British society and that meaningful action is required to remove racial inequalities. Indeed, in making the case for race equality we must recognise that there is resistance and contestation when it comes to talking about racialised and racist dimensions of our collective life.

For example, in the late 1990s the term ‘institutional racism’ gained currency as an explanation of ongoing racial disparities (Macpherson, 1999). This in turn informed the 2000 Race Relations (Amendment) Act, which required public authorities to take a more proactive stance against discrimination, including positively promoting equal opportunities and ‘good relations’, not only prohibiting direct or indirect discrimination. However, more recently institutional racism has lost ground as an explanation of why BME people experience different outcomes to white peers. In 2014, as home secretary, Theresa May even used the term ‘institutionalised political correctness’ (cited in Tran, 2014) as a way of suggesting that some BME people had been overly accommodated.

More positively, in her first speech as prime minister on the steps of No.10 Downing Street Theresa May spoke about tackling particular ‘burning injustice’ faced by certain groups in society because they are poor, black, white working-class, state-educated or female (cited in Perkins, 2016). This was followed up in August 2016 with May announcing the launch of ‘an audit to look into racial disparities in our public services that stretches right across government. It will highlight the differences in outcomes for people of different backgrounds, in every area from health to education, childcare to welfare,

5 In 1999 the Macpherson Inquiry into the conduct of the police during the Stephen Lawrence murder investigation found the Metropolitan Police Service guilty of ‘institutional racism’.

6 May’s claim was that sexual exploitation of young girls in Rotherham by men of south Asian heritage went unchecked due to ‘institutionalised political correctness’ on the part of Rotherham Council.
employment, skills and criminal justice’ (May, 2016). The first Audit (Cabinet Office, 2017) is now in the public domain, though the impact it will have is, as yet, unclear.

In this context of ongoing disparity, discursive setbacks and glimmers of hope, race equality advocates attempt to achieve multiple objectives with their communications efforts. They try to connect to the lived and felt experience of many BME people; shine a light on the underpinnings of racism and race inequality; and garner more support for the cause. These objectives are not easily achieved, but framing may help.

The next section sets out some of the dilemmas that advocates face and the concerns that they have when trying to advance the case for race equality. Sections 4 and 5 detail a range of activities involved in framing efforts, possible benefits and question marks over the suitability of this approach as a means of race equality advocacy. Section 6 considers how we might work on and through some of these tensions and marks out some practical next steps in more effectively making the case for race equality.
3. Demands and dilemmas in advocating for race equality

In considering how the case can be made for race equality there are a range of issues and imperatives that weigh on the minds of advocates. We lay some of these out as a series of questions below.

How can advocates stay connected to ‘supporters’?

Work to advance race equality is rooted in the lived and felt experiences of BME people. This rootedness guides the work of BME-led race equality organisations and initiatives; helps hold them accountable for their actions; and provides them with the legitimacy to advocate for BME populations, for example, to policymakers.

The situation is similar in other group-based struggles against injustice. These include those led by and for particular populations subject to discrimination, including LGBTQI (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer Intersex) and Gypsy and Traveller populations.

In these cases, advocacy messages need to reflect the experiences of these populations. This does not mean that messages cannot be aimed beyond core supporters, but rather that lived experiences always need to be in the frame.7

How can advocates reach out to the ‘mainstream’?

Advocates for race equality face a dual challenge of reflecting the experiences of BME populations while also making race equality a relevant mainstream issue. These two objectives may be somewhat in tension.

One way to reach the mainstream is to align race equality to mainstream norms and interests. For example, one can argue that race equality is a fulfilment of ‘British values’. However, this can feel inauthentic to race equality advocates and BME populations, as suggestions that fairness is part of Britain’s ‘DNA’ appear at odds with the experiences of many BME people, including those with roots in former British colonies.

7 This may be different in relation to other causes, such as human rights or even migrants’ rights, anti-poverty or anti-homelessness work, where advocacy is not necessarily led by those directly affected by the issue. In such contexts, ‘professional’ advocates have perhaps more leeway in what they say to make their case, but there are also, potentially, questions about the credibility and accountability of some advocacy.
A related approach emphasises that BME people deserve equality on the basis of their contributions to society as a whole. This idea was much in evidence in the coverage of the ‘Windrush scandal’ (Sodha, 2018); but it can feed problematic ideas of there being some ‘good’ BME people who deserve proper treatment and other ‘bad’ BME people not worthy of such regard. Advocates may, rightly, want instead to make the general case that all (BME) people should be subject to fair and just treatment.

A further issue of advocacy to the mainstream is that it may be possible to secure change that advances race equality, but such gains may be fragile and subject to reversal. An illustration is the allocation of places in elite universities in the US and UK to students ‘of colour’. One study found that white students are at best ambivalent about the ‘diversity bargain’, and that they agree with affirmative/positive action for students of colour reluctantly, as long as it benefits them by providing a ‘diverse’ learning environment. Within this ‘bargain’, white elite students fear being called racist but protest if a ‘diversity’ programme might threaten to limit their chances for advancement (Warikoo, 2016). The mainstream can therefore be a difficult audience, and one that seeks to defend its own primacy and to place strict limits on race equality.

How can advocates talk about ‘difficult’ subjects?

Issues of racism and race equality can be complex and controversial and contain some ‘uncomfortable truths’.

Complexity can come in the form of trying to communicate the ‘structural’ nature of race inequalities. Structures can be hard to convey, as they involve a nebulous set of ideas and practices that consistently and by default deliver detrimental or advantageous outcomes to certain groups in society (Aspen Institute, 2016; Brown University, 2016). Where the public do understand the role of deep-set forces, there is a tendency to think of a ‘rigged’ system (New Economy Organisers Network et al., 2018) in which ordinary people flounder and elites flourish. However, the rigged-system metaphor tends to be associated with a fatalistic sense that nothing can be done to undo these forces. This is counterproductive, because advocates want to create the sense that change is essential and achievable.
Complexities aside, controversy may arise simply as a result of pointing out that (in aggregate) BME people face disadvantages compared to white counterparts, and that this is related to ‘race’ and racism.

This statement, though seemingly incontrovertible, can be incendiary such that it prematurely closes down a conversation about what to do about race equality. Indeed, such is the difficulty associated with these ideas that communications specialists warn against foregrounding racism or ‘white privilege’ in race equality communications efforts (Davey, 2009) amid concerns that such topics can lead to discomfort and defensiveness among some (white) audiences (Campbell, 2016). Some of these feelings may be associated with concerns that race equality may imply the removal of advantages for some in the white majority population.

Of course, honest discussions on other topics can also create discomfort. For example, the stories of sexual aggression, harassment and abuse of women that prompted the #MeToo and Time’s Up movements can lead to men evading and denying these issues, or seeking to personally exonerate themselves from culpability.

However, it may be that shared lives across genders offers some potential for men to gain insights into experiences of women. In particular couples and families that involve males and females provide a basis for (though no guarantee of) female–male solidarity in struggles against misogyny.

In contrast, there may be too few white people with close enough connections to BME people. For example, in 2011 only 4 per cent of White British people were in inter-ethnic relationships.\(^8\) This may be insufficient to generate sufficient engagement, empathy and willingness in black and brown lives amongst white people.

The difficulties of having open and honest conversations with white populations and institutions (Lingayah, 2016) has led to frustration among race equality advocates. And many advocates will share the sense of being in a no-win situation exemplified in Reni Eddo-Lodge’s book Why I’m no longer talking to white people about race (Eddo-Lodge, 2017).

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8 See: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/marriagecohabitationandcivlpartnerships/articles/
How can advocates appeal to policymakers?

One of the underlying logics of some advocacy work is that public attitudes can and should be targeted in order to move forward a cause. The purpose of this is to encourage a groundswell of support on an issue that catalyses personal, institutional and policy change. However, as described above, this may be difficult in the case of race equality, because of resistance to talking about ‘race’ and racism in mainstream settings.

In this context it may make sense to find levers for change other than public opinion – particularly so because public-facing campaigns can be resource-intensive and their outcomes unclear (Crawley, 2009; Crompton et al., 2002. Race equality and other advocates may therefore target their persuasion efforts at policymakers first and foremost.

Policymakers can provide moral leadership for the public. Examples from history include the UK’s various Race Relations Acts, which signalled to the population at large the unacceptability of some forms of racist behaviour. Even though the ability of policymakers to provide ethical guidance may be somewhat in decline in anti-establishment, anti-deferential times, leaders can still take an ethical lead on issues, and in doing so help to shape public opinion and action.

A recent example of this is the case of the charge for plastic bags in England.

Though there was no apparent public clamour for them to do so, policymakers were persuaded to place a levy of five pence on plastic bags in England and Wales. Once it came into force, the policy actually gained support as people saw it as practicable and sensible. In addition, experience of life under the levy helped to increase public support for related proposals, such as an additional five pence charge on each plastic water bottle purchased (Economic and Social Research Council, 2017). This example shows that persuading policymakers can both secure policy change and create additional after-the-fact public support.
Although the public may not necessarily be the first and primary target for race equality advocates, public attitudes still matter. For example, public resistance to race equality can encourage decision-makers to go ‘soft’ on race inequality, whereas benign public opinion can encourage them to act decisively.

We are left, therefore, with a series of tensions, dilemmas and questions in race equality advocacy.

How can we talk to each other about ‘race’, racism and race equality in ways that honour the ongoing lived realities and deep underpinnings of racialisation and racism?

How can we have the necessary uncomfortable conversations?

And while doing so, how can we call to the cause of race equality people who have different perspectives and experiences?

The answers to such questions lie at the heart of the communications conundrum facing advocates for race equality. The complex nature of the conundrum is an important reason why race equality advocates may be interested in framing as an approach to more effectively making their case.
4. Framing: methods and elements

Advocacy work is based on the idea that causes advance with the support of the public and other audiences (such as policymakers). In order to win that support an effective case must be made.

The previous section laid out a set of imperatives for race equality advocacy, as well as attendant difficulties and dilemmas. This section considers ways in which framing may help advocates to make their case.

Why framing?

The approach of framing has emerged out of growing interest among advocates in how to strengthen the case for a particular cause, based on a number of increasingly evident insights:

1. Being morally right and having the facts on one’s side is not enough to gain support;
2. Language and messaging matters, and can be significant in persuading audiences;
3. Arguments and messages dearly held by activists may not be productive in making the case for a cause.

The first point is that being ‘right’ and on the side of what is ‘just’ is insufficient to guarantee that the case for a cause will be made. Audiences – including policymakers – do not necessarily respond to facts or the weight of evidence. This is not to say that facts do not matter – they are important – but rather that audiences are governed by sets of values, cultural norms and biases that may discount pieces of evidence and amplify others (Crompton, 2010; Darnton and Kirk, 2011; Kasser, 2016; Lakoff, 2014; Schwartz, 2011). Furthermore, because most people will not necessarily be critically engaged with a particular cause or issue, these values, norms and biases become even more important when they are confronted with an unfamiliar fact, argument or event.

Point 2 above emphasises that the way the case for a cause is made is pivotal. In particular, advocacy done well, can change ‘the perceived bounds of political and economic possibility;
changing what is seen as realistic’. In other words, the stakes for messaging are high because the way we talk about an issue can affect the scope for social change.

The third point is that stock arguments that are favourites of activists may not help a cause. For example, as discussed above, talk that emphasises crisis in a social issue can result in audiences thinking that there is nothing that can be done (New Economy Organisers Network et al., 2018; O’Neil et al., 2018). Moreover, some advocacy messages can actually lead to a net shift in the public away from supporting a cause, such that in pure public support terms, advocates would have been better off saying nothing (Hawkins, 2016). Framing suggests that advocate messages need to be devised (and tested) in a researched way that avoids assumptions about what works.

In combination, these three insights suggest that advocates may need to act with greater focus and intentionality in making their case – and in this regard the approach of framing can help.

Building blocks of framing

We can think of framing as an overarching process for responding to some of the challenges of making the case for a cause.

Core tasks include engaging with advocates to understand their priorities; conducting analyses of how a particular cause is already talked about in public and policy domains; and comparing how advocates and key audiences think about the issue – with a view to devising messages that navigate gaps and to making use of areas where public and advocate thinking overlaps.

Framing can include multiple steps: see Table 1 below.

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### Table 1: Possible steps in a framing process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Clarifying and articulating long-term cause objectives</td>
<td>Establish long-term objectives. Refer back to them at each stage to ensure short-term aims or ‘wins’ are not counterproductive to future goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Reviewing current frames in discourse</td>
<td>Understand dominant themes, narratives and framing about the issue in the media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Advocate interviews</td>
<td>Interview key advocates to understand how they communicate an issue and what content they wish to convey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Public interviews/surveys</td>
<td>Interview/survey members of the public (or other target audiences) to explore what they think about an issue and how this thinking is guided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Gap analysis</td>
<td>Identify significant gaps between public and advocate understanding of the issue with a view to reframing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Framing and message development</td>
<td>Reframe issue messages to close advocate–public understanding gaps and to move attention towards more productive ways of understanding the issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Testing audience responses to different cause frames and messages</td>
<td>Test audience support for (re)framed cause messages. Message efficacy can be tested when groups exposed to these messages are asked to assess a set of explanations of a social problem as well as possible solutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Refining, selecting and deploying those messages most likely to move the audience(s) towards support for responses to problems</td>
<td>Select messages that display efficacy in shifting audiences towards desirable policy positions and that are consistent with long-term cause objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Deployment of messages</td>
<td>Take messages live into communications plans and practice followed by evaluation and refinement where needed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The steps outlined in Table 1 are similar to those used in efforts to improve advocacy on various issues in the UK, including on new economics (New Economy Organisers Network et al., 2018) and anti-poverty (O’Neil et al., 2018).

Framing approaches can appear very systematic and deliberate. This contrasts with typical practice – certainly in race equality – where advocates are reliant on their experience and instincts to devise persuasive messages, and where there is no test phase (step 7 in Table 1) and messages either ‘sink or swim’ in the real world.

As well as the types of steps in a framing process (as outlined in Table 1), there are specific concepts upon which these processes are built. Among the most important of these building blocks for advocacy are cultural models, values, frames and messages.

Cultural models

‘Cultural models’ are used by people to navigate and make sense of situations and the world more generally (Sanderson, 2017). These models can be uncovered through in-depth ‘cognitive’ interviews10 and provide insights into how audiences think about an issue, e.g. ‘race’ or what attributes they assign to being BME. With a clear idea of the cultural models that operate in their issue area, advocates can anticipate how audiences might accept (or reject) new information and attempts at persuasion and can make their case accordingly.

For example, ‘self-makingness’ (O’Neil et al., 2018) is a cultural model based on the belief that positive life outcomes result from effort, talent and good choices. People who ‘make it’ deserve their rewards and people who are struggling are in some way to blame for their condition. With this insight, advocates for justice and equality may need to be mindful of triggering or reinforcing these ideas and to instead emphasise that those who succeed in society do so due to access to systems of support and benign contexts (O’Neil et al., 2018).

More positively, other cultural models exist that can serve efforts for equality. These include ones that acknowledge the interdependent nature of society and the social responsibilities that we have for one another (encapsulated by an institution such as the National Health Service). Advocates can seek to activate and appeal to these models in making their case (O’Neil et al., 2018).

10 For more on cognitive interviews see [www.frameworksinstitute.org/sfa-methods.html](http://www.frameworksinstitute.org/sfa-methods.html)
Values

Advocates argue their case by appealing to audience values (Crompton, 2010; Crompton et al., 2012; Grouzet et al., 2005; Kasser, 2016; Schwartz, 2011). Work from Common Cause shows that, to resolve ‘bigger-than-self’ problems (Crompton, 2010) such as poverty or climate change, advocates need to appeal to ‘intrinsic’, ‘compassionate’ or ‘public-spirited’ values among the audience (Crompton, 2010; Crompton et al., 2012). These values range widely and include the importance of social justice and, in the environmental sphere, connection to nature (Common Cause Foundation, 2011; Crompton and Weinstein 2015). Conversely, the case for a cause can be made by appealing to ‘self-focused’ or ‘extrinsic’ values which centre on external rewards such as social approval and personal financial gain. These values are more associated with indifference towards ‘bigger-than-self’ problems (Crompton, 2010; Grouzet et al., 2005).

The example of solar panels can demonstrate the split between public-spirited and self-focused appeals.

If the case for solar panels is primarily based on income or savings generated, or on the grounds that they represent ‘green chic’, then uptake may initially increase but diminish when the external reward of money or the ‘cool’ factor is removed or reduced. However, if solar panels are framed in terms of being a meaningful way to safeguard our shared natural environment then, other things being equal, uptake will be more enduring.

Analogously, in race equality, employers can be encouraged to recruit BME people more proportionately at all levels of their organisation (Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 2017). A self-focused argument may emphasise the potential commercial advantages, such as that more ‘diverse’ workforces lead to better ideas and engagement with customers. But what if evidence shows limited or no such gains, or is ambivalent? In the absence of more public-spirited arguments (and buy-in), such as the moral case for enabling everyone in society to have a chance, employers may make few or no adjustments to their existing practices.

The work on values therefore suggests that advocates must seek to activate and connect to people’s public-spirited values for deep and lasting change.
Frames and messages

Cultural models and audience values can inform how advocates seek to make their case. The way that a case is made is, in practical terms, determined by the frame that they use and the messages that they deliver. We shall take frames and messages in turn.

A frame is a way of viewing and presenting certain aspects of an issue. Frames are important because of the way that they help to trigger cultural models (Sanderson, 2017). A ‘productive’ frame will trigger helpful cultural models and values (such as social responsibility). For example, in work to make the case for alternative economics, one frame identified as useful was ‘resisting corporate power’. It emphasised a need to make the economy work for everyone rather than serving the interests of elites (New Economy Organisers Network et al., 2018).

Frames provide an overall shape to a case, but advocates still need to identify messages that encapsulate frame elements and guide audiences towards particular ways of thinking about and supporting a cause.

Messages are, therefore, the spearhead in advocacy efforts and where the work of making the case gets practical, as advocates attempt to make persuasive arguments with careful use of language and metaphor.

The example below is an anti-poverty message that tested well in Joseph Rowntree Foundation’s work on reframing poverty (O’Neil et al., 2018):

As a society, we believe in justice and compassion. But, right now, economic conditions mean that millions of people in our country are trapped in poverty and their opportunities are limited. Benefits can help.

This message in particular tries to reframe poverty by: (a) aligning the fight against poverty with public-spirited values of justice and compassion; (b) foregrounding the way that the economy traps people in poverty; and (c) positioning benefits not as part of the problem (as in some mainstream depictions) but as part of the solution.
Real-life framing examples in the UK

Human Rights

The Equally Ours campaign has developed a framing approach to human rights. Advocates for human rights have been concerned by levels of support for human rights in Britain.

As part of its work, Equally Ours researched wider public attitudes to human rights and developed and tested a number of messages, primarily aimed at the ‘persuadable middle’ or ‘undecided’ members of the public. On the basis of that research, Equally Ours developed a practical guide on communicating human rights emphasising what works and does not work in moving persuadable audiences towards supporting human rights (Equally Ours, 2014).

Some of what works includes:

- Making human rights relevant: Talk about how human rights benefit a wide range of people and issues that people already care about, such as children, people in care, victims of domestic violence and people experiencing mental health problems;
- Using inclusive words and phrases: Express human rights as something of which ‘we’ can be proud or that help ‘all of us’;
- Highlighting human rights ‘wins’: Give specific but concise examples of where human rights have been an agent for change and produced real results for individuals and society;
- Demonstrating how human rights bring to life values we all share: Use phrases like ‘freedom’, ‘fairness’, ‘justice’ and ‘equality’ as values that underpin human rights;
- Focusing on your arguments, not theirs: Pivot away from the viewpoints of detractors and back to positive messages about human rights.

Some of what doesn’t work includes:

- Attempting to educate and persuade with facts;
- Arguments about legal and procedural issues;
- Myth-busting scare stories about abuse of human rights legislation – because this strategy tends to reinforce the myth!
Poverty

As part of its anti-poverty strategy for the UK, Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) has been working with the FrameWorks Institute to explore public understanding of poverty and how anti-poverty advocates can better communicate (Hawkins, 2018; O’Neil et al., 2018). JRF has developed a strong and extensive evidence base over many decades on understanding poverty and how it can be reduced, yet wider public support is still to be secured for some of these ideas, including JRF’s definition of poverty as related in part to people’s ability to participate in society.

Research for the project by the FrameWorks Institute has found that the public tend to associate poverty with developing countries rather than modern-day Britain. Furthermore, poverty is framed in individual terms such that poor people are seen as (partly) responsible for their circumstances (O’Neil et al., 2018).

At the same time, the public have a number of more favourable cultural models that can be activated by communications in order to support anti-poverty measures. These include seeing ‘market forces’ as having negative effects on people; thinking that people should be able to shape their own lives; and support for fairer opportunities (O’Neil et al., 2018).

Recommendations (Hawkins, 2018) from this work include:

- Avoiding leading with statistics about the prevalence of poverty, as these will be interpreted according to audience beliefs and assumptions – which are often unfavourable to anti-poverty work;
- Appealing to ‘public-spirited’ values such as compassion, justice and shared responsibility, as these will elicit support for responses to poverty;
- Adopting messages that use the metaphor of the economy as locking people into poverty: this works well as an explanation and encourages the public to think more about social context, structures and systems;
- Turning to solutions once the problem of poverty is established. In particular, advocates can move on to talk about how benefits help to free people from economic constraints. If one leads with messages on benefits this can bring to bear a whole set of negative associations, such as benefits being part of the problem rather than part of the solution.
Stop and search

As part of Runnymede Trust’s End Racism This Generation programme of work, Runnymede and Stopwatch (a group of charities campaigning for fair policing) aimed to shine a light on the disproportionate use of stop and search powers against black and Asian people. In 2013, one in four stops was thought to be unlawful, exacerbating already damaged relations with ethnic minority communities (HMIC, 2015). Runnymede and Stopwatch campaigned to reduce unlawful and disproportionate stop and search by aiming messages at policymakers. In addition to values of fairness and equality, campaign messages focused on the waste of police time in an era of public spending cuts. A key message of the campaign was as follows:

If the police stopped and searched Black and Asian people at the same rate they stop white people, they would save nearly 5,500 days of officer time every year. (Cited in Runnymede Trust, undated)

This framing, combined with arguments about injustice, appeared to ‘cut through’ and play its part in changes to stop and search. In 2014, Theresa May, then home secretary, announced a package of reform for stop and search, citing waste of police time and the damage done to police–public relations when innocent people were stopped (May, 2014).

Framing the issue (in part) from an inefficiency standpoint has not, however, ended debate about the effectiveness of stop and search, with rises in knife crime bringing such issues back to the fore in London (Dodd, 2017; O’Mahoney and Davenport, 2017; Ward, 2015). The risk remains that gains made in this area could be lost because the case has not yet been irreversibly made about the ineffectiveness and unfairness of stop and search in fighting crime and as a source of disproportionate harm to BME people.

Implications for race equality

The practical examples above suggest a number of lessons (which will be brought together in more detail in Section 6). Points to note here include the need to make the case for race equality in moral terms, for example as part of a struggle for freedom and justice. In addition, specific examples of the effects and harms of racism and race inequality for real people
help to make the issues more tangible. Furthermore, the focus on solutions that logically follow on from the problem combats fatalism (and fatigue) among audiences, and conveys the idea that the situation is not inevitable and that we can design a better system.

An illustration of this type of approach was provided by one children’s advocate interviewed as part of this review. Their three-part formula for communicating their cause involves (a) trying to trigger the value of social responsibility in relation to the issue; (b) providing a sense of the importance of the issue; and (c) providing a solution or set of solutions to the problem. This may be a useful template for race equality and other causes.
5. Potential limits of framing

While framing offers a multi-stepped approach to advocacy, some aspects of framing provide pause for thought for those who would seek to reframe in the name of race equality.

Audiences and engaging the ‘anxious middle’

A core element of framing is the need to understand audience attitudes and thinking in relation to a cause. A number of communications practitioners focus on the ‘general public’ as the primary audience for cause messages. One reason for this is that policymaking occurs in a public context and if the general public can be moved in the direction of a cause then this in turn can help to secure policy and institutional change.

In its work on human rights (cited in Section 4), Equally Ours (2014) found that the public was split four ways in terms of its views about human rights:

- Undecided: 41 per cent
- Supportive: 22 per cent
- Opposed: 26 per cent
- Uninterested: 11 per cent

Similar splits in public attitudes exist in other cause areas.11 This can in turn lead to communications efforts to target ‘undecideds’ or ‘persuadables’, because of the numbers of people in this category and because they, seemingly, can be moved to more supportive positions. Advocacy could therefore ignore both core supporters on an issue (based on the idea that they will back a cause come what may) and staunch opponents (who will likely never be convinced).

However, the kinds of messages to which ‘persuadables/undecideds’ may respond can raise issues.

People may be undecided on an issue for a number of reasons. Sometimes this may be the result of a simple lack of information, but sometimes people are uncertain because they feel unsettled in relation to an issue. As a result, the undecided-but-persuadable group are sometimes called

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11 According to some recent work by Bond (2016), public attitudes to international aid divide into sceptics (29 per cent), moderates (42 per cent) and supporters (29 per cent).
the ‘anxious middle’. ‘Anxiety’ is particularly used to explain resistance to migration among (white) British people unsettled by ‘incomers’.

While the ‘anxious middle’ may be persuadable on migration, trying to engage, assuage or persuade this audience can be problematic.

For example, trying to emphasise that migrants are normal people similar to incumbent populations and that they play a positive role in society (e.g. as with the ‘I am an Immigrant’ campaign; Joint Council for Welfare of Migrants, 2015) may actually feed anxieties. Working in the contributions frame may reinforce for some undecideds the idea that, while there may be exceptions, on the whole migrants detract from British ‘culture’, or are a ‘drain’ on public resources by using public services or claiming benefits.

This is not to say that advocates should not engage with public anxieties, as to avoid doing so could leave progressive voices absent from important debates about refugees, migrants, Muslims or BME people. Rather, the point is that such interventions must be carried out with care. Indeed, some framing practitioners suggest that advocates avoid getting ‘dragged’ into an opponent’s frame, as most people won’t hear the attempt to refute a dominant idea and will instead hear the argument one is trying to disprove (Equally Ours, 2014).

Moving the message and moving the audience

A related point to that of engaging the ‘undecideds’ – anxious or otherwise – is the question of what changes: the messages of cause advocates or, in time, the views of the audience.

Messages that can appeal to undecideds may initially need to be sensitively constructed, in order to engage the audience with a view to being able to present them with more challenging messages and ideas over time. The hope is that these initial messages can be a ‘gateway’ and open up significant audience movement on an issue. For example, in Great Britain arguments for same-sex civil partnerships initially maintained a legal difference between homosexual and heterosexual relationships by restricting marriage only to the latter. This approach may have normalised ideas of same-sex relationships and in turn opened the way for a case to be made for equal marriage rights for same-sex couples.

12 The most notorious example of this in recent times appears to be the sign on the side of a Leave campaign bus during the UK’s 2016 EU referendum. The slogan stated ‘We send the EU £350 million a week – let’s fund our NHS instead’ (Asthana, 2017). Though the claim was widely criticised (Henley, 2016), doing so required the continual repetition of the £350 million figure, and if anything this reinforced the idea that the additional money would be available to the NHS in the event of leaving the EU.
However, in some circumstances advocates may move their message towards ‘undecideds’ with no positive – and perhaps negative – effects in terms of changing the minds of the target audience. For example, efforts by Muslims to condemn attacks carried out in the name of Islam (Gani, 2015; Mahdawi, 2017) can feed rather than calm anxieties in mainstream audiences. They can lead to unfair demands that all Muslims condemn groups such as ISIS (Greenslade, 2015) and serve to reinforce ‘common-sense’ ideas of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ Muslims.

Again, the implication is that one must message with care, and be alive to the fact that advocates’ attempts to engage undecideds can both create ‘gateways’ and move audience thinking – but can also turn into ‘dead-ends’ and entrench anxieties and resistance to causes.

What audiences really think, and what it means

A further issue is how, through framing processes, advocates might try to understand what audiences think about their cause.

Polling has somewhat fallen into disrepute in recent times, as in 2016 pollsters failed to foresee either the result in the European Union referendum in the UK or Donald Trump’s victory in the US presidential election. Polling remains an important way of capturing and predicting human attitudes and behaviours, but these big misses emphasise that it is one that requires careful scrutiny.

Framing efforts can use polling both to understand public opinion on a particular cause (as in the above example of support for/opposition to human rights) and to look at audience responses to different cause-related messages.

However, there are longstanding objections and criticisms about the use of polling. Since the 1960s the Institute of Race Relations (IRR) has been particularly critical of the use of opinion polls on issues of ‘race’, migration and national identity (Bourne, 2011).

Amongst IRR’s concerns is that opinion polls are reductive, serving to over-simplify complex issues and reflecting the immediacy of current events rather than longstanding changes in public consciousness. It also argues that polls artificially push issues to the forefront of respondents’ minds and present them
as audience priorities, when in reality they are more a reflection of the pollsters’ priorities than those of respondents (e.g. see Elahi and Khan, 2016).

Furthermore, polls can be subject to distortion. They can involve questions that are loaded and vulnerable to weighting, i.e. placing emphasis on one set of answers over another (Burnett, 2011). And participants may try to present their best selves to researchers and the outside world through polls, trying to give socially acceptable rather than honest answers.

As such it is not clear what version of the ‘truth’ is provided by poll results. However, skilled poll designers and competent framing researchers should be aware of these challenges and honest about the difficulties in responding to them. They will understand that responses are a partial ‘snapshot’ view of the world and one that may not fully reflect a deeper or all-things-considered view of the matter. We can use poll results as useful data, but should avoid drawing too firm and settled conclusions from them.

A final caveat in relation to polling is the need to recognise that its focus is on the thoughts or feelings of a sample of people about a topic. It is not about the social problem itself. As the IRR points out elsewhere, polling research is ‘not research into actual life chances, the opportunities that different communities and classes are afforded, the impact of racism and Islamophobia on equal opportunity in Britain today’ (Institute of Race Relations, 2013).

To generate social change, we may need an understanding both of the nature of the problem itself and of what/how audiences think in order to know what to do to achieve progress and how to mobilise support in pursuit of such change.

**What is a ‘win’, and what won it?**

Framing is – or can be – aimed at developing and implementing persuasive cause messages to a wider audience in order to secure gains on an issue. However, there are different interpretations of what counts as a ‘win’ for cause advocates. One definition is to secure a shift (hopefully permanent) in public discourse and thinking on an issue. The ‘win’ might not necessarily be a change in public policy, but could be normalising new ways of thinking about issues, including
exploring new policy responses (FrameWorks Institute, 2008). A recent illustration has been discussion in the UK over use of medicinal cannabis oil and subsequent calls for the legalisation of cannabis for recreational use (Busby, 2018). At least for the moment, such debates seem sensible and legitimate even though no policy changes are yet forthcoming.

In some situations, such as the case of the Macpherson report and the narrative of ‘institutional racism’, gains can be lost and ideas can fall from favour in mainstream discourse. In other cases, wins feel more secure. For example, it is hard (but not impossible) to see how the shape of the public policy debate could take a dramatically negative turn on equal marriage.

Where gains are secured, as with Ireland’s 2015 ‘yes’ vote in the referendum on equal marriage, it is important to put such victories in context in order to understand the role of framing and other factors. The official campaign in favour of equal marriage went under the title ‘Yes equality: The campaign for civil marriage equality’ (Irish Council for Civil Liberties, 2015). The title was chosen to reassure and avoid antagonising potential opponents by making a distinction between civil and religious marriage (with the latter institution unaffected). The title avoided mention of gay, homosexual or same-sex marriage and appealed to the value of equality.

However, there was more to the victory than good framing and good messaging. Traditional campaigning, such as on-the-ground activists knocking on doors, was critical, as was the fact that the main political party leaders supported the cause (though this is no guarantee of success, as shown in the UK’s EU referendum). Perhaps more significantly, the most powerful potential opponent of equal marriage, the Catholic Church, occupied a weaker position in Irish society than previously. It had lost some of its moral authority as a spokesperson against equal marriage due to revelations about longstanding child sexual abuse perpetrated inside Catholic institutions.

The issue of the credibility of spokespersons was also raised by a US race equality advocate interviewed as part of this review. They noted the potential of figures from popular culture in creating change by building cause-empathy among audiences. The TV sitcom Ellen was cited (Nicholson, 2017) as helping to shift attitudes on gay rights generally because Ellen DeGeneres, the show’s star, ‘came out’ publicly in season four (1997). By this time, many viewers had been watching and caring about Ellen
for a number of years and she had been a regular presence in their living rooms.

Though messages matter, at times the context and other resources seem to drive change. Therefore, one of the core skills of advocacy is to identify when contextual factors align and to use messages to make the most of favourable conditions.

**Talking structure and other difficult issues**

The final dilemma highlighted here that can impact the effectiveness of framing in making for entrenched social problems. As discussed earlier, problems such as race inequality can be said to be structurally produced by interlocking public policies, institutional practices, interpersonal interactions, and cultural norms and ideas. These elements reinforce each other so as to generate and perpetuate adverse outcomes for certain groups in society (Aspen Institute, 2016; Brown University, 2016).

However, for storytellers and audiences it can be easier to focus on specific individual failings, such as the racists who murdered Stephen Lawrence, rather than think about structural failings. Though this has the advantage of saying that human actors are part of the problem, it can mean ignoring the larger context that produces or reproduces the problems and instead lead to a focus on ‘bad apples’.
6. Towards what works and what next

Making the case for race equality is a very particular communications challenge.

Two dimensions appear especially important in making progress. One is the value of incorporating general lessons and principles from framing-based efforts such as those in relation to human rights and anti-poverty. The second dimension is more specific to race equality. It involves the need for specific research and work to identify frames, metaphors and messages capable of calling audiences to the cause of race equality. We explore each dimension in further detail below.

General lessons and principles

We turn first to the general emerging lessons that might inform advocacy efforts on race equality.

UK efforts (some outlined in Section 4) based on work in the areas of poverty (O’Neil et al., 2018), human rights (Equally Ours, 2014), environmental concern (Crompton, 2010; Lindland and Volmert, 2017) and care for children (Kendall-Taylor et al., 2014) suggest a number of emerging design principles for communications:

1. **Clarity about goals**: Advocates should be clear and explicit about the purposes of communications efforts, i.e. who they are trying to reach and influence, and what they want these audiences to do.

2. **Caution with ‘myth-busting’**: Advocates should approach with care refuting the (false) claims of opponents. These can include assertions such as suggesting that race inequality is not a significant phenomenon. ‘Myth-busting’ can end up reinforcing the points made by those on the other side of the argument. Advocates can engage and need not remain silent on unfair claims, but need to try to avoid getting dragged into debates that can be counterproductive.

3. **Appeal to ‘public-spirited’ values**: Advocates should engage those collective values that matter to people, such as responsibility for one another, and show how action on a cause aligns with those values.
4. **Don’t appeal (primarily) to ‘self-interest’:** Don’t rely on arguments that actions for race equality are good for those taking that action. For example, advocating ‘diverse’ workforces mainly on the basis that profits may increase can perpetuate a self-focused, ‘what’s in it for me’ culture rather than a principled attachment to equality.

5. **Take care with ‘crisis’ talk:** The language of crisis can grab attention but it can also reinforce fatalism and the view that progress is impossible, and audiences can end up tuning out and disengaging from advocacy messages.

6. **Talk structure:** Present race inequality as a structural problem caused by prevailing ideas and institutional practices and show that the answer is to redesign structures to promote equality.

7. **Emphasise collective progress:** Show how action on race equality is a means to a decent life for all and avoid the cause becoming expressed as zero-sum redistribution from one group of people to another. This is perhaps one of the most difficult tasks facing race equality advocates. However, race equality might be framed as part of a wider settlement in society in which all people have an assured level of well-being.

8. **Test messages:** Don’t assume audiences will respond to race equality messages in the ways intended. It is beneficial to test responses with target audiences in advance if possible.

**Words that work**

The principles above, if observed, should help race equality advocates to better make their case. But for maximum efficacy we need to identify and use words, frames and metaphors likely to win over audiences to support race equality.

Identifying words, frames and metaphors is an empirical process requiring a specific race equality framing programme. This programme is recommended as part of the next phase of making the case for race equality.
A race equality framing programme

Through the research for this review it has become clear that there is a need to help advocates to convey more effectively that:

1. Racism is real and significant;
2. Action for race equality is important; and
3. Solutions are available to advance race equality.

In speaking to advocates and drawing on our own experiences, we recognise that these three areas are, to a greater or lesser extent, still contested and form a barrier to greater race equality.

A framing race equality programme would, ideally, follow the steps laid out in Table 1 (Section 4), including: clarifying and articulating with activists and advocates long-term cause objectives for race equality; reviewing current race equality discourse; understanding cultural models and public thinking on ‘race’ and race equality; developing frames and messages; and testing, refining and deploying new frames and messages.

Furthermore, there are specific adaptations required to make framing more helpful in dealing with some of the specifics of race equality. These are:

- Listening to BME voices and lived experiences;
- Learning from and developing race equality practice;
- Investigating whether advocates all need to say the same thing;
- Exploring why ‘race’ matters; and
- Tying general work for justice to specific issues of race equality.

Listening to BME voices and lived experiences

Race equality advocacy and activism gains power and insight from BME experiences. Furthermore, there is relatively little understanding of what BME people think about and how they experience racialisation and race inequality. Engaging these perspectives would in turn bring new advocates and activists into mobilising for race equality. A framing programme therefore needs to stay connected to and listen to supporters as well as focusing on trying to convince the ‘undecideds’ or ‘persuadables’.
Learning from and developing race equality practice

Communications for race equality does not start from zero. Race equality activists have long been thinking about how they make their case. Reframing race equality should therefore be informed, on a continuing basis, by experience from the field and the frames and messages used by advocates, as well as by the intelligence that they can provide on what appears to be ‘working’ and in what context(s). This – alongside the point about listening to BME voices – implies that a reframing race equality programme should bring in a cohort of race equality advocates in order to inform and shape the process.

Investigating whether advocates all need to say the same thing

This strand of work would examine to what extent race equality advocates need to use the same types of frames and messages. The context is that race equality advocates will often have different perspectives and politics – think for example of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. Specifically, the aim would be to better understand if (and how) it is possible to effectively support a productive message ecosystem which includes ‘strident’ calls to end racism and ‘white privilege’ and more ‘moderate’ messages.

Exploring why ‘race’ matters

As discussed in Section 4, there is work to be done to look at ‘cultural models’ that show how people think about ‘race’ and why the ‘myth’ of ‘race’ and racial otherness appears to have such a hold over the collective imagination. The findings could then inform strategies to highlight and (eventually) erode doctrines antithetical to race equality.

Such cognitive work is part of the ‘typical’ framing process, but it may require extra effort and analysis as it may reveal some unpleasant truths, e.g. about how racism informs public thinking.

Tying general work for justice to specific issues of race equality

Social justice efforts can be rather siloed even though social injustice is produced and reproduced by complex and interrelated systems. In order to further advance race equality (and other struggles) there is a need to have the cause taken up
by ‘mainstream’ organisations. Some organisations, such as the Sutton Trust (on ‘social mobility’) or the Resolution Foundation (on low income), carry out work that potentially ‘primes’ people for messages on race equality specifically. Furthermore, it may be useful to persuade such organisations to consistently apply a racial lens to their work. This implies that a framing race equality programme needs to intentionally work with mainstream justice-orientated initiatives and organisations to better align efforts.

A re-framing race equality process characterised by the five features above will help to tie the process to BME experiences and to real-world racialised thinking; and to encourage advocates to implement lessons about how to effectively make their case.
7. Conclusion

Like other causes, race equality needs people to respond to its call. But perhaps unlike many causes, talking about ‘race’ and acting for race equality and against racism carries particular difficulties and can elicit emotional resistance and even denial among those audiences that race equality advocates must persuade (Memon and Wyld, 2018). Making progress in this context requires a tailor-made and nuanced communication effort.

Race equality advocates have long been framing – even if they do not name their activities as such – in order to make their case and typically exercise considerable care over their words. There is now a growing body of practical experience and research in the use of framing approaches that can inform these advocates in making their case. Framing has the potential, at the very least, to help advocates communicate with intent and to understand the potential and limits of their chosen approach.

However, there is no suggestion that advocacy is a standalone endeavour; rather, it can both help to catalyse and benefit from other complementary change efforts, such as institutional reform, organising and movement-building, research and insights into social problems, and policy innovation.

Better advocacy requires investment. Enhancing knowhow on framing is one form of investment that may yield dividends. Race equality advocates themselves can look to incorporate some general framing lessons into upgrading their communications thinking and output. Furthermore, financial investment from funders is essential to conduct a real-world framing programme specific to race equality. Such a programme would follow some of the steps of audience research and message-testing familiar in relation to other issues but, crucially, it should also be adjusted specifically for race equality.

With suitable investment there are possibilities to not only enrich and change the public and policy conversation on race equality, but to also reinvigorate and bring together race equality advocates in productive dialogue about what to say in the name of advocacy; how to say it; and how better to complement one another’s efforts.
8. Appendix: List of project participants

Roundtable participants (May 2017)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elena Blackmore</td>
<td>Public Interest Research Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeremy Crook</td>
<td>Black Training and Enterprise Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neil Crowther</td>
<td>Thomas Paine Initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ali Harris</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunder Katwala</td>
<td>British Future</td>
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<tr>
<td>Omar Khan</td>
<td>Runnymede Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex Mitchelmore</td>
<td>IMIX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sanjiv Lingayah</td>
<td>Voice4Change England</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ellie Mae O’Hagan</td>
<td>New Economy Organisers Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kunle Olulode</td>
<td>Voice4Change England</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abigail Scott Paul</td>
<td>Joseph Rowntree Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fizza Qureshi</td>
<td>Migrants’ Rights Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nicola Rollock</td>
<td>University of Birmingham</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alice Sachrajda</td>
<td>Independent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bec Sanderson</td>
<td>Public Interest Research Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daniel Vockins</td>
<td>New Economy Organisers Network</td>
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Interviewees

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Brendan Cox</td>
<td>Jo Cox Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Gregory R Maio</td>
<td>Head of Psychology, University of Bath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rinku Sen</td>
<td>Senior Strategist, Race Forward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate Stanley</td>
<td>Director of Strategy, Policy and Evidence, National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Advocates’ Learning Circle participants, London and Bristol (April 2018)

Andy Burkitt
Leah Cowan
Saqib Deshmukh
Mina Drobna
Nadia Hasan
Moestak Hussein
Sado Jirde
Nigel Jordan
Clayton Planter
Jayne Saul-Paterson
Anneka Singh
Manu Wachter
Ayoade Wallace
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About this report

This review explores the potential of and limits to ‘framing’ as a method to call the public and decision-makers to the cause of race equality. The report provides principles for making the case for race equality that can be implemented now and recommends a longer-term programme to reframe race equality that is driven by Black and Minoritised Ethnic advocates and experiences.

About the authors

Sanjiv Lingayah is an associate at Voice4Change England specialising in research and development to advance racial justice. This work includes connecting causes of racialised and minoritised populations; strengthening the case for race equality; and researching and responding to resistance to racial justice.

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