



A Sense of Place

From 24–27 November, the old Central Library building in the heart of Cardiff played host to the conference 'A Sense of Place – Displacement and Integration: the role of the arts and media in reshaping societies and identities in Europe'. Runnymede was one of several partners facilitating this 4-day event organised by the British Council, and after a brief description of its aims and objectives, three active participants contribute their impressions, beginning with Runnymede's Director, **Michelynn Lafleche**.

'A Sense of Place' was developed in the context of heightened public suspicion, fear and intolerance, and evolving European human rights and immigration policies. Its aim was to consider the shifting landscape since World War I, looking at how societies are in flux, how cities are in transition and how rebuilding is taking place at both a physical and psychological level. This international event sought out the meeting grounds between arts and social policy, theory and experience, the personal and public. Setting the political context of migration on the opening afternoon of the conference, it then focused one full day each on the role of the media and the potential of the arts in, as the title so clearly states, 'reshaping societies and identities'. The concluding morning of the conference reflected on the discussions held over the preceding 3 days and tried to imagine what could be different in 2 years' time through the personal reflections of four concluding speakers, of which I was one.

In preparation for this closing panel, we were asked to reflect on three questions:

- the most memorable moment of the conference for each of us and how it has affected what we think about the role and potential of media and arts to transform society;
- whether what we've learned here will affect the way we conduct our work in the future, and how;
- and, if asked to return in 2 years for a follow-up event, what differences would we have observed or be able to report?

Among numerous 'moments' of

revelation, so to speak, the one that stood out for me was arts practitioners themselves linking successful arts intervention projects to the utilisation of 'social capital' when devising and running these sorts of projects. I'll explain that in a moment, but first let me just step back and talk about why I came to this conference.

There are two main reasons. First, I have a strong personal belief that it is possible to create a fairer, more just and more equal society and that I, as an individual, can contribute towards creating it. This is on a very personal level, obviously, but it is a belief that permeates all I do in all aspects of my life.

Second is how the themes of this conference relate to the work of the Runnymede Trust. Our report, *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*, which is the starting-point for much of Runnymede's current work programme in its perspective on how to promote what we call a successful multi-ethnic Britain, outlines ideas and strategies for improving social policy to achieve that aim. But while the policy discussion and recommendations

A section of the audience at the seminar 'From Arts and Cultural Interventions to Social Transformation and Back Again: Practice—Research—Policy', created in partnership with Runnymede. The session was well attended and widely appreciated.





ARTS & SOCIETY

'I have noticed a tendency to separate social and cultural policy as if they were distinct.'

of this report may be very much Britain-focused, the vision is one that can be applied to the whole of Europe, and a key theme is the need to reshape (reimagine even) society and identities, to begin to understand Britain, and indeed Europe, as both a community of communities *and* a community of citizens. In order to realise this vision, there needs to be created a common sense of belonging which must both foster and go hand-in-hand with valuing diversity, and this all has implications, therefore, for the law and for social policy.

With this in mind, I wanted to contribute my thoughts and learn from others about how the arts in particular are, or could be, harnessed to impact directly on social policy, indirectly on the law, and affect more broadly the hearts and minds of Britain's and Europe's residents (Citizens or not!) towards devising and sharing a more inclusive vision for the future – in other words, to explore the potential for arts to be used for social transformation.

Runnymede is currently running a major project called *This is Where I Live*, which is about just that – social transformation through arts, trying to use arts as the medium and/or the methodology for influencing social policy. The project links up with youth workers and arts practitioners working with young people to give them a voice through creative expression. But, beyond that, our project is exploring how to use creative expressions and outcomes to impact social policy. Young people are taking part in this project not just because they want to make music, film or poetry (powerful though that is) but because they want to transmit their views and ideas on identity and belonging to social policy-makers. The trick, of course, is how to do that.

Reflecting back to Monday, I started out with a question as to whether or not cultural policy and social policy were the same thing. In speaking with arts practitioners, through the medium of our project as well as at this conference, I have noticed a tendency to separate social and cultural policy as if they were distinct. Indeed, I was doing the

same thing. But, as a result of discussions held here, I now view them as intrinsically related. Here's why.

In the session 'From Arts and Cultural Interventions to Social Transformation and Back Again', organised for this conference by Runnymede, a lengthy discussion took place between arts practitioners and cultural policy-makers/funders about the value and potential of arts intervention projects for making social change. Experiences were relayed suggesting that funding policy (to be understood as wholly mediated by cultural policy) impacted on the kinds of projects that could be created to win funding and altered the aims of the arts intervention projects to reflect current cultural policy concerns.

The point of view of cultural policy-makers/funders was very much the opposite and it was stated that what arts practitioners needed to do was apply their 'social capital' to securing support for their projects. The complexities of arts practitioner-led projects were not fully recognised in this discussion, but, even more importantly from my point of view and my particular interest in the creation of policy language, it seemed that the emerging social policy focus on civil renewal and social capital had permeated the thinking and views on practice of cultural policy-makers. Not surprising one might say, in hindsight; but at that distinct moment a revelation nonetheless.

This leads me to the second question for this morning — what difference will this make to the way we conduct our work in the future? Runnymede takes a social policy perspective on its work for the *This is Where I Live* project. We are not an arts organisation, nor have we spent much time working on arts and cultural policy issues. Our concern in this project is to work with arts practitioners and youth workers to bring the creative outcomes of young people to the eyes and ears of social policy-makers concerned with fostering greater equality and inclusion in our society.

We started from the position that there is a triangulated

relationship between research, arts practice and policy-making, where each could influence the other. The opportunity to view a disjuncture between these three at this conference leaves me with a renewed vigour for our own project and a stronger belief that arts practice with groups at risk or facing disadvantage can have an influence on social policy, when cultural policy and social policy are understood to be intrinsically related.

There are many projects out there, across the UK and Europe, that are attempting to do this, to create social change through arts intervention with vulnerable or disadvantaged groups of people, but the impact on social policy seems to be low. So the questions remain: How exactly are these projects going to influence policy-makers? And what should our role be as an organisation directly concerned with policy-making? And how could we, in that way, get policy-makers engaged in the creative process as part of social change?

For Runnymede, one answer has to be to refocus our own project – to explore in greater depth the full process of: (a) how arts practitioners work with young people, (b) how the social and creative aims of the projects, devised to complement each other, get worked through; and (c), most importantly, get evaluated.

The unique feature of our contribution can be to identify a methodology that utilises the creative processes in order to explore social concerns and disseminate policy recommendations directly to policy-makers. But this has to be a methodology which is reflective and robust in the evaluation of its own impact on policy-makers, while fully respecting the needs of the project participants.

In 2 years' time, I would hope that we could all of us – not just us at Runnymede but most of you too – reunite to share our successfully implemented methodologies for using creative mediums in the service of improving social policies for the achievement of a successful, inclusive, multi-ethnic Britain and Europe. □

Arts for Social Change

Day Three of *A Sense of Place* featured the session created in partnership with Runnymede: 'From Arts and Cultural Interventions to Social Transformation and Back Again: Practice – Research – Policy'. The session was chaired by **Marion Vargaftig** who here summarises a complex and wide-ranging discussion.

The aim of this session, held on day three of *A Sense of Place*, was to look at the relationship between art, culture and social change and to explore the potential of Arts/Cultural interventions in influencing policies and making social change.

Three projects (two of which were pan-European), which used different medium/art expressions, were presented as a starting-point for illustrating experiences at the interface between research, arts/cultural practices, and social policy. There then followed a discussion, which explored the tensions between arts/cultural practices as a developmental aid to policy, and as constrained by it.

Interventions

Liesbeth de Block, a Researcher from the *Institute of Education*, presented *CHICAM* (Children in Communication around Migrations), an action-research initiative involving refugee children using video/new media in six European locations. Set up 3 years ago, it responded to the interest of the European Commission in new media, social inclusion and media literacy. Liesbeth referred to the relationship between the funders' priorities and broader social policy agendas and questioned where these were complementary and where there were tensions. She also underlined the challenges brought by new ways of working: How does one work as a researcher within an art project? How does one work as a video artist with a research project?

Tiffany Fairey, co-founder and Director of the charity *Photovoice*,

used as a starting-point '*Transparency*', a photography and self-advocacy project involving young refugees in London, with three key aims to:

- provide a channel for self-expression and creativity,
- create a body of work to combat negative stereotypes,
- and provide long-term support to the young refugees.

Tiffany talked about the role of funders in defining priorities and project parameters and their desire in principle to engage with social

policy agenda, but their incapacity or unwillingness, in practice, to support social transformation projects using the full potential of arts interventions.

Igor Dobricic, from the European Cultural Foundation in Amsterdam, presented the *Art for Social Change Programme*, which has been running since 1996. Built on youth expression through the arts, the programme started with theatre-making in the Balkans, at a time where Yugoslavia was at war. Igor insisted on the need to create a methodology for greater project sustainability (e.g. anchoring the project with local organisations, training local artists, etc.) to ensure that the activities would be followed up after project completion.

The discussion started around simple but key questions and notions that tend to be taken for



ARTS &
SOCIETY

Alex Rotas, sharing a platform with Michelynn Lafleche, Rasa Sekulovic and Kuljit Chuhan at the final panel session to summarise the conference, had many impressions to share, including the following:

I want to frame my comments around a remark made by the journalist John Torode on Tuesday. He said: 'I thought this was an academic conference' – or words to that effect, after something said rather passionately by one of us. It's made me think about the fact that I actually am *an* academic and yet I've found the last few days incredibly emotional on all sorts of levels, as well as being engaging on other levels too (intellectually, issue-related, information-sourcing, etc.). There have been lots of very moving moments.

One of them was listening to the panel of exiled journalists who had to dig deep into painful personal experiences when making their presentations from this platform. It made me think about my own anxieties about giving a paper – anxieties that were 'performance-related' really, rather than connected to deep personal trauma. So I want to say 'thank you' to all the people who felt safe enough and brave enough to share that sort of experience with us here at the conference.

There have been phrases *other* people have made – other people's sound-bites, if you like – that have moved me particularly. Here's a selection of them:

- 'Exile is never being able to visit the graves of those who stayed – including your mother's.'
- 'I don't want to be assimilated. I want to be integrated.'
- 'How can we have "refugee art"? Do we have refugee accountants?'
- 'Exile is trying to repay the limitless hospitality of your hosts and knowing that you never will.'
- 'You fight every day for recognition here. I didn't need to do that in Africa.'
- 'I want to hear fewer stories about asylum seekers. I just want them to be able to get on with their lives.'
- 'Blackness is relentlessly examined. Whiteness is relentlessly presumed.'
- 'I prefer Syrian prison to detention centre here because at least my mother could visit me there.'
- 'I wasn't there when the songs became old.'

And finally Aidan Jolly's comment, when we were talking about how you are born black or born a woman – this was in the context of comparing the notion of 'refugee art' to 'black art' or 'women's art' – but becoming a refugee is something that happens to you. Aidan said, 'We in the West shouldn't be so complacent that we think that we'll never become a refugee. It's one of the things that could happen to us all.'

There are many, many more. It's been really valuable, stimulating, interesting and moving, and we have seen a lot of evidence in the past few days that it is from the personal we create broader meanings.



ARTS & SOCIETY

Marion Vargaftig is a European Consultant for Cultural Programmes and Social Action

granted: How may art/cultural interventions bring about social change? What does social change exactly mean? Does it mean social cohesion, or integration, or more than that? And when one talks about art for social change, what exactly does one mean? Social change for whom – the individual or society? Finally, how does the creative process reconcile with the social work element of the project?

Observations

The debate needed inevitably to look at the different elements of 'project-making' (i.e. the practice) and go through several issues and phases essential for defining how a project will work, from:

- (a) its resources – and how these can affect the project itself;
- (b) its objectives – policy and practice;
- (c) its process – and necessary flexibility of process, an aspect not always understood by funders;
- (d) project outputs – those planned as well as unplanned;
- (e) social outcomes (insight from the project's experience);
- (f) project impact – on participants as well as on others;
- (g) evaluation – the complexities of evaluating art work and the necessity of 'translating' it into a medium or language understood by policy-makers;
- (h) and, finally, the exit strategy, if any.

Policy (whether cultural or social) often sets the context for practice.

But practice is exploring and testing this premise; so how can practice inform and help define the next policy step? And in this process, what is the role of research? How does one feed the outputs of such a project into policy? And how can one communicate the richness of creative outcomes in such a way as to influence or contribute to policy-making?

Practitioners involved in such projects often find themselves limited by the exigencies of providing a certain kind of evaluation/final report to funders, and unable to adequately reflect in the form of a report the reality of their experience and the richness of the project's learning processes. Arts/cultural projects, because of their creative process, do not follow the conventional format of activities which deliver pre-defined outputs in response to pre-determined goal-setting. They have their own 'creative logic', and when it comes to evaluation, it is clear that social workers and artists apply different models of evaluation to measure their success. Furthermore, it is arguable that an artist who does art work with a particular group is setting up a process of discovery, a form of research, and that this research should feed back into policy-making.

If the need for policy design is what underpins funding programmes aimed at using art and culture as a catalyst for social change, it may be argued that

existing art practice is likely to be the real impetus informing the thoughts of policy-makers. But is art practice recognised as such by policy-makers? And what is the relationship between the demands and responsibilities of social work and the nature of the artistic process? Sometimes the relationship between those two elements is in harmony, sometimes clashing or even disconnected. One can postulate that art creativity often necessitates the breaking of boundaries or rules as they are set in social contexts - being as free as possible from these norms is essential to the vitality of the creative process.

If the consensus was that expression through the arts provides new and powerful means of self-development to disadvantaged people, the audience was divided around the notion of whether art for social change was simply a form of art-therapy, and if not, could we really talk about art anyway.

In particular, for youth art projects, can artists and young people really work as equals, and how far can the young really go without active input from the adults. This raises additional issues on how to interpret their creative work and draw conclusions from it.

Issues for research

Many questions were addressed in the debate, many others remain unanswered, despite the session lasting longer than planned.

Ultimately, finding answers will take more than a group discussion, as these are complex and challenging issues being explored and further reflection and research is needed in this field. The aim of such research should be to lead to a potential new set of practical tools as well as new forms of mechanisms between artists, researchers and policy-makers. Above all, it should point to ways of communicating art project outcomes and outputs to policy-makers in a form that they can comprehend and use for future policies, both cultural and social. □

Runnymede was one of several conference partners and organised the session: 'From Arts and Cultural Interventions to Social Transformation and Back Again: Practice-Research-Policy'. Here (L-R) panellists Igor Dobricic and Liesbeth de Block are seen with Marion Vargaftig in the Chair. Michelynn Lafèche and Tiffany Fairey were co-panellists at this session.



Old Boots and New Brooms

The Immigration Rights Project's latest discussion forum¹ focused on a paper presented by Don Flynn, which examined the seeming 'paradox' of New Labour's asylum and immigration policies since its arrival in government in 1997. Here **Liza Schuster** summarises the key points she raised when speaking in response to Don's presentation on 4 December.

Taking as my starting-point Don Flynn's paper '*Tough as Old Boots? Asylum, Immigration, and the Paradox of New Labour Policy*,² I'm examining the three core elements he identifies as underlying Labour's migration policy generally, and asylum more specifically:

1. Utilitarianism
2. Animosity to rights
3. Adherence to communitarian commitments to social cohesion

Utilitarianism

Taking utilitarianism first of all in the sense that Don uses, which is in terms of migrants' utility, Don suggests that while economic migrants add value to the British economy and base their claim on this value, asylum seekers base their claim on *their* rights, *their* needs – I'll come back to the issue of rights in a moment – but this distinction explains the hostility towards one group, and the welcome afforded the other.

However, there was a time when asylum seekers/refugees were seen as adding value to receiving societies. Most recently, during the Cold War, asylum seekers or refugees had an ideological value, but the end of the Cold War and the apparent victory of liberal ideology has reduced though not destroyed it – hence the continued, ritualised hypocrisy of references to Britain's long and honourable tradition of granting asylum. To continue to see itself as liberal, Britain must continue to offer refuge to those who need protection – though ideally not too many!

There was also a time when refugees/asylum seekers had an economic value. The Huguenots, though encountering hostility, were welcomed by the government of the day because of the lace-making skills they brought with them, and more recently, labour shortages in the immediate post-war period saw the UK trawling Displaced Persons camps in Europe, bringing in refugees through the 'European Voluntary Workers Scheme'.

Given the ongoing labour shortages that currently enable asylum seekers, in spite of a ban, to find work in the shadow labour market, and given Alan Finlayson and Don Flynn's stress on the utilitarian nature of Labour's approach, the denial of work permits might seem irrational. Though of course it isn't – it serves two purposes: first, it is supposed to deter those whose goal is primarily to seek work; and second, it creates a flexible and malleable

workforce, too scared of deportation to claim rights or just marginally better conditions.

But utilitarianism can also be understood in its Benthamite sense; morality as a felicific calculus according to which what is good is what promotes the greatest good of the greatest number. This philosophy continues to exert a significant influence on contemporary thought and policy.

As someone with an attachment to a more Kantian universalist approach to humanity, I have a number of problems with utilitarian philosophy, which at Don's prompting, I realise are similar to problems I have with migration/asylum policy in Britain and Europe.

- The first of these is the possibility of perfect knowledge. There is a sense that this government believes they have the technology, they have the power to gather all necessary information, they can build a finely tuned, evidence based, managed migration system – identity cards, biometric data, scanners etc bring the control of borders tantalisingly within their power.

However, perfect knowledge is not possible, and there is a marked failure to share enough of the knowledge currently in government databases to arrive at a coherent policy. When I was recently introduced to a Home Office civil servant as an academic working on migration, he smiled warmly and announced that there was a pressing need for people like myself, since there was so little information available on migration(!). Surprised I asked what kind of information he was looking for, and he mentioned information on how asylum seekers choose their countries of destination. I replied there was a very good recent study by Koser and Pinkerton on just this subject. He asked eagerly where he might find it, and was embarrassed to learn it was published by the Home Office on their website.³ Even when the knowledge exists...

- Second, and more importantly, who counts when counting the greatest number? When and how much do they count? Lydia Morris has already spoken of the stratified, or graded way in which some people count within a polity, but it seems almost inevitable that democratic governments will be constrained to promote the happiness of their electorate, and that therefore the electorate will always count more.

Admittedly, it doesn't have to be like this, at least in theory. Singer, who I mentioned earlier, is a



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¹ The Immigration Rights Project (IRP) is a discussion forum sponsored by the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI). It is intended to provide a structure for discussion and debate on all aspects of immigration, refugee and nationality law and policy in Britain today.

² Don Flynn's discussion paper, 'Tough as old boots? Asylum, Immigration, and the paradox of New Labour policy', is published for the IRP by the JCWI, and is available to read on their website [www.jcwi.org.uk] or to purchase as hard copy from their offices at 115 Old Street, London EC1V 9RT, price £2.00. This paper was launched with a seminar held at the JCWI on 4 December 2003.

³ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/socialnetwork.pdf>.



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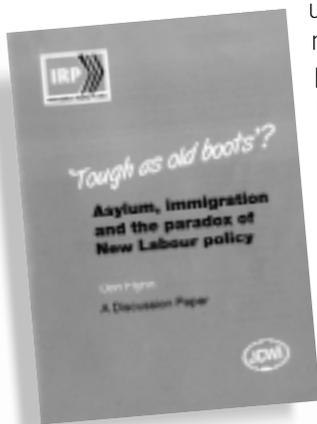
Moments from the post-presentation discussion

Elsbeth Guild – There are two competing visions of migration – the first is this battle for control, but it conflicts with those who argue for free movement, presenting the EU as a paradise where people can circulate freely. Also top Civil Servants in Europe are scarred by the fall of the Berlin Wall, and this partly explains their obsession with control.

Arun Kundnani – The ‘R’ word has been missing from the discussion. Racism can’t be disconnected from the asylum debate. And there has been a shift – the debate changed when Blunkett became Home Secretary – social cohesion moved onto the agenda, and race and immigration get connected in response to riots in the North. The anti-racist agenda that was there under Straw was subsumed under talk of cohesion in an attempt to reassure those turning to the BNP.

[LS] – I don’t agree that this is a new debate. Racism has always been intimately linked with migration controls. It was Straw who introduced the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, which included section 19, exempting migration and nationality legislation from the Act. And look at his response to the Roma: when fewer than 800 arrived one winter, he cut the appeal period from 28 to 5 days. (see ‘State Racism and its Techniques’ in *Racism and Asylum in Europe – Special Issue of Patterns of Prejudice*, 37,3 (September 2003)).

Richard Williams – Civil servants are told: “I want a silver bullet to sort out asylum, I don’t care about international law.”



universal utilitarian and insists that the greatest number is the global population, but ... within present-day state mechanisms, this is not the case

And at a more pragmatic level, while the Tampere framework declared that the interests of states of origin and of migrants should be taken into account when developing a common European asylum and migration policy, it seems, from the output of the European Council, that countries of origin only count when signing readmission agreements, and migrants only when they have skills and use regular channels.

- Finally, and most importantly, a significant problem with the happiness calculus is that individuals are treated as means rather than ends. We see this very clearly in relation to asylum (and migrants more generally). This is a major problem and takes me to Don’s second point...

Animosity to Rights

Turning to Don’s second core element - the animosity to rights. Yes, it is true that rights are not as firmly rooted in British culture as they are in, for example, France and Germany – though for different reasons. And a rights culture in both those countries does not necessarily protect individuals but it does mean that in France, for example, it is not possible to detain for prolonged periods. If someone is detained they must be brought before a court within 48 hours and the detention justified. It is only within the last month that a new law has extended the maximum period of detention from 12 to 32 days. This is in stark contrast to the situation in the UK, where there are no limits to detention – not even for children.

Reading Michael Walzer⁴ again recently, his use of the principle ‘Mutual Aid’ struck me as familiar – I should point out that Mutual Aid is not used in the anarchist Kropotkin’s sense, but in the more limited sense of an obligation to assist those in need, so long as the cost to ourselves is low. And it is this principle of mutual aid as used by Walzer that underpins Britain’s asylum policy – rather than attachment to human rights norms. Taking Jack Straw, when he was still Home Secretary, his declaration that ‘we cannot take every genuine refugee’ is straight from Walzer (that and the animosity to rights), and I think explains why Labour feels justified in limiting our obligations to ‘even genuine refugees’.

Walzer offers criteria according to which we can select those to whom we should offer refuge. He argues that we have an absolute obligation to those whom we have turned into refugees, and cites the case of the Vietnamese boat-people and the obligation incurred by the United States. But beyond that, when forced to choose from among refugees, we should

‘look, rightfully, for some more direct connection with our own way of life... [boundaries] depend with regard to population on a sense of relatedness and mutuality. Refugees must appeal to that sense.’

Communitarianism

This takes me to the third of Don’s elements – communitarianism. What Walzer is defending is the notion of community, of belonging. This runs beneath and sometimes on top of asylum policy throughout the 20th and 21st century. We just have to look at the reaction to Jewish refugees, and the Ugandan Asians. I think the three elements Don identifies characterise policy since at least the 1905 Aliens Act – the sense

⁴ Michael Walzer
Spheres of Justice,
Oxford: Martin
Robertson, 1983.

that we should only admit those who share 'our' values. It is this concern that was expressed by Denis MacShane, the Foreign Office Minister, who said that British Muslims had to make a choice between 'the British way' or the values of terrorism.

A Panacea for an Unruly World

What is new is what Don discusses at the end of his paper – the increasingly desperate battle for control, a battle in which new technology is embraced as a panacea for an unruly world. This is allied to a return to shifting responsibility for social provision from the state to the private sphere – whether family, friends or charity – and the use of the minimal state provision as a further weapon of control. This second element has precedence – it is not simply that support is reserved for the deserving poor, but that support is used to ensure continued good behaviour, including that of asylum seekers who should board planes for home when their claim is exhausted.

To return to what is novel – states have always been faced with crises – government seems to consist overwhelmingly of crisis management – but in the past, crises ebbed and flowed, were occasionally resolved. This no longer seems to be the case. It feels as though we have been in the midst of an 'asylum crisis' for more than a decade. Why? Given that numbers last year – the measure of the crisis – have fallen dramatically, one would assume the government would be triumphantly announcing the end of the crisis, arguing that they had got it right, that clearly they are back in the saddle. But they aren't. Why not?

There is a second equally important question – how high a price are Labour prepared to pay in pursuit of these goals? As the controls grow ever more restrictive, so the number of deaths in trucks in the Mediterranean grows. Will there ever come a point when these deaths are considered too high a price to pay for controlling the borders of this area of 'freedom, justice and security'? □



MIGRATION

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The Politics of Migration: Managing Opportunity, Conflict and Change **Edited by Sarah Spencer (IPPR) is published by Blackwell's in December 2003.**

With an impressive list of over a dozen contributors that includes Tariq Modood, Andrew Geddes, Shamit Sagar, Will Kymlicka and Claude Moraes, the book 'explores the opportunities and tensions posed by migration today through the eyes of some of the foremost international experts on migration and citizenship issues'.

We hope to include a piece by Sarah Spencer in the March 2004 Bulletin.

Locate the book on the publisher's website at: www.blackwellpublishing.com/1405116358

Revisiting History – a necessity from time to time

A Comment from Dipak Nandy on Omar Khan's June article on the National Census was left out of our September issue. As Omar has returned to the Census statistics in this December issue (see over) we publish it here with apologies to Dipak for the delay.

Omar Khan's comprehensive as well as succinct analysis of the 2001 Census in the [June 2003] Bulletin is a valuable contribution to public education. I wish he had taken the opportunity to point out that it finally lays to rest, for good, one of the great arguments which raged round the infant Runnymede Trust for the year of its birth, 1968.

By the year 2000, there will be 'in the region of 5–7 million' Commonwealth immigrants and their descendants, 'approximately one-tenth of the whole population [of Great Britain]. Whole areas, towns and parts of towns across England will be occupied by different sections of the immigrant and immigrant-descended population': thus Enoch Powell in his infamous Birmingham speech on 20 April 1968.

The actual figure, it transpires is 4.6 million, or 8.1%, and even that, as Khan points out, on a generous selection of the Census categories for inclusion in the 'Black and Ethnic Minority' population. He might have pointed out too that, far from occupying 'whole areas, towns or sections of towns', the BME population reaches the 50%+ level in just two London boroughs.

Omar Khan is, of course, right to stress that the real significance of the Census figures lies in their contribution to relevant local service delivery. But it is, I suggest, not unimportant to give Powell's blood-curdling prognostications a decent burial. In its time they panicked a Home Secretary bereft of principle into passing the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act. The then Junior Minister, David (later Lord) Ennals, pleaded that there were 'millions of Alf Garnetts' in the country as a justification of that shameful piece of legislation. The tendency to ditch principle and run for cover at the first sign of trouble persists, as when the current Home Secretary declares, a propos asylum-seekers today, that the whole country is 'seething'.

The poison that the late Enoch Powell injected into the bloodstream of the body politic lingers to this day, directed now at asylum-seekers; the fear that 'they' will 'take over' is facily repeated in 2003, exactly as it was in the 1960s. That is why it is important to revisit history from time to time and, when necessary and appropriate, give it a final burial.

Constituency First



NATIONAL
CENSUS



In the June Bulletin, Runnymede analysed the ethnicity question in the 2001 census. At that stage, data was available at district and borough level, but in September information was released on constituency figures. This allows observers to consider more assiduously the impact of black and minority ethnic voters, the status of BME candidates and the role of Britain's minority ethnic communities in politics more generally, says **Omar Khan.**

Even though it is well recognised that statistics can be and often are manipulated, it is important to understand population trends in the British population, particularly in the case of ethnicity. This article examines the recently published results of the 2001 census by parliamentary constituency, focusing on their potential impact on British politics. Since general elections are not only emblematic of democratic politics but evidently influential on people's lives, it is crucial to understand the form and variety of the populations that make up the parliamentary constituencies. While some liberal democracies have other means of electing their representatives, the single-member constituency system of the United Kingdom links the voters of a particular locality with their representative in a manner that focuses consideration on local concerns and interests. In this context, it makes sense to examine and consider the implications of the recently released figures on ethnicity.

Table 1. UK Constituencies (top 50) with highest BME percentage populations

Constituency	BME %	Party
East Ham	66.27	Labour
Birmingham, Ladywood	64.89	Labour
Birmingham, Sparkbrook and Small Heath	64.84	Labour
Brent South	64.59	Labour
West Ham	60.23	Labour
Brent North	58.17	Labour
Ilford South	54.87	Labour
Ealing, Southall	52.67	Labour
Camberwell and Peckham	50.24	Labour
Bethnal Green and Bow	49.82	Labour
Leicester East	49.80	Labour
Croydon North	49.49	Labour
Birmingham, Perry Barr	48.08	Labour
Bradford West	47.40	Labour
Poplar and Canning Town	45.67	Labour
Harrow East	44.87	Labour
Tottenham	44.86	Labour
Lewisham, Deptford	43.36	Labour
Brent East	42.27	Lib Dem
Hackney South and Shoreditch	41.72	Labour
Leyton and Wanstead	41.43	Labour
Walthamstow	40.83	Labour
Vauxhall	40.53	Labour
Hackney N and Stoke Newington	39.47	Labour
Feltham and Heston	38.98	Labour
Leicester South	38.80	Labour
Harrow West	37.34	Labour
Slough	37.28	Labour
Streatham	35.74	Labour
Ealing North	35.28	Labour
Hayes and Harlington	34.17	Labour
Lewisham West	33.87	Labour
Hendon	33.16	Labour
Regent's Park and North Kensington	32.74	Labour
North Southwark and Bermondsey	32.53	Lib Dem
Edmonton	32.52	Labour
Mitcham and Morden	32.09	Labour
Holborn and St. Pancras	32.04	Labour
Brentford and Isleworth	31.65	Labour
Ealing, Acton and Shepherd's Bush	30.92	Labour
Dulwich and West Norwood	30.57	Labour
Warley	30.17	Labour
Manchester, Gorton	29.28	Labour
Blackburn	28.95	Labour
Luton South	28.36	Labour
Bradford North	28.28	Labour
Birmingham, HodgeHill	27.87	Labour
Tooting	27.55	Labour
Walsall South	27.34	Labour
Wolverhampton South East	26.91	Labour

Constituency Data from the 2001 Census

Before considering why ethnicity statistics might matter in a parliamentary democracy, it is useful to present the data

released in the context of the 2001 census. The figures in Table 1 denote the 50 constituencies with the greatest number of black and minority ethnic voters. Between the 1981, 1991 and 2001



NATIONAL
CENSUS

censuses, the threshold for such seats rose from 15% to 20% to 27%. These statistics are roughly in line with increases in the BME population more generally that were analysed in the June 2003 *Bulletin*.

In many ways, the constituency data reveals the continued concentration of BME population even more starkly. For example, the number of seats with more than 40% BME populations increased from 3 in 1981 to 7 in 1991 to 23 in 2001. Though much less dramatic, the number of seats with more than 15% BME populations has nearly doubled over 20 years: from 51 in 1981 to 99 in 2001. East Ham is reported as the constituency with the greatest proportion of BME voters at over 66% (see Table 1), quite an increase from Brent South's figures of 55% in 1991 and 46% in 1981. Indeed, there are now 14 constituencies with a greater proportion of BME Britons than the highest such seat (Brent South) in 1981.

Regional Variation

As noted in previous *Bulletins*, the black and minority ethnic population in Britain is also regionally varied, a point further demonstrated in Table 2. Of the 23 constituencies with BME populations in excess of 40%, 18 are in London and 3 in the West Midlands. If the overall statistic of 9.08% is taken as a national benchmark, only 136 constituencies in England, or one-

quarter, meet or exceed this figure for BME population percentage, and nearly half of these (67) are in London. Another revealing statistic is the percentage of seats in each region that contain BME populations greater than the average of 9% in England. While in London over 90% of constituency seats exceed

clearer. In both the North East and North West over three-fourths of all constituencies contain BME populations of less than 3% and in the North West, Yorkshire and the Humber and East Midlands over half of the constituencies do so. On the other hand, no constituency has a BME population under 3% in

Table 3. Regional Variation of BME population in England, indicating constituencies where BME population is less than 3% of total

Region	Under 3% ^a	Under 2% ^a	Total constituencies
North East	23 (76.7)	19 (63.3)	30
North West	45 (59.2)	32 (42.1)	76
Yorkshire and the Humber	30 (53.6)	25 (44.6)	56
East Midlands	25 (56.8)	23 (52.3)	44
West Midlands	18 (30.5)	13 (22.0)	59
London	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	74
South East	40 (48.2)	19 (22.9)	83
East	24 (42.9)	17 (30.4)	56
South West	39 (76.5)	36 (70.6)	51
Total	244 (46.1%)	184 (34.8%)	529

^a Figures in parentheses indicate the percentage of constituencies in each region below 3% and 2% respectively.

the national average, in the North East and South West the figure is under 4%.

The obvious flipside to the preponderance of minority ethnic constituents in certain regions is their relative paucity in other areas, captured in Table 3. As this table reveals, over one-third of English constituencies (184) have populations with less than 2% BME representation and nearly half (244) have less than 3%, far fewer than the national average of over 9%.

Examining these figures regionally makes the trend even

London, and in the West Midlands less than one-third are below this figure.

Although the regional variation is noteworthy, the strongest element appears to be black and minority ethnic concentration in urban districts. For example, 48 of the 50 constituencies with the highest BME proportions listed in Table 1 are in metropolitan areas (and Slough and Luton are only just outside Greater London), where the vast majority of BME Britons live. Indeed, 35 of these constituencies are in London, 7 are in the West Midlands (i.e. Birmingham) metropolitan area and 2 each in Leicester, Manchester and Bradford.

Political implications

What is eye-catching in Table 1 is the dominance of the Labour party among seats with significant BME populations, with only two Liberal Democrat MPs, in Brent East and North Southwark and Bermondsey respectively (both originally won in by-elections). Since the 1974 election, evidence has indicated that over 80% of BME voters support the Labour

Table 2. Regional Variation of BME population in England, with comparison to overall national average of 9.1%

Region	Over 9.1%	Constituencies	% above England average
North East	1	30	3.3
North West	13	76	17.1
Yorkshire and Humber	13	56	23.2
East Midlands	7	44	15.9
West Midlands	19	59	32.2
London	67	74	90.5
South East	8	83	9.6
East	6	56	10.7
South West	2	51	3.9
Total	136	529	25.7



NATIONAL
CENSUS

party, so this result should not be surprising. However, it is significant that the increasing concentration of such voters in particular constituencies is having a clear and substantial effect on British politics.

In the June 2001 *Bulletin*, we noted that the changing nature of

BME populations in the 1983 election and even 24% in 1992, two related trends have dramatically altered their prospects in such areas. First, the overall population nationally and in each constituency has increased (see Tables 1 and 3). Second, the number of seats with

will probably take more than superficial appeals to overturn this trend.

It is clear, therefore, that the disproportional increase in BME voters in certain parts of Britain has made it more difficult for the Tories to compete in many, if not all, of the seats in Table 3, many of which are among Labour's safest seats. The London constituencies of Cities of London and Westminster (22.12%), Chipping Barnet (17.65%), and Kensington and Chelsea (17.46%) are the Conservative constituencies with the greatest number of BME voters. Even among the 132 constituencies with BME populations of 10%, in 2001 Labour won 117, the Tories 9 and the Liberal Democrats 6. Again, the overwhelming trend of this data would seem to suggest that the Conservatives (and to a lesser extent the Liberal Democrats) need to do more than simply field increased numbers of BME candidates, but also consider the policy preferences and specific interests of BME voters.

Brent East by-election 2003

The recent result in Brent East attracted a great deal of attention in the national media because of its potential as a symbol of the weakness of the current Labour government and perhaps even Tony Blair. For the purposes of this article, it is more immediately relevant to determine the possible impact of the black and minority ethnic makeup of this seat on this somewhat surprising result for the Liberal Democrats. Brent East's BME population of over 42% is the 19th highest in Britain, and like nearly all such seats had been held by Labour, namely by Ken Livingstone, from 1987 until his election as London mayor in 2000, and then by Paul Daisley until his death in 2003.

When Sarah Teather won Brent East for the Liberal Democrats in September 2003, she gained an enormous 29% swing to defeat the local Labour

constituencies in terms of ethnicity means that formerly safe or at least winnable seats for the Tories, especially in urban areas, are increasingly becoming Labour strongholds. For example, a seat such as Feltham and Heston, held by the Tory party in 1983 and 1987, but by the Labour party since 1992, increased from 20% BME population in 1981 to 27% in 1991 to 39% in 2001. The same experience can be retold in a number of other formerly Tory-held London constituencies, such as Ilford South (20% in 1981, 36% in 1991, 55% in 2001), Brent North, Croydon North, Streatham, Harrow East, Harrow West and even Margaret Thatcher's old seat of Finchley and Golders Green. Some of these trends are indicated in Table 4.

While the Conservatives won 35% of the seats with substantial

BME populations greater than 20% has more than doubled, from 33 according to the 1981 census to 73 by 2001. By 1997 the Tories were able to win only a single seat in this category – a trend confirmed in 2001. As more constituencies pass this threshold, the Conservatives may well have to reconsider their strategy in attempting to gain a majority in General Elections. This is not to suggest that poor Conservative results are linked exclusively with BME voting patterns; it is well known that the Tories do worse in metropolitan areas, even among those with low BME populations. Nevertheless, the results in seats with high BME populations were less overwhelming even as recently as 1987 and 1992, and it is important for political parties to try to understand them even if it

Table 4. London Constituencies formerly held by the Conservatives, with current Labour majorities and BME percentage populations from 1981 to 2001

Constituency	Current Labour Majority (%)	2001 BME%	1991 BME%	1981 BME%	Last year held by Conservative
Brent North	10,205 (30.07)	58.17	41.74	23	1992
Leicester East	13,442 (33.06)	49.80	38.07	26	1983
Ilford South	13,997 (33.90)	54.87	35.66	20	1987
Leicester South	13,243 (31.42)	38.80	32.28	26	1983
Croydon North	16,858 (40.25)	49.49	30.94	23	1987
Harrow East	11,124 (23.14)	44.87	30.24	17	1992
Slough	12,508 (32.07)	37.28	28.13	21	1987
Streatham	14,270 (38.57)	35.74	28.02	20	1987
Feltham and Heston	12,657 (34.99)	38.98	27.02	20	1987
Dulwich & West Norwood	12,310 (32.10)	30.57	23.08	17	1987
Ealing North	11,837 (26.33)	35.28	22.98	<15	1992
Harrow West	6,156 (13.20)	37.34	22.51	<15	1992
Brentford & Isleworth	10,318 (23.18)	31.65	22.49	<15	1992
Finchley & Golders Green	3,716 (8.51)	26.17	21.29	16	1992
Hayes and Harlington	13,466 (41.56)	34.17	21.25	<15	1992
Wolverhampton South West	3,487 (8.53)	26.91	21.09	18	1992
Luton South	10,133 (25.75)	28.36	20.89	18	1992
Edmonton	9,772 (28.10)	32.52	20.15	17	1992



NATIONAL
CENSUS

MEP Robert Evans. Although criticism of the Labour candidate for being a millionaire and the low turnout of 35% probably adversely affected his chances, other factors related to the makeup of the constituency also seem to have played a role in Mr. Evans's defeat. In particular, many speculate that the large Muslim population was angered by the Labour party's support for the war in Iraq, and the Liberal Democrats did focus on this issue.

Of the BME population in Brent East, most are of Asian descent. While statistics cited above note that roughly 80% of BME voters have supported Labour, there has been some evidence that this support is weakening, particularly among Asians. Some observers have noted that the Tories could do worse than appeal to upwardly mobile Asians, a claim that seems to have some empirical support. However, the results in Brent East indicate that the Conservatives cannot simply rely on such changes in support accruing to them. Indeed, while the swing from Labour to the Liberal Democrats was overwhelming and surprising, the Conservative vote share was lower than in 2001. This indicates that simplistic appeals to voters need to be supplemented by substantive policies; the voters in Brent East understood perfectly well that concerted support for the Liberal Democrats could unseat the Labour candidate.

Whatever one's opinion of the result in Brent East, it is important to recognise its implications, though all of these must be tempered by its somewhat atypical nature as a mid-term by-election in the context of a relatively unpopular (particularly in this locality) policy in Iraq.

- First, the Labour party cannot simply rely on the votes of the BME population as it did in the past.
- Second, there are specific policy issues that appeal to

voters and in a single-member district it is imperative for candidates to connect with the particular interests of their locality. In some cases, the Labour party is no longer in direct accord with the interests of BME voters, even if it remains the overwhelming choice for most.

- Third, the Liberal Democrats seem capable of winning metropolitan seats with large BME populations, confirming a trend seen in Southwark and Bermondsey, though it is probably too early to unequivocally advance such a conclusion.
- Fourth, the Conservative party cannot assume they will automatically pick up BME votes as Labour support declines, and must increasingly challenge the Liberal Democrats in appealing to concerns that matter to the community.

Conclusion

As mentioned above, participants in a representative democracy usually expect their MP to have some understanding of their concerns. While this of course leaves a great deal open in terms of which interests and concerns they see reflected by their MP, it is notable that the majority of BME MPs represent constituencies with large BME populations. The analysis offered here on BME voting patterns must be mediated by two caveats.

First, the BME population is increasingly diverse. African-Caribbeans, Bangladeshis and Pakistanis continue to occupy less privileged positions in society, but Chinese and Indian Britons are in some cases more successful than the average British voter. Such evidence cannot be marshalled to deny the social salience of race, but it should be taken seriously in considering the political preferences and particular interests of various voters. All parties need to make sure that

they listen carefully to the multiple voices of BME Britons, despite the difficult and sometimes costly groundwork this necessitates. And as it becomes even more important to entertain the notion that various groups might present competing claims, in some policy areas the one-shoe-fits-all approach will become increasingly inappropriate.

The second caveat is that it is increasingly counterproductive to isolate BME voters as a particular type whose loyalties to the Labour party are unreflective or instinctive. In fact, this was always a myth: the Labour party did well among non-white voters precisely because it seemed most able and willing to represent their interests, and no amount of good will by the Tories or Liberal Democrats can obfuscate this historical appeal. However, as the Brent East by-election recently demonstrated, the BME vote will go to the party that best reflects its interests, and these can no longer be taken to be synonymous with those of the Labour party.

This might suggest that the Labour party is less connected with some of its historical vote sources. More generally, and perhaps more importantly, it also indicates that analysts should cease viewing the BME population as an outlier and instead compare their preferences and behaviour to trends observed in the British electorate in general.

On the other hand, as the BME population recognises the strength of its position, it might be able and inclined to make a greater impact on British politics more generally, whatever the party in power. Whether or not BME voters will continue to support the Labour party increasingly depends upon the ability of all three of the major parties to develop and ultimately implement policies that matter to them. □

Omar Khan was a researcher at Runnymede until mid-2001, when he returned to his studies. He is now a consulting policy researcher to Runnymede while working on his PhD at St Antony's College, Oxford.

At the Jim Rose Inaugural



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The Lord Lester of Herne Hill, QC, who co-founded the Runnymede Trust with Jim Rose in 1968, gave the inaugural Jim Rose Lecture under the chairmanship of Pam Rose, Jim's widow, on 15 October 2003.

Also at this event, Middlesex University's Centre for Racial Equality Studies launched the Runnymede Archive Collection; and the British Council, who hosted the evening, announced the publication of *Citizenship Education and Human Rights Education*, an updating of their original 2000 programme of activity in this area.

Runnymede's Director, Michelynn Laffèche, drew attention to recent Runnymede publications, in particular *Guardians of Race Equality*, which examines the impact of the RR(A)A 2000 on inspection and regulation in practice, and includes contributions from those who have been subject to inspection – a government minister, inspectors, regulators and voluntary organisations.

But the focal point of the evening was Anthony Lester's speech in which he paid tribute to his friend and Runnymede co-founder with a series of reminiscences dating from the early 1960s to the close of the 20th century. Extracts from his speech appear below, and the full version can be read on the Runnymede website [www.runnymedetrust.org].

Leading up to the 1968 Race Relations Act

'I first met Jim [Rose] and Nicholas [Deakin] in 1964, having returned from the American South to write a report for Amnesty International during that long hot summer. When we met I was attempting without much success, as a member of a Society of Labour Lawyers committee, to develop proposals to persuade the decision-takers in what would become Harold Wilson's first administration to introduce a Race Relations Act worthy of that name. Jim and Nicholas became interested in the use of legislation to combat racial prejudice and discrimination.

Two years later, when Roy Jenkins became Home Secretary for the first of the two liberal interludes at the Home Office, together with his close friend Mark Bonham Carter, I helped in preparing Roy Jenkins's public statement of his attitude towards racial discrimination and the problems of integration. That was the speech in which Jenkins explained that he did not regard integration as meaning a loss, by immigrants, of their own national characteristics and culture.

'I do not think', he said, 'that we need in this country a "melting-pot", which will turn everybody

out in a common mould, as one of a series of carbon copies of someone's misplaced vision of the stereotyped Englishman.... I define integration, therefore, not as a flattening process of assimilation, but as equal opportunity, accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance. That is the goal. We may fall short of it in its full attainment, as have other communities both in the past and in the present. But if we are to maintain any sort of world reputation for civilised living and social cohesion, we must get far nearer to its achievement than is the case today.'

Roy Jenkins, Mark Bonham Carter, I, and many others worked hard behind the scenes to build support for comprehensive and effective anti-discrimination legislation. Unfortunately, Jenkins did not remain Home Secretary long enough to introduce the legislation. That was done by his successor, Jim Callaghan, and the 1968 Act was broad in scope but toothless and unenforceable, which is why we had to replace it 8 years later.

On the subject of 'translating the ideals of racial equality into practical reality':

I cautioned against a blinkered approach in the introduction to a book on 'Race and Law' on which I collaborated with Geoffrey Bindman,¹ when I wrote that:

'Some of the problems of cultural diversity can be safely left to solve themselves; some, but not all. It would, for example, be entirely misguided for public authorities to tolerate the exploitation of children or the maltreatment of wives and daughters because such practices were condoned by a particular national, religious or cultural group. Prejudice and discrimination ought to be opposed with equal force, whether among white people or black people, natives or immigrants; and cultural

(L-R seated) The Lord Lester of Herne Hill, QC, Mrs Pam Rose, and Rod Pryde, Asst Director-General of the British Council; (L-R standing) Michelynn Laffèche, Professor Ken Goulding, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Middlesex University, and Professor Heidi Safia Mirza, Head of the Centre for Racial Equality Studies at Middlesex University



tolerance must not become a cloak for oppression and injustice within the immigrant communities themselves.'

From the outset we regarded it as essential that Runnymede should be and should be seen to be wholly independent of Government and Government bodies. It is not an offshoot of Government, and must never become so

On keeping in mind, as Chair, the objectives of the Runnymede Trust:

... Runnymede's functions as set out in the Trust Deed are to assist in combating the defamation of minorities; to be available to the media for information and advice about race relations, to publicise the findings of existing research on race relations in a popular form; to sponsor short-term research; and to convene conferences on policy and research. They remain vital objectives.

Those associated with Runnymede from its birth were remarkable for their enlightenment and influence: Jock Campbell, Adrian Cadbury, Harry Walston, Peter Medawar, Edward Boyle, Tony Rampton, Trevor Huddleston, Elizabeth Parker, Pranal Sheth and Elizabeth Scott, to name only some of them.... It was a singular privilege to know and to work with them, and we shall not see their like again

On promoting a culture of respect for human rights:

Those who founded and developed Runnymede ... well understood that it is a characteristic of the human condition to conform and to take the line of least resistance. They understood what Mill meant by the tyranny of the majority, and they saw the need for coherent legal principles, rules and remedies for the victims of unfair and unjustifiable discrimination, as well as for a continuing campaign to promote a culture of respect for human rights, including the rights of ethnic minorities. Jim's own words on this subject are as relevant in today's world as they were 30 years ago. This is what he wrote in his conclusion

The British Council publication *Citizenship Education and Human Rights Education – An overview of recent developments in the UK* can be downloaded as a pdf from their website: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/governance/index.htm>

The Runnymede Collection at Middlesex University can currently be viewed by appointment only. Contact Professor Heidi Safia Mirza on: +44 (0)20 8411 6279 for more information; or visit their website at: www.mdx.ac.uk/www/runnymedecollection and www.mdx.ac.uk/news/ethnichistory.htm

to *Colour and Citizenship*:

'If this Report has any message it is that the decision-makers must recover the confidence necessary to take initiatives of the kind that we have outlined here. Not merely because justice for new citizens is a necessary measure if we are to avoid the disasters that have overtaken other societies ... or even because injustice disfigures our society as a whole, but because ultimately this issue involves more than the future health of our society.

The dominant question of our century is whether men of all races and colours whom advances in science and technology have made near neighbours, can live together in harmony A society which has provided the model for other



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1 A. Lester and G. Bindman (1972) *Race and Law*, p.18. London: Longman and Penguin Books.

From the archives:

Hugo Young and Race Relations

The recent death of Hugo Young produced a small tide of tributes, as the press are usually generous with valedictory space for one of their own profession. Dipak Nandy has had occasion to recall instances of Young's generosity to Runnymede, and some of these were recounted by Anthony Lester in his speech to guests at the Jim Rose Lecture on 15 October.

Dipak, who could not attend this event through illness, had recalled Hugo Young's passionate commitment in the 1960s to race relations: 'So deep ... that his response to Powell's "Rivers of Blood" speech of May 1968 was an uncharacteristically intemperate leader in *The Sunday Times* in which he accused Powell of "spouting fantasies of racial purity", just the thing which the pedantic Powell had taken care *not* to do.'

Dipak also reminded us of Young's 'authoritative critique of the "news values" criterion', as one of four contributions to *Race and the Press* published by Runnymede in 1971.

The central point about race as an issue, Hugo pointed out, is that race relations is not 'self-reporting'. Confronted with the balance of payments figures, journalists from extreme left to extreme right have a shared context within which they can read the figures; but faced with one month's immigration statistics, they are at sea because there is no such shared context. Each paper supplies its own 'context' and, in so doing, places its own slant on the story. The same fact could be presented as 'Immigration figures rise again' and 'immigration rate slows'. At the end of his characteristically authoritative analysis, he draws a crucial distinction – that between neutrality and objectivity – in dealing with race relations in journalism.

Although only a couple of paper copies of this publication remain in Runnymede's own records, we know that one of the functions of the Runnymede Archive, now housed at Middlesex University's Cat Hill site, will be to make available, to all those interested in civil rights activism, anti-racist struggles of the 1970s and 1980s, and the history of immigration policies and public attitudes, not just the news stories and press clippings of the late 1960s to the present day, but many kinds of academic documentation and private testimony that make the people behind the issues more accessible, if not always understandable, to those living in the first decade of the third millennium.

Dipak Nandy was the first Director of the Runnymede Trust (1968-1973).



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societies by evolving democratic forms that respect the individual, and which has shown how to combine tolerance with dissent, now has the chance to set a further example by proving that men of many races can live together in justice and harmony.

That is also the dominant question of this century.

On reform of the Equality legislation:

It is surely unacceptable that the present Government has amended the law to give less legal protection to the victims of discrimination based on colour than to the victims of other forms of racial discrimination. It is also unacceptable that the Government has refused to give effect to the recommendations of the equality agencies and independent experts about the need to reform the outmoded and inadequate legislative code.

As the Parekh Report explains, the time is ripe for the comprehensive reform of our equality legislation. There is a pressing need for a single Equality Act, with a manifestly independent Equality Commission well

resourced and staffed to promote equality of opportunity and treatment on merit, and to use its law enforcement powers strategically and effectively. There is much work to be done in combating prejudice and promoting genuine equality.

And from the Question & Answer session that followed the speech:

1. In response to a question from Sam Walker of the Black Cultural Archives about political engagement with the question of racial equality Lord Lester replied:

Home Secretaries are like most human beings, they follow the line of least resistance and they don't have courageous principles. I think the remarkable thing about my old boss [Roy Jenkins] was that he did. We were a minority Government expecting to be booted out at any moment. We had a coherent well-constructed Conservative opposition, and yet we got through first the Sex Discrimination Act, that wasn't quite so hard, and then the Race Relations Act, which for their day were radical and effective measures. Now, with this huge majority, I don't think there is that degree of commitment, and I'm depressed about that, because I think the Government's commitment is weak now in comparison to when it came to power.

2. In response to a question from Richard Stone, Runnymede Trustee, on bringing human rights issues into the structure of an equalities commission:

The parliamentary committee on which I sit, the Human Rights Committee, were divided as to whether you should have an equality and human rights commission all in one place or whether you should have an equality commission that can look at human rights, but only in the equality field, and a separate human rights commission. My own view, which was the minority view, was that there was a danger of having everything in one house because torture and free speech and privacy and family life and forced labour and the right to marry and property rights and all the rest of them would have to be tackled by the same body that was monitoring very detailed anti-discrimination legislation. And one part of the single house, which would be the equality and equal rights commission, would have enforcement powers and the other would be largely a propaganda place with no powers or very few powers.

I don't want the equality side to be weakened by the human rights side even though, as you probably know, I'm not unenthusiastic about protecting general human rights. I would say you need to have a human rights commission and an equality commission and some kind of federal link between them. I especially don't like the idea that the powers on the equality side might be reduced because you don't want strong powers on the human rights side. It's all in our report [the Hepple Report], we've consulted further on it and I wait to learn what Patricia Hewitt and her colleagues come up with. □

Officially published on 15 October 2003

Guardians of Race Equality: Perspectives on Inspection and Regulation

Foreword by Audrey Osler

Introduction by Rob Berkeley

Exploring the issues:

- I. The Public Duty and a Duty to the Public
 - II. Trust, Accountability and Race Equality
 - III. Regulation, Review and Partnership
- Rob Berkeley

Viewpoints:

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Fiona MacTaggart, Parliamentary Under Secretary for Race Equality
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Invoking Community

Vic McLaren plots the rise of the concept of 'social capital' and considers its broader implications for government and for neighbourhood.

Newspapers and social commentators often refer to the decline of 'community'; and the rebuilding of communities has been a major plank of government policy since 1997, with nearly £2 billion earmarked for neighbourhood renewal funding between 2001 and 2006.

Ministers, when speaking of 'community', are generally concerned with territorial communities, and with the issue of neighbourhood empowerment. But the potential for 'communities of interest' (for example, faith communities) to be involved in regeneration is also increasingly being recognised.

The other sense in which community is being invoked could more accurately be described as 'civil society' – the area between the market and the state – in other words, the voluntary and community sectors. Here, the Government sees increasing opportunities for partnership in public service delivery. Civil Renewal is another term which has gained in ascendancy, particularly at the Home Office, where the Home Secretary himself has published a personal manifesto on the subject.¹ A key component of the civil renewal process is seen to be the development of something known as 'social capital', and it is this concept that I wish to explore.

Investing in 'the good society'

Social capital (in essence, membership of networks with a shared set of values) is a term that has been in use in academic circles for a decade or so, but which has come to prominence only with the publication in year 2000 of *Bowling Alone* by a hitherto fairly obscure Harvard-based professor, Robert

Putnam.² Though not the originator of the concept – that honour goes to fellow US academic, the late James Coleman – Putnam is currently the most vociferous advocate of the idea. He certainly succeeded in touching a nerve with the American reading public, writing in an accessible style and with a journalist's eye for a good phrase and a *bon mot*, by suggesting that the Tocquevillian foundations of US democracy were palpably beginning to disintegrate.

There was sufficient resonance in Putnam's headline messages for governmental policy advisers in this country to sit up and take notice. The Performance and Innovation Unit within Whitehall prepared a detailed study on the policy implications of social capital in the form of a discussion paper published in Spring of last year,³ and further momentum has been provided by Putnam himself who has been on a European lecture tour. [I caught the UK leg of this in Birmingham in the spring, and found him an engaging and persuasive performer.]

Having said that, inevitably Putnam is not without his critics, and the debate triggered by *Bowling Alone* has a number of similarities with the disputes engendered by communitarian theorists such as Francis Fukuyama and Amitai Etzioni. Essentially, all three have been accused of being rose-tinted in their vision of the potential of community, and of invoking romantic images of the past rather than practical solutions for the present. In fairness to Putnam, he does recognise that totally new forms of social capital may emerge rather in the way that occurred in 1890s America, and slightly earlier in Britain; but his own diagnosis of contemporary

problems and their potential remedies has a distinctly 'fogeyish' dimension.

The Black American sociologist Iris Marion Young and the veteran UK radical criminologist Jock Young have both been critical of the kind of *gemeinschaft* vision of society depicted by orthodox communitarians, arguing that contemporary urban society is best envisaged, and operates most successfully, as a network of lightly engaged strangers, where diversity and creativity can find their own space.⁴ According to this version of the good society, the key to urban living may have more to do with issues around 'civility' (in the broad sense of civilised behaviour, encompassing respect and toleration as well as courtesy) rather than the notion of 'strong communities' propagated by political communitarians. Other critics argue that nowadays 'community' is not a concept regarded as a universal public good, but rather a selective remedy to the problem of poor, unruly neighbourhoods. For many middle-class people 'communities of place' have no particular validity, with 'communities of choice' or 'communities of interest' having much greater cogency.

But to return to 'social capital'. Whilst the idea is undoubtedly gaining momentum in government policy circles, it remains a tricky concept, similar to 'community' in that respect. Described by Barbara Misztal as a form of institutionalised trust,⁵ it emphasises that relationships matter; but as Michael Woolcock's helpful typology demonstrates (see over), there are clearly different types of social capital, and these – as with financial and physical capital – can have negative as well as positive consequences, and can be exclusionary as well as inclusive.⁶

Whilst authors such as Raymond Williams and Geoffrey Pearson have successfully



CIVIL
RENEWAL



1. David Blunkett, *Politics and Progress*. London: Demos, Politico's Publishing, 2001.

2. Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000.

3. Performance and Innovation Unit, *Social Capital: a discussion paper*. London: Cabinet Office, 2002.

4. Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990; Jock Young, *The Exclusive Society*. London: Sage Publications, 1999.

5. B. Misztal, *Informality*. London: Routledge/Taylor & Francis, 2000.

6. John Field, *Social Capital*. London: Routledge/Taylor & Francis, 2003.



CIVIL RENEWAL

Vic McLaren was a Policy Adviser to the Runnymede Trust in 2002/3. This paper was prepared during his period of secondment.

⁸ R. Williams, *The Country and the City*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1973; G. Pearson, *Hooligan: A History of Respectable Fears*. London: Macmillan, 1983.

⁹ CFMEB, *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain: The Parekh Report*. London: Profile Books for the Runnymede Trust, 2000.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 56.

¹¹ *Taking the debate on to another stage, see the Runnymede Perspectives pamphlet published with this issue of the Bulletin. Civil Renewal, Diversity and Social Capital in a Multi-Ethnic Britain by David Faulkner can be read at or downloaded from Runnymede's website [www.runnymedetrust.org], or ordered as a printed document from Runnymede. See the back cover of this Bulletin for our regular contact details.*

Definitions of Social Capital according to Woolcock (2001)

- (a) bonding social capital, which denotes ties between like people in similar situations, such as immediate family, close friends and neighbours;
- (b) bridging social capital, which encompasses more distant ties of like persons, such as loose friendships and workmates; and
- (c) linking social capital, which reaches out to unlike people in dissimilar situations, such as those who are entirely outside the community, thus enabling members to leverage a far wider range of resources than are available within the community.⁷

debunked the myth that the past was invariably a more peaceful and socially ordered place,⁸ nevertheless, that is not the general public perception. To give just one example, despite significant falls in the volume of crime over the past decade, a telling proportion of the general public (particularly tabloid newspaper readers) still believe crime to be on the increase, much to the chagrin of ministers and chief constables nationally.

In that context, it is not difficult to see why Robert Putnam's analysis in *Bowling Alone* touched so many buttons in terms of public concern – whether about alleged loss of 'community', perceived loss of 'civility', declining civic engagement or general voter

apathy. But the real test of utility for the concept of social capital will not be in re-invoking the past, but in unlocking a vision of the future.

A useful test might be to apply the concept to the potential implementation of the CFMEB (or Parekh) Report, for example.⁹ In the context of social cohesion, it would seem that the idea of 'bridging' social capital could be very useful were its policy implications to be fully developed. On the other hand, some poor neighbourhoods, it could be argued, have a surfeit of 'bonding' social capital, to the detriment of newcomers to the community such as asylum seekers. So whilst bonding social capital could be perceived as positive in staving off

the effects of collective poverty, its downside involves prejudice and discrimination towards those of different ethnic origin. So the rhetoric about building 'strong communities' may be misplaced, and cohesive communities characterised by sufficient levels of bridging social capital may not necessarily constitute 'integrated' communities.

New Labour policy strategists have seen social capital as a useful concept in a progressive public policy, with the state cast as an enabler or capacity builder. But the issue of how social capital might be promoted through public policy, and the relative merits and demerits of different forms of social capital, have been left hanging in the air. It seems that the vision set out in the Parekh Report of Britain as 'a community of communities, and a community of citizens, not a place of oppressive uniformity based on a single substantive culture'¹⁰ effectively throws down the gauntlet to Putnam and other communitarians to demonstrate the validity of the concept of social capital to a modern multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society.¹¹ □

Civil Renewal, Diversity and Social Capital in a Multi-Ethnic Britain

In January 2004, Runnymede publishes an invited paper by **David Faulkner**, under the above title, as the first in a series of occasional papers – Runnymede Perspectives.

In this paper David Faulkner examines how a civil renewal agenda will have implications for race equality, and that these can be interpreted and usefully examined in terms of diversity, social capital and racial justice, and related to 'current understandings of race equality'.

From the Runnymede point of view, this paper reinforces how we intend to structure the next phase of our work in 2004/5:

- engaging promptly with new policy agendas,
- exploring the use and development of concepts in policy-making; and
- analysing their potential for contributing to the creation of a successful multi-ethnic Britain.

As an approach, it mirrors the one we developed throughout 2002/3 in helping define the concept of community cohesion during its emergence as a key element of social policy. And as with community cohesion, the potential for utilising the concepts of civil renewal and social capital through policy may be great; but, again, overt or even 'quiet' references to the impact that these ideas are having or could have on issues of anti-discrimination and promoting racial justice are few at this stage.

In his June 2003 paper, the Home Secretary noted that 'we need to think much more broadly about the practical implications [of this policy framework] for all areas of government and the delivery of public services' and invited agencies, think-tanks and voluntary bodies to help develop ideas further.

This paper is our first word, so to speak, on the subject. David Faulkner rightly notes that '[t]here are still instances of racism in Great Britain which need to be dealt with firmly and decisively, both when they occur and to prevent them from happening in the first place'. But beyond the concrete issues 'there lies a range of larger sets of questions about the changing nature of British society, its social composition and dynamics, the sources of power and influence, and the distribution of wealth. Those questions come together in the conceptions of citizenship and social capital.'

Michelynn Laffèche

A printed copy of **Civil Renewal, Diversity and Social Capital in a Multi-Ethnic Britain** has been provided with this issue of the *Runnymede Bulletin*. If you would like another copy, contact us at Runnymede (tel: 020 7377 9222; email: info@runnymedetrust.org), or read the full text shortly on our website [www.runnymedetrust.org].

Human rights – time to embrace a new agenda?

Rob Berkeley looks at how the government's announcement of a single body for equality and for human rights cannot avoid prompting a renewed recognition of the commonalities between equality strands.

In November 2003 the long-awaited announcement on the new single equality body was made – with two surprises. There was no surprise that the announcement was silent on a Single Equality Act. Yet, the Queen's Speech, introducing legislation for the 2004 parliamentary term, included a range of activity on equality, including a new disability discrimination bill, a children's commissioner for England, and a civil partnerships bill. It would appear that the government would rather approach equality legislation in this piecemeal fashion. Let us hope that any new Single Equality Body will not reap the whirlwind as a result of this approach.

The first surprise was the lack of detail. Given a consultation process that began in October 2002 and included 10 ministerial regional roundtables, a conference, 150 responses to questionnaires, longer written submissions, and online consultation, the announcement included the decision to 'establish a taskforce' as 'the government has reached no conclusions on key issues such as the governance of the body and its internal structure'. While the government's commitment to an 'open and transparent process' is commendable, there is some urgency as new employment legislation (age, sexual orientation, and religion/belief) comes on stream with little or no institutional support. A 2006 start date for the new commission leaves only sketchy interim arrangements for these groups.

The second surprise was the decision that 'the new body's remit should cover the promotion of human rights together with its equality responsibilities'. The working name for the single equality body is the Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR). What exactly have human rights and equality got to do with each other? What are the links between these agenda, where do they complement each other and where is the potential for conflict?

One of the major recommendations in the report of the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain¹ is to work towards 'building a pluralistic human rights culture'. The authors were keen to express the importance of human rights both as underpinning shared understandings of our society, and as a route to building links between the different equalities agenda 'recognising what unites them as well as their own distinctiveness'

(p.101). They quote the then Home Secretary, Jack Straw, who commented:

Consider the nature of modern British society. It's a society enriched by different cultures and different faiths. It needs a formal shared understanding of what is fundamentally right as well as what is fundamentally wrong if it is to work together in unity and confidence ... The Human Rights Act provides that formal shared understanding.²

The report also notes that:

Equality and diversity principles will thus necessarily be a central part of human rights culture. This is not to say that equality and diversity should be seen only as human rights issues, but it does mean that human rights have much to offer in the realisation of these principles. (p.100)

Race equality issues in the UK, the report's authors argue, have not usually been addressed through a human rights perspective, too often seen as a minor problem rather than as a challenge for society as a whole. So human rights and equality are compatible, but how do they best complement each other?

In her timely book *Social Inequality and Social Injustice*,³ Evelyn Kallen attempts to elucidate the links between human rights and social equality. She reflects on her 30 years of research and teaching on human rights issues to offer an analysis of how social inequalities are constructed and how human rights approaches can be used as a tool to create equality.

Her book is a response to what she refers to as 'two serious lacunae in the prevailing social scientific approaches': first that there have been differing theoretical approaches to social inequality developed by those looking at ethnic or non-ethnic populations (i.e. differences in approach between those considering gender and race); and second that:

Traditional approaches to the study of subordinate populations were decidedly negative in thrust; emphasis was placed on socially constructed invalidation and disadvantage. But no positive lever was offered which could enable members of subordinate human populations to take steps to gain equitable treatment as full and equal members of humankind. (p.2)

Professor Kallen builds a conceptual framework which endeavours to use human rights frameworks to deliver positive change for subordinate groups.

This book provides a very useful introduction to human rights perspectives. Written in an accessible manner, it distils the often legalistically complex principles and relates them to the language of activism. The work is impressive in its inclusiveness – it gives a



EQUALITIES



¹ CFMEB (2000) *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain: The Parekh Report*. London: Profile Books for the Runnymede Trust.

² Building on a Human Rights Culture – Jack Straw, address to the Civil Service College December 1999.

³ Evelyn Kallen (2004) *Social Inequality and Social Injustice: A Human Rights Perspective*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan (ISBN: 0-333-92428-2 pbk)



EQUALITIES

range of international examples, ranging from gay and lesbian groups in Japan, to the aboriginal peoples of Australia, to children in Burma. This worldwide view does not, however, make the book unwieldy, as Kallen uses these examples to develop and exemplify a universal model. The breadth of her view only helps to emphasise the commonalities between subordinate groups and helps to pinpoint the experiences and disadvantages that are held in common and those that are unique to the characteristics of particular groups. With specific chapters on movements for gay and lesbian rights, women's rights and new nationhood movements, this should provide a useful primer for those whose work does not focus primarily on these groups, and a reminder of the universality of the struggle for those whose work does.

Kallen concludes the book with a critique of the current human rights system; important in that it highlights the contested nature of our understandings of human rights. As efforts continue to improve the ways in which we move towards cohesion, equality and diversity, we will also have to be mindful of the need to improve their underpinning – our human rights.

It is worth quoting Kallen at length when she discusses the means of building coalitions among different subordinate groups:

The first and essential element of coalition building is the mutual identification of different subordinate populations as groups (albeit for different reasons) disadvantaged and subordinated by dominant agencies in the society. The second element is for members of different subordinate groups to recognise that they share a common goal; that of transforming the structure of society from one based on group inequality to one based on group equality. A third element, directly related to the second, is for members of different subordinate groups to understand that it is the same mainstream political and economic elites who are responsible for the inferiorization and disadvantaged status common to all subordinate groups. A fourth element, critical for coalition building, is the recognition that most subordinate group members experience subordinate status on multiple grounds. This fact enables the development of caucuses of internal minorities that facilitate the development of links with other subordinate groups. (p. 184)

The CEHR is currently building a coalition of groups representing subordinate groups on the grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age and religion or belief (see opposite). I am not sure how many of the elements Kallen suggests have yet been met; I do not underestimate the challenges ahead in bringing these elements together. The inclusion of a human rights perspective may be the basis on which to build a coalition for equality, and the surprise that could make the single equalities body a success. □

The Equalities Coalition is a network of organisations with an interest in equalities and non-discrimination issues in the UK. It is funded by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and managed by the Fawcett Society, with a cross-strand advisory group.

Equalities Coalition membership is open to:

- organisations or individuals with an interest in equalities and non-discrimination in the UK;
- those working on issues related age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation or equality more generally;
- grassroots, local and national organisations;
- voluntary sector organisations, trades unions, and employers' forums.

The Equalities Coalition exists to:

- foster broad debate around the future of equalities, involving member organisations, government departments and policy-makers;
- provide information on legislation, policy changes, events, resources and lobbying opportunities;
- make possible the sharing of expertise and views;
- facilitate partnerships between member organisations for lobbying and other work.

Members can be involved in the Coalition's work to whatever extent they choose, from attending meetings and discussion groups to simply viewing material on the website [www.equalities.org].

Back to the drawing board?

It appears that the new citizenship tests referred to in the September Bulletin are unlikely to progress in the form envisaged by the committee on 'Life in the UK'. A report in the *Daily Mail* on 10 December said that 'yesterday the Home Office claimed the tests were still being considered, fuelling speculation that the scheme would stay on the back burner permanently'. We understand that the Mail is not infallible, but there was no mention of the resources that would be necessary to fund the effective delivery of these tests in Gordon Brown's pre-budget report. It may be that the tests will not happen and the committee led by Bernard Crick will have wasted their energy. A slimmed-down, cut-rate version of the tests and support for language learning would be unacceptable, and would not achieve the laudable objectives set out for them in the committee's report. We may have to make do with the citizenship ceremonies – welcoming new citizens with the oath of allegiance and a blast of the national anthem – that will go ahead from January 2004.

New Commission for Equality and Human Rights Task Force

On 30 October 2003, Patricia Hewitt and Lord Falconer announced, in a joint DTI and DCA statement, the bringing together of the existing equality commissions – the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) and the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) – to combat discrimination, and promote equality and diversity.

A task force has now been set up to canvass views and coordinate opinion in preparation for a White Paper on a single equalities commission. Runnymede's Director, Michelynn Lafleche, has just been appointed to membership of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR) Task Force, which held its first meeting on 16 December, with full attendance.

The Task Force is made up of experts from current equality commissions and organisations, communities who will be covered by the CEHR, human rights, trades unions, business and academia, who will explore and develop options for the new body, including its role, functions, priorities, governance arrangements and structure.

It is chaired by Jacqui Smith, the Deputy Minister for Women and Equality.

The Process envisages the members of the Task Force providing their own views and consulting with others in their area of interest, and feeding in their views over the meetings programme, with a White Paper for publication in Spring 2004.

Terms of Reference for the Task Force specify that it will, after meeting over a period of 12 months:

- Advise government on the role, functions, priorities and activities of the proposed Commission for Equality and Human Rights, in furtherance of the government's statement of 27 October on future arrangements for equality institutions in Great Britain;
- Provide such advice in preparation for a White Paper;
- Provide ongoing policy advice, including assessment of responses to the White Paper, on the range of issues described above.

The Meetings Schedule and breakdown of areas for discussion at each meeting are listed on this page. The first meeting (16 December) looked at constructing a vision for the CEHR, and the next (scheduled for 6 January) is on governance, and relationships with devolved administrations. With meetings due to happen in close order, Michelynn would like people to contact her with ideas on and reactions to the content of the programme and future outcomes (which will be minuted on the government's website) so she can take them forward.

Task force membership is listed in the narrow column. Further information on both the task force and its membership is available on the government's website [cehr@dti.gsi.gov.uk].

2004 Meetings Programme for the CEHR

(location for all meetings is the DTI Conference Centre)

Tuesday 6 Jan 2004 - Meeting to address:

- Governance
- role and constitution of the board
 - accountability of the board to stakeholders and communities of interest
 - independence of the board
 - accountability of the board to Parliament and Government
 - real and meaningful mechanisms for stakeholders and communities of interest to participate in the CEHR

Scotland & Wales

- the CEHR's response to Scottish and Welsh political, social, economic and cultural circumstances
- how to reflect the devolved constitutional settlement in the work of the CEHR
- relationship of the CEHR to institutions operating in devolved nations

Thursday 22 January 2004 - Meeting to address:

- Enforcement and Other Powers
- the CEHR's approach to enforcement
 - the effectiveness of current investigation powers and how they could be improved
 - the effectiveness of current litigation powers and how they could be improved
 - development of Codes of Practice
 - alternative dispute resolution tools - their role and scope
 - other powers to help deliver the CEHR's functions

Tuesday 3 February 2004 - Meeting to address:

- Support of Individuals
- their information and advice needs on equality and human rights
 - role of CEHR in meeting these needs
 - role of other service providers in meeting these needs
 - relationship between the CEHR and other advice providers
 - how to develop/retain CEHR's 'centre of excellence' capacity on legal expertise and on casework

Support of Communities

- role of 'good relations' in the CEHR
- relationship between community cohesion, equality and human rights
- where the CEHR could and should add most value
- relationship to the voluntary and community sector, including the RECS

Thursday 26 February 2004 - Meeting to address:

- CEHR's Role in Support of the Public Sector and Promoting Human Rights
- promoting human rights
 - delivery of its human rights remit
 - relationship to public bodies
 - delivery of its enforcement functions on public duties
 - effective mainstreaming of equality and human rights

CEHR's Role in Support of Business

- relationship to the private sector and to SMEs
- in support of employers and service providers in the private sector

Tuesday 2 March 2004 - Meeting to address:

- Review and Planning of Further Work
- overview and evaluation
 - issues for revisiting
 - identifying further work

Further meetings are then diarised for:

Thursday 1 April 2004
Thursday 13 May 2004
Thursday 10 June 2004
Thursday 22 July 2004



EQUALITIES

Taskforce

membership:
Lucy Anderson, TUC
Amanda Ariss, EOC
Mohammed Aziz, British Muslim Research Council
Neil Bentley, CBI
Frances Butler, British Institute of Human Rights
Katie Ghose, Age Concern
Lorraine Gradwell, Small Business Council (DTI)
Patrick Grattan, Third Age Employment Network
Ros Hardie Ejiobuo, London Borough of Croydon
Tessa Harding, Help the Aged
Rev. John Kennedy, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland
Francesca Klug, LSE
Michelynn Lafleche, Runnymede
Nick O'Brien, Disability Rights Commission
Colm O'Cinneide, UC London
Brian Pearce, Interfaith Network
Katherine Rake, Fawcett Society
Teresa Rees, University of Cardiff
Andy Rickell, British Council of Disabled People
Pam Smith, CRE
Sarah Spencer, University of Oxford
Hanne Stinson, British Humanist Association
Ben Summerskill, Stonewall
John Wilkes, Equality Coordinating Group
Mandy Wright, Employers' Organisation for Local Government



University Top-up Fees: Paying for froth or flavour?

The government's plans for top-up fees of up to £3000 a year for university students have dominated the discussion of Labour's legislative plans for the parliamentary sessions of 2004. Whatever one's views on charges in general, we thought it advisable to consider the reasons for and against the proposal, particularly from the viewpoint of black and minority ethnic students. The following chart is a summary by **Omar Khan** and **Rob Berkeley** of some of the relevant reasons, both generally and from a race angle. Hardly a comprehensive list, but it gives an indication of the issues at stake, both for the education system and for BME students and their parents.

General Issues on top-up fees

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| <p>Pros</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of university education will be good for Britain, both socially and economically. • Those who don't go to university will no longer pay towards providing a service they are unlikely to use (thus removing a 'subsidy' paid by the poorer members of society to the middle and upper classes). • Increased income for universities will ensure their overall quality and maintain their international competitiveness. • Fees will give universities greater control and independence in determining their finances, making them less reliant on government. • Variable fees will ensure that the costs applied to students have some relationship to the advantages they accrue from their particular course and university; the reason for such variation is that certain degrees afford greater advantages, particularly material, for some graduates. • If variable fees are implemented, there will probably be increased numbers of students studying Business, Law, Medicine, Pharmacology and various professional and vocational degrees. This may improve the health of the British economy. • There will no longer be any upfront fees. For those from lower-income families grants may be available. • Universities will be encouraged to offer bursaries for students from lower-income families. | <p>Cons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of debt will dissuade working-class students even from applying to university. • Variable fees will dissuade students from pursuing courses not obviously linked to higher-salaried careers. • Decrease in enrolments for certain courses that lack obvious economic prospects will reduce the number of faculty members employed to teach them, and might even see the closure of departments such as Anthropology, Art History, African and Asian Studies, Drama, Education, Foreign Languages, History, Literature, Music, Philosophy, Sociology, etc. Even where such courses continue, a newfound emphasis may be placed on their ability to train students to be successful in the economy, thus altering the rationale for such courses and requiring the transformation of graduate training, a costly and long-term endeavour. • Top-up fees may undermine the idea of education 'for its own sake', foregrounding the vocational worth of the degree at the expense of the learning experience. • Graduates may be less likely to seek or accept employment in the public or voluntary sectors, as future earnings prospects cannot match those offered in the more lucrative zones of the private sector. • There is a danger of a 'two-tier' university system becoming entrenched with employers and potential students judging courses (and the quality of graduates) on their price. Russell Group and other 'older' universities start with a market advantage, newer universities may struggle to establish themselves in this market. The outcomes may be under-funded courses and lack of resources leading to lower quality teaching and learning – a vicious circle. More vicious given that it is the newer universities that have to date been at the forefront of efforts to widen participation among social groups that traditionally have had little access to Higher Education. |
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Issues on top-up fees that may adversely affect minority ethnic candidates

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| <p>Pros</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insofar as certain parts of the BME population are less likely to attend university, they will not be paying for a public good that advantages the better-off. • Expansion of university education will offer new opportunities for BME students. • Inasmuch as BME students are currently more likely to enrol in professional and vocational courses, the cost of their course will better reflect the advantages they stand to gain. • Many students from BME communities will not have to pay anything given that they are more likely to come from lower-income families. Many will also be eligible for grants and/or bursaries. | <p>Cons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence suggests that even given the same course at the same university, BME students get less advantage career-wise from their degree than their white counterparts. If this is true, then it may be unfair to expect them to pay according to the 'average' benefit provided by a particular university course. • Relatedly, if the rationale for variable fees is that certain degrees provide greater (material) advantages than others, then it would seem to follow that if certain groups of students (whether BME or working-class) get fewer advantages compared to their colleagues, then they should pay lower fees. • While the relative over-representation of BME students in professional and vocational courses might signal their lower costs, it is possible that the 'average' (material) advantages provided by such courses could drive up fees. • Variation in fees may lead to an entrenchment of hierarchies in HE. The universities that are most likely to be at the wrong end of these hierarchies are also those with the highest proportions of students from Black and minority ethnic communities. |
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With newspaper reports that Tony Blair has put his authority on the line over winning the vote on tuition fees, the stakes could not be higher. Any policy that will have such a huge effect on public services will inevitably have an impact on those from minority ethnic communities. In the debate so far about the rights and wrongs of fees, there has been little discussion of what the reform might mean for students from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds. What we have done here is simply attempt to tease out what some of the main issues might be, to feed into such a discussion, and offer suggestions for further reading to help you deliberate on this crucial reform.

Attitudes to debt. School leavers and further education students' attitudes to debt and their impact on participation in higher education – Executive Summary. A report for UUK and HEFCE by Professor Claire Callender of South Bank University. February 2003.

Stephen J. Ball, Diane Reay and Miriam David (2002) 'Ethnic Choosing: Minority Ethnic Students, Social Class and Higher Education Choice', *Race, Ethnicity and Education* 5 (4).

John Carter, Steve Fenton and Tariq Modood, *Ethnicity and Employment in Higher Education* (London: Policy Studies Institute, 1999).

M. Shiner and T. Modood (2002) 'Help or Hindrance? Higher Education and the Route to Ethnic Equality', *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 23(2): 209–32.

White Paper: The Future of Higher Education (Cm 5735).

Race Impact Assessment [www.dfes.gov.uk]

Religious Discrimination in the European Union



EUROPE

This article by Mohammed Aziz draws on the author's participation at a conference on 'Religious Discrimination in the European Union', organised by the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) on 24–25 October 2003, in Amsterdam.

The EU is home to large minority faith communities. On the whole, the record held by these communities is a strong one: they are law-abiding communities, maintaining stable families and living decent and moderate lives; they are diverse and vibrant, enriching local arts and cultures; they contribute to, and often sustain, many public services; they help to ensure the well-being and prosperity of Member States in numerous ways. And yet, far from celebrating the contributions these communities make throughout the EU—resulting from a failure to understand their religious beliefs and observances, cultural differences, social norms and habits—they have often been seen as 'problematic minorities', and consequently suffer from prejudice and discrimination. Such treatment of these religious minority communities is only just beginning to receive the attention of the law.

Based on the competence provided by Article 13 of the EC Treaty, as adopted by the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997, on 27 November 2000 the EU adopted a general framework Employment Directive for equal treatment. The Directive seeks to guarantee equal treatment on the grounds of religion or belief, amongst other grounds, in both 'horizontal' relationships between individuals and 'vertical' relationships between public authorities and individuals.

The deadline for the transposition of the Directive into national law by Member States was set for 2 December 2003. Most, if not all, Member States have at least made an effort to meet this deadline.

The key provisions of the Directive, from a religion or belief perspective, are as follows:

- Prohibition of direct discrimination—this operates where one person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation, simply on the grounds of their religion or belief. An exception is made to this provision where discrimination is based on a 'genuine and determining occupational requirement' for the job or the particular religious or belief ethos of the employer.

- Prohibition of indirect discrimination – this comes into force where an apparently neutral policy, procedure or practice would put persons of a particular religion or belief at a particular disadvantage compared with others. Again, an exception can be made to this provision where the discrimination has a legitimate aim and where the means of achieving that aim are necessary and proportional.
- Prohibition of harassment – where unwanted conduct related to religion or belief takes place that violates the dignity of a person and creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
- Prohibition of victimisation – where an employee is discriminated against or harassed because they had made a complaint or allegation, or given evidence against someone in relation to a complaint of discrimination, on the grounds of religion or belief.
- Allowance of positive action – to maintain or adopt specific measures to prevent future, or compensate for past, disadvantage linked to a religion or belief with a view to ensuring full equality in practice.

The correct and complete transposition of the Directive in Member States would, therefore, provide a significant level of protection against religious discrimination throughout the EU. This is very welcome, particularly for religious minorities in the European Union who have so far been at the sharpest end of such religious discrimination. However, there is much concern that the Directive simply does not go far enough. It is possible to argue this case on at least four grounds.

First, the scope of the Directive is restricted to areas of employment only, and thus can be significantly less extensive than its sister directive on race and ethnic origin (the Race Directive). Even after full transposition of the Directive, therefore, where Member States have decided not to go beyond its minimum requirements, minority faith communities will still *not* be protected from discrimination in areas such as social security and health care; education; goods and services available to the public (including housing); and social advantages (e.g. housing benefit, student maintenance grants and loans, bus passes for senior citizens, etc.). In practice, this will leave obvious gaps in the law against religious discrimination and place religious minorities in a vulnerable position with regard to very significant areas of daily life. Consider some



EUROPE

Answering questions at a UKREN meeting in Glasgow, held in conjunction with BEMIS, are (L-R) Fariha Thomas, of the AMINA-Muslim Women's Resource Centre, Fraser Campbell of SEMPER Scotland, and Damir Duheric of the Scottish Refugee Council. At this 8 December gathering the UKREN Management Committee met in the morning, and presentations from these three named speakers in the afternoon were followed by an open discussion on the subject of whether government and devolved bodies were doing enough about racism and inequality.

concrete examples:

- A hospital surgeon can refuse to operate on members of a particular faith, and a local doctor can refuse to take on patients from particular faith communities on the basis of their faith practices.
- A local school can refuse admission to pupils of certain faiths or introduce rules that would discriminate against certain minority faith communities – e.g., 'short hair for boys and short skirts for girls'.
- A shop, restaurant or hotel can refuse service to a person because he or she is from a particular minority faith group. Similarly an airline, a car hire company or any other service provider can refuse service to members of particular faith communities or treat them differently.
- A housing authority can have an unofficial policy to accommodate all members of a particular faith community in one run-down area, and the local town hall can refuse to hire out its facilities to a particular religious group.
- A fitness club or a golf club can refuse membership to members of a particular religion.

Moreover, this limitation in the Employment Directive has the potential of providing a loophole in, perhaps even making a mockery of, the Race Directive. The fascist may hate Black and Asian people just as much as before, but knowing that there are laws relating to the delivery of goods and services that proscribe his hatred and activities on the grounds of race and ethnicity, he may smartly but falsely claim that his treatment of certain minorities is based not on those grounds but on religion—'It is not because they are Indians, but because they are Hindus' or 'It is not because they are Black or Somali, but because they are Muslims'. Thus, the target and those affected may remain the same, although the marker may be different. Religion would then be a perfect surrogate for undertaking with impunity activities already proscribed by the Race Directive.

Second, even if the Employment Directive covered the additional scope of the Race Directive, there would still be a significant shortfall, in that the provisions would not extend to discrimination in law enforcement, regulatory and control functions. This is fast becoming a critical concern in many areas, not least, the following:

- *National security and anti-terrorism activities.* It is argued that whilst EU states must do all that is required to protect against terrorist activities, they must still refrain from unnecessary abuse of human rights, particularly where this results in unjustifiably disproportionate indirect discrimination on the grounds of race or religion.
- *Policing crime and treatment by the criminal justice system.* There is some evidence now that in some Member States people affiliated to a particular religion or belief are less likely as victims to get a good service from the police; more likely to be over-policed, policed unfairly or heavy-handedly; more likely to be charged, and at higher levels, by prosecution authorities; more likely to be given longer custodial sentences by the courts; and more likely to receive an unsatisfactory service from probation authorities.
- *Immigration and asylum.* Here, it is again argued that serious discriminatory practices on the basis of religion or belief are genuine and real possibilities, but presently there are few safeguards against them.

In order to address these areas of concern, the provisions of the Employment Directive must not only be extended to the delivery of goods, facilities and services, but also to law enforcement, regulatory and control functions.

Third, the Employment Directive requires Member States to impose only a negative duty 'not to discriminate' on the grounds of religion or belief. Of course, this will help to bring about a certain amount of 'equal treatment'—the primary objective of the directive—across faith communities. However, such an approach is unlikely to result in a culture of 'equal



opportunities' across faith communities, which would require a positive duty imposed on all organisations 'to eliminate religious discrimination and promote equality of access and opportunity for all'. It is only through such an approach that the specificity of minority religions will be considered—and, therefore, those faith communities alienated in the margins of society, through historic and structural discrimination, will over time be brought into the mainstream.

And fourth, the Directive places very limited emphasis on promotional work and is almost silent on stipulations for institutional arrangements to assist enforcement. The clauses on dissemination simply state that 'Member States shall take care that the provisions ... are brought to the attention of the persons concerned by all appropriate means', and the stipulations on institutional arrangements to assist enforcement rely too heavily on existing provisions, requiring only that, where they exist, they be empowered to support and represent complainants of discrimination. From past

experience in many Member States, however, it is strongly argued that anti-discrimination initiatives work best where legislation is backed by campaigns to raise awareness, resources to provide advice and support (including legal support) to victims, powers to investigate and effect change, and institutional arrangements to monitor, evaluate and seek change in policy and legislation. Where such backing is not provided, the relevant legislation results in very limited actual impact.

We may conclude from the above, then, that whilst the transposition of the Employment Directive by Member States will introduce significant new protection against religious discrimination, there is far more that needs to be done to protect vulnerable faith communities in the EU. One way of moving forward would be to establish what level of protection against religious discrimination is required by international human rights law, and then to use the competence provided by Article 13 of the EC treaty to achieve this in practice throughout the EU. □



EUROPE

Mohammed Aziz, is the Chief Executive of the British Muslim Research Centre and a member of the UK Race & Europe Network Management Committee.

Information on and papers presented at the ENAR Conference (24–25 October 2003) on 'Religious Discrimination in the European Union' can all be read at: www.enar-eu.org.

ENAR: European strategies to combat racism and xenophobia as a crime

Authors: M. Bell, A Coomber, T. Hutchinson, R Nickel and K. Zahi

'European strategies to combat racism and xenophobia as a crime', the latest of a series of publications produced by the European Network Against Racism, looks at the issue of racism and xenophobia as a criminal offence. The report can be categorised under three broad headings:

1. A review of the current standards of protection through criminal legislation in different EU member states, at European and International levels.
2. Thoughts on a framework and strategy to combat racism and xenophobia using EU legislation.
3. A useful conclusion, focussing on the way forward with practical policy and strategies – for NGOs in particular – to engage in this debate.

Copies of the report can be ordered by emailing ENAR [info@enar-eu.org] or ordering it at the ENAR website [www.enar-eu.org].

Religious Discrimination in the workplace in the UK

Labour Research, in its December issue, carries an article on discrimination in the UK against workers on grounds of religion or belief – now unlawful under the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003. Under the title 'Faith bias is outlawed' (pp. 12-14) the article discusses the possible beneficiaries of this piece of legislation, but points out the difficulties of working with a loose definition of a 'religion or belief'. The ACAS code suggests that to qualify under the Regulations a 'religion or belief' must include a collective worship, a clear belief system and 'a profound belief affecting the way of life or view of the world'. Making these interpretations will be demanding, and with more than three-quarters of the UK population having categorised themselves in the 2001 census as having a religious belief, there would seem to be plenty of scope for tribunals to work towards fuller definitions.

As yet, there appears to be no employment protection offered to those professing no religion or belief.

A study conducted for the Home Office by the University of Derby on *Religious Discrimination in England and Wales* reported in 2001. The 216-page report (HORS 220) can be read as a pdf on the Home Office's website [www.homeoffice.gov.uk].



EDUCATION

Bangladeshi educational underachievement – is religion to blame?

Mohammed A. Lais, the author, is a research officer at Imperial College, University of London. His doctoral research (thesis submitted), conducted as a part-time student at Middlesex University, is on: Attitudes towards and the effectiveness of work-related learning within the Bangladeshi Community. This article is based on parts of his thesis.



Factors of underachievement

Studies (see for example Quader 1992 and Haque 1999) supported the HAC Report findings (1986) that language is one of the major barriers to achievement for many Bangladeshi children. Yet, the schools involved in this research have suggested that whether or not pupils are born and/or brought up in Britain, and speak good English; they fail to meet the demands of the curriculum.

Other important factors noted in the research literature included racism within society, racism in education, inappropriate support from the National Curriculum, crowded and cramped housing, lack of parental involvement in their children's education, teachers' low expectations of them and

Bangladeshi pupils' underachievement in education has been recognised for at least two decades. Studies have suggested language and religion as main causes in this underachievement. This article reflects on these conclusions in reference to recent research by questionnaire (involving 288 participants) and 25 participants in group interviews in Camden, North London. The research participants were Bangladeshi low achievers from years 10 and 11 in secondary schools in Camden, their teachers, parents, careers officers and members of the local Bangladeshi community.

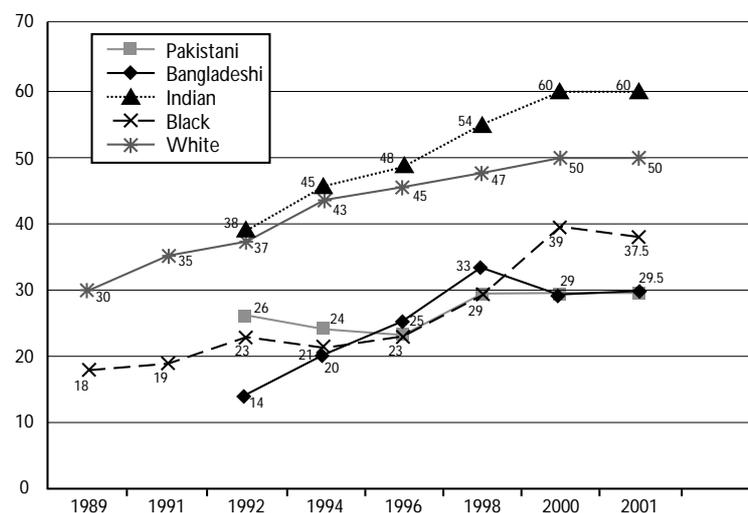
Decades of under-performance

Bangladeshi pupils under-perform in education and are under-represented in employment. This educational under-performance was not a concern until the 1980s, prior to which studies focussed on the performance of ethnic minorities as a whole, or combined the performance of Bangladeshis with that of Pakistanis. Bangladeshis were regarded as a concealed community¹ with the result that consideration of their performance was neglected for years.

The Swann Report² revealed in 1985 that Bangladeshi pupils' performances were poorer in comparison with other Asian

or White peers. The Home Affairs Committee³ (HAC) highlighted in 1986 that Bangladeshi pupils were underperforming in education and participating less in formal examinations than any of the other recorded ethnic groups. Further studies supported these findings. Nuttal⁴ in 1990, Quader⁵ in 1992, the London Borough of Camden⁶ in 1996, Modood and Berthoud⁷ in 1997, Ofsted⁸ in 1999, Haque⁹ in 1999 and the 2001 Census¹⁰. The Census highlighted that underachievement persisted: 78% of boys and 63% of girls underachieved at GCSEs (less than 5 A*-C grades), and 40% of the Bangladeshi young people 'aged 16 to 24' were unemployed (see Fig 1).

Fig 1. Analysis of performance in GCSE exams (by percentage) of 5 A*-C grades of pupils aged 16 (England and Wales) since 1989.



(Source: LFS, and Census 2001)

Note: The GCSE performance of Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils is shown as the lowest of all ethnic groups measured.

¹ C. Peach (1990) 'Estimating the Growth of the Bangladeshi Population of Great Britain', *New Community* 19(1): 75-98.

² Swann Report (1985) *Education for All: The Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups*. London: HMSO. (Two Runnymede Research Reports were also consulted: 'Education for All: A Summary of the Swann report on the education of ethnic minority children (1985); and 'Education for Some': A summary of the Eggleston Report on the educational and vocational experiences of young black people (1986).)

³ HAC (Home Affairs Committee) Report (1986) *First Report from the Home Affairs Committee, Session 1986-87, Bangladeshis in Britain*. London: HMSO.

⁴ D. Nuttal and A. Varlaam (1990) *Differences in Examination Performances*. ILCA Research and Statistics, pp. 1277-90. London: ILCA.

⁵ D. A. Quader (1992) 'Second Language Development and the Content-based Classroom: Bangladeshi learners in London Schools', unpublished PhD thesis, Institute of Education, University of London.

⁶ Camden Equalities Unit and the Institute of Education (1996) *Valuing Diversity: Camden Bangladeshi Residents Survey*. London: Camden Council.

⁷ T. Modood and R. Berthoud (1997) *Ethnic Minorities in Britain. Diversity and the Disadvantaged: The fourth national survey of ethnic minorities*. London: Policy Studies Institute.

⁸ Ofsted (1999) *Raising the Attainment of Minority Ethnic Pupils*. London: ????

⁹ Z. Haque (1999) 'Exploring the Validity and Possible Causes of the Apparently Poor Performance of Bangladeshi Pupils in British Secondary Schools', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cambridge.

¹⁰ The UK Census (2001) London: National Statistics.

the taking of extended holidays.

However, some authors include religion as an important barrier to the successful uptake of education, particularly for Bangladeshi young women. The next section will focus briefly on the barrier of religion in the light of relevant results from my own recent research.

Influence of religion on education and stereotyping attitude

Many Islamic principles are part and parcel of Bangladeshi cultures and strongly influence community behaviour. Marriage¹¹ and a stable family life are fundamental to Islamic society. The Islamic ideology strongly upholds the concept of *izzat* meaning honour or reputation, and the family's honour or reputation is directly related to the behaviour of members of the family, especially the women. This was a prime concern of the Bangladeshi Muslim families in the study, and was nurtured amongst family members. For example, from an early age the protection of a woman's virginity until marriage must be maintained; the concept of 'boyfriend and girlfriend' is not recognised within Islam; sex outside marriage is strictly forbidden and regarded as a great sin which damages family *izzat*.

Although Islam does impose restrictions on social mixing between the sexes, it never, however, precludes men and women from receiving education; rather, it grants equal status to them in pursuit of education and knowledge.¹² Other studies, for example Siddiqui¹³ and Basit¹⁴, suggest that parental restrictions hardly ever obstruct the careers and educational choices of their daughters; rather, they are able to match their religious and cultural values with those of western culture and make progress without in any way going against the teachings of Islam. In fact, LEAs^{15 16} have highlighted that Bangladeshi girls are performing better in school than boys.

However, there have so far not been any studies suggesting reasons why some Bangladeshi parents encourage their daughters to actively pursue their educational goals whilst others are reluctant. Is Islam encouraging some and opposing others? Research throws some light on the matter.

I put this question to the Bangladeshi participants in this research. The participants indicated that Islam encourages both males and females to search for education and knowledge, and that education is an important instrument for economic and social development. They believed education to be the backbone of a nation that brings success in life. One parent recited a Bengali verse:

'Lekha Porha Kore Je, Gari ghoora chore she.' (Male: parent) [Meaning: Life chances are plentiful for the educated people]

This theme is consistent with Cross¹⁷ (in Coffield 2000) who concluded about education:

'Of all of the variables that have been related to educational interest and participation, amount of formal schooling has more influence than any other... In short, learning is addictive; the more education people have, the more they want, and the more they will get' (pp. 54–5).

The Bangladeshi participants claimed that their daughters do enter into further and higher education and also pursue various occupational routes, including those of health, social services, retail and the law. In their view, parents do not put obstacles in the way of their progress in the interests of religion or culture¹⁸.

Regarding low achievement among Bangladeshi girls, their responses were that low achievers did not have any

appropriate provision at 16.

Neither were they supported appropriately by the National Curriculum while in school, nor at transition from school were they encouraged to access college, training or employment.¹⁹ Where should they send their daughters? What options are available to them? Fears about the dangers of society, such as addiction to drugs, were expressed. It was argued that responsible fathers keep their girl children at home rather than risk the potential onslaught of drugs and other social dangers outside the home.

Several parents commented that the Local Authority blamed parents for not sending their children, particularly girls, to take up post-16 opportunities, but the parents claimed that LEAs do not provide suitable options for those who do not perform well in GCSE examinations. They argued that there should be better provision. Speaking personally, they believed that no parent would either evade or miss out on an opportunity to bring success and social development into the lives of their children. They viewed culture as human capital and they claimed that Bangladeshi culture hinders neither education nor the possibility of widening life's opportunities. One female parent (school teacher) claimed that:

'Culture is human capital. For education and widening life opportunities... Bangladeshi culture and religion would not be a problem.'

She further claimed that the reason for young women being forced to stay at home was lack of appropriate provision and certainly not because of culture or religion. She went on to say that neither culture nor religion teaches parents to treat daughters differently; rather it teaches equal opportunity and treatment for all children. If Bangladeshi parents can send one daughter to higher education, the



EDUCATION

¹¹ A. Brah and S. Shaw (1992) *Working Choice: South Asian Young Muslim Women and the Labour Market*. A report for the DfEE by the Centre for Extramural Studies, Birkbeck College, University of London.

¹² H. Abd al Ati (1998) *Islam in Focus*. USA: Amana Publications.

¹³ H. Siddiqui (1991) 'Winning Freedoms', *Feminist Review*, 37: 78–83.

¹⁴ T. Basit (1997) *Eastern Values, Western Milieux: Identities and Aspirations of Adolescent British Muslim Girls*. Aldershot: Ashgate

¹⁵ Tower Hamlets (2000) Analysis of 2000 GCSE results, London Borough of Tower Hamlets

¹⁶ London Borough of Camden (2002) Analysis of National Curriculum assessments and GCSE results by ethnicity.

¹⁷ F. Coffield (2000) *The Necessity of Informal Learning: The Learning Society*. Bristol: Policy Press.

¹⁸ T. Basit (1997) *Eastern Values, Western Identities and Aspirations of Adolescent British Muslim Girls*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

¹⁹ Iqra Trust (2000) *Disaffection Amongst Muslim Pupils: Exclusion and Truancy*. London: Iqra Trust.

²⁰ P. Desai (1999) 'Spaces of Identity, Culture of conflict: The Development of New Asian Masculinities', unpublished PhD Thesis, Goldsmiths College, University of London.



EDUCATION

Mohammed Lais would like to acknowledge the Research & Documentation Committee of the Muslim Council of Britain for their advice and support.

other one can also be sent.

Parents were understandably proud of their children and noted that they were not untalented; also that they often possessed very practical skills. In their opinion the education system neither recognised their skills nor honoured their Bangladeshi cultures. The parents noted that due to their fears for the personal safety of their daughters in what they perceived to be crime-ridden and dangerous neighbourhoods, they were likely to encourage their daughters to stay at home, especially those daughters who were not involved in education, training or employment.²⁰

Conclusion

The respondents in this research noted that, instead of having been offered appropriate options by LEAs to utilise their full potential, many Bangladeshi pupils have been labelled as underachievers in education, and as held back by their religion. Few attempts have

been made to recognise the potential of those Bangladeshi children whose skills are practical rather than academic in nature. Their language of 'mouth' is heard but their language of 'hand' (their 'practical skills') is being ignored. It became evident that for these groups of parents, Islam is a strong supporter of education for both boys and girls and does not create a barrier for its followers in their pursuit of the benefits of education.

The respondents had strong positive attitudes towards work-related learning. They believed that their children could reverse decades of educational underachievement by going through a work-related learning option at Key Stage 4 (yrs 10 and 11) and, on leaving school, be able to choose an option including going to a college or training course or into employment. They accepted work-related learning as a blessing for their children that could reduce the rate of unemployment and increase integration of Bangladeshi young people into the labour market. □

Aiming High: the national strategy

¹ Including African and Mixed Heritage pupils.

Department for Education and Skills (2003) *Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of African-Caribbean Pupils*. London: DfES.

Further information on the DfES Aiming High strategy can be found at the website [www.standard.s.dfes.gov.uk/ethnicminorities].

To date there has been no single coherent policy that has addressed the under-achievement of African Caribbean pupils. The statistics, published earlier this year, that only 30% of African Caribbean pupils achieved five or more A* to C grades at GCSE (DfES, 2003) are but a stark and depressing corroboration of what many academics, parents and many policy-makers have known for years: the education system is failing a large number of Black¹ pupils.

It is in this climate that the DfES has launched the national Aiming High strategy, of which this publication is part, aimed at raising the achievement of underachieving minority ethnic pupils, specifically those of African Caribbean heritage and bilingual pupils.

The guide offers some practical advice for supporting African Caribbean students through teaching and learning practices and a host of additional wider school issues, which includes an examination of governors' roles and how to establish positive, mutually beneficial relationships with parents. The opening chapter of the guide provides statistical justification for the need to focus on African Caribbean pupils, and as such examines academic attainment, exclusion data and the roles of gender and social class. Strategies for dealing with teachers and parents who might question the need to focus on African Caribbean students as a group are delineated in the following chapters alongside a number of challenges to commonly held stereotypes and myths

frequently attached to those from this ethnic group.

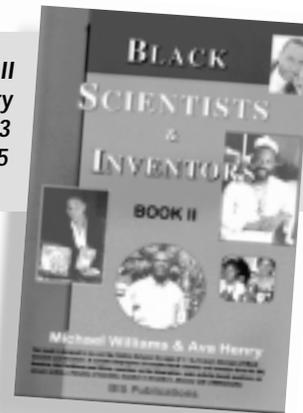
The final chapter of the guide draws on the CRE's *Learning for All* framework by providing brief audits at the end of each subsection. This is a useful addition for teachers who are committed to raising African Caribbean attainment but who may not have the time to read the document in its entirety, and will also be of use to schools when reviewing their Race Equality Policies.

As well as specific checklists for governors and the senior management team, there are a number of suggestions for facilitating positive relationships with parents and community groups. These include establishing a parental hotline with guaranteed same-day response and providing clear information about staff and their responsibilities so that parents know to whom they can direct their queries.

Whilst considerable and necessary attention is paid to the importance of the relationship between pupils, parents and teachers, Aiming High also offers ideas on how the curriculum content can be developed so that it reflects the diversity of the population it serves. Ideas are offered for English, Mathematics, Science, History and Geography while Runnymede's *Complementing Teachers* and the OCA's *Respect for All* website are suggested as avenues for exploring further examples of work in this area.

Schools may also find useful the section describing which learning styles tend to be most effective for African Caribbean pupils, along with the detailed lesson plan in the appendices, which lists specific learning outcomes for African Caribbean pupils. Consideration is also given to the multiplicity of identities that Black students may occupy and how schools can support the development of positive identities. The guide concludes with some advice on recruiting Black teachers and on ensuring that there is representation across all levels of management. □

Black Scientists and Inventors, Book II
Michael Williams and Ava Henry
London: BIS Publications, 2003
Pp. 40 (A4); £7.99; ISBN: 1-903289-02-5



In this second book of the series, Williams and Henry provide further accounts of the lives of Black scientists and inventors from the UK, America, Africa and the Caribbean. Each biography is accompanied by a series of comprehension-style questions, the answers to which can be found at the back of the book.

Rather excitingly there are some basic, interesting practical experiments that readers might wish to explore. The publication also offers quite an extensive glossary of key terms and words, though some of the language is too advanced for the younger age group, at which the book is aimed, to read without assistance.

The timeline provides a useful one-page summary of key events described throughout the book and the bibliography lists some suggestions for further reading,

although this may be too limited in scope for students, parents and teachers wishing to research specific individuals in any depth.

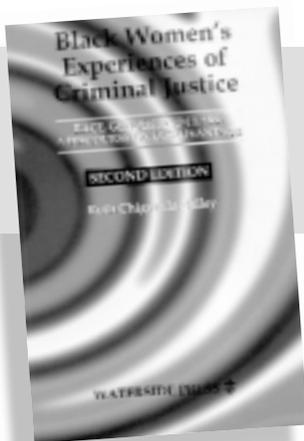
The book includes scientists and inventors and significant events from 2980BC to the late 1990s, and though it is not clear how the authors have selected those for inclusion, they can be commended for drawing attention to a frequently dormant area of Black history. □

Nicola Rollock
Runnymede



REVIEWS

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Black Women's Experiences of Criminal Justice.
Race, Gender and Class: A Discourse on Disadvantage
By Ruth Chigwada-Bailey
Winchester: Waterside Press, 2003, 2nd edn
Pp. xviii + 160. £18.00. ISBN: 1 872 870 52 X

Ruth Chigwada-Bailey's *Black Women's Experience of Criminal Justice* (2003) is a welcome follow-up to the first (1997) edition

of the book. At the time of first publication it was one of few academic authorities in this area, and its explorations of race, gender and class were widely used by students and academics alike. This revised, extended and updated edition is also a good source of comparative information for any changes that have taken place since 1997.

The book examines the way in which black women interacting with the criminal justice system are doubly disadvantaged by their being women and black: 'the unique social, cultural and economic experience of black women has been overlooked' as for most purposes they 'remain subsumed within those of black men or are homogenised with those of white women'.

Ruth Chigwada-Bailey looks at why and how black women end up on the wrong side of the law – examining statistics, problems in policing, sentencing, courts and lawyers. But most of all she focuses on the sometimes traumatic experiences of the women themselves within the prison system of England and Wales. A substantial amount of the material for the book is derived from extensive interviews with black women who had been in prison, and who were able to speak of their first-hand experiences with the police, customs officers, solicitors, prison officers, barristers, probation officers, magistrates

and judges. The author was concerned to explore 'whether any differences in treatment accorded to women of different races might be attributed to rules, policies or directives within organisations, or to institutional or individual racism'.

The book raises awareness of issues around discrimination that are not instantly identifiable, and this revised version brings into the picture all relevant Home Office research and initiatives up to early 2003. Its extensive bibliography is an excellent starting-point for further reading and research, but the strongest voices, the ones still demanding to be heard, remain those of the women 'trapped in the system'. □

Natasha Conhye
Runnymede Intern

Criminology in the New Millennium Conference **XIV: Race, Gender and Criminal Justice Process**

St Alban's Centre, Baldwin's Gardens, Holborn, London EC1
28 May 2004

Organised by Ruth Chigwada-Bailey, the 2004 conference in the CNM series, will be chaired by Michael Gordon, and addressed by Courtney Griffiths QC, Deborah Coles of Inquest, UK, Professor Yaw Ackah of Delaware State University, Dr Dele Olajide of the Maudsley Hospital, London and Anell Smith of the London Probation Area.

For further information and booking details, contact:
Ruth Chigwada-Bailey at 98 Aldridge Avenue, Stanmore, Middx HA7 1DD
[Tel/Fax: 020-8204-9587; email: ruthchigwada@aol.com]

CONTENTS

Arts & Society:	
A Sense of Place	
Michelynn Lafleche	1
Arts for Social Change	
Marion Vargaftig	
+ Comments from Alex Rotas	3
Migration:	
Old Boots and New Brooms	
Liza Schuster	5
National Census:	
Comment from Dipak Nandy	7
Constituency First	
Omar Khan	8
Jim Rose Lecture & Runnymede Archive:	
At the Jim Rose Inaugural	
Address by Anthony Lester	12
Civil Renewal:	
Invoking Community	
Vic MacLaren	15
Equalities:	
Human Rights – Time to Embrace	
a New Agenda?	
Rob Berkeley	17
Back to the Drawing Board?	18
New Commission for Equality and	
Human Rights Task Force	19
Parliamentary Monitor:	
University Top-up Fees	
Omar Khan & Rob Berkeley	20
Europe:	
Religious Discrimination in the EU	
Mohammed Aziz	21
Education:	
Bangladeshi Educational	
Underachievement	
Mohammed A. Lais	24
Aiming High	26
Reviews	27
The Real Histories Directory	28

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BLACK HISTORIES



The Real Histories Directory

Unlocking the UK's diverse cultural heritage.

The website for the new **Real Histories Directory** is now well under way. Users will be able to access information on culturally relevant organisations across the UK by searching by age (Key Stage), subject area, local education authority or resource. Users are also invited to submit resources that they feel may be of interest to others. In this way we hope that the directory will continue to grow and be of direct benefit not only to teachers and pupils interested in diversity issues but also to the wider community.

The **Real Histories Directory** provides a unique opportunity to encourage teaching and learning about diversity for *all* ethnic communities across the UK. It will be formally launched at the joint GLA, LMAL and Runnymede Trust conference – **The Black British History Experience?** - on Wednesday 28 January 2004 (see below).

We are grateful to LWT and The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation for their support of this project.

The Black British History Experience?

The Role of Museums, Archives and Libraries

Wednesday 28 January 2004

Committee Room 4, City Hall

The Queen's Walk, London SE1 2AA

This venue will host a conference which aims to explore way of developing and making accessible a critical body of Black History. In particular it will discuss and try to provide answers to some of the recent debates around the role of Black History Month as a vehicle for museums, archives and libraries and the wider cultural sector.

With speakers and panellists that include: Lee Jasper, Stella Dadzie, Dr Hakim Adi, Darryl McIntyre, S.I Martin, Mike Phillips and Celia Watson, this event will look at 'Putting the British back into Black History', 'Revealing London's Black History' and 'Evaluating Black History Month: history versus heritage'

This one-day conference, at which Runnymede's **Real Histories Directory** will be formally launched, is an LMAL Cultural Diversity Network Event, with the Network being supported by Resource, through LMAL, to 'encourage the development of better and more relevant services for minority ethnic communities within libraries, museums and archives'.

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