Behind the personality politics of the Mayoral contest, the May First London Assembly elections presented the main political parties with an opportunity to put their stated ambitions for increasing BME representation in politics into practice. Not only do black and minority ethnic people make up 29 per cent of Londoners, but also the Alternative Vote system used for the assembly election allows for candidates from traditionally underrepresented groups to be included on the London-wide ‘top-up list’. Despite these ambitions, the Assembly’s composition after the election still falls short of accurately representing an ethnically diverse London. Representation increased from only two BME Assembly Members after the 2004 elections to four out of the twenty-five Assembly Members. Significantly for race relations in the city, for the first time, a member of the British National Party was elected to the Assembly, and nearly 200,000 Londoners gave the BNP Mayoral candidate their first or second preference vote.

Matthew Ross looks behind the results of the recent elections in London to see what is really going on.

The Mayoral Election

The Mayoral election uses the Supplementary Vote system, whereby the voter is able to cast a first and second preference vote. If no candidate receives more than half of the first preference votes, the two candidates with the most first preference votes go through to a second round and the other candidates are eliminated. If the second preference of voters for the eliminated candidates were for either of the remaining candidates, these second preference votes are added to their totals, and the candidate with the highest total of votes wins.

Matthew Ross is an intern at the Runnymede Trust.

Table 1. Votes in the London Mayoral Election 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate name</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>1st choice votes</th>
<th>1st choice %</th>
<th>2nd choice votes</th>
<th>2nd choice %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boris Johnson</td>
<td>Conservative Party</td>
<td>1,043,761</td>
<td>42.48</td>
<td>257,792</td>
<td>10.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ken Livingstone</td>
<td>The Labour Party</td>
<td>893,877</td>
<td>36.38</td>
<td>303,198</td>
<td>12.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Paddick</td>
<td>Liberal Democrats</td>
<td>236,685</td>
<td>9.63</td>
<td>641,412</td>
<td>26.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siân Berry</td>
<td>Green Party</td>
<td>77,374</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>331,727</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Barnbrook</td>
<td>British National Party</td>
<td>69,710</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>128,609</td>
<td>5.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan Craig</td>
<td>Christian People’s Alliance and Christian Party</td>
<td>39,249</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>80,140</td>
<td>3.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerard Batten</td>
<td>UK Independence Party</td>
<td>22,422</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>113,651</td>
<td>4.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindsey German</td>
<td>Left List</td>
<td>16,796</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>35,057</td>
<td>1.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt O’Connor</td>
<td>English Democrats</td>
<td>10,695</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>73,538</td>
<td>2.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winston McKenzie</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>5,389</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>38,954</td>
<td>1.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: london.gov.uk
first and second preference votes wins.

The result of the Mayoral election (see Tables 1 and 2) matched the media coverage of the contest, in as much as it was presented as a two horse race between Boris Johnson and Ken Livingstone. In the 2004 election, 64% of first preference votes went to the top two candidates, while in the 2008 election that figure had increased to 79%. Either indicating unfamiliarity with the Supplementary Vote system or the electorate’s view that the contest was indeed a two-horse race, 17% of voters didn’t indicate a second preference and 15% of those who did, used their second preference to support the direct rival of their first preference.

A Supplementary Vote system should theoretically increase the vote share of smaller parties, as voters can use their first preference to vote with their conscience and use their second preference tactically, with a mind to influencing the final result. However, with the distribution of first preference votes so heavily favouring the top two candidates this suggests that the electorate treated the Mayoral election as if it was being conducted under the first past the post system. It is difficult to discern whether this realignment is due to broader electoral trends or factors particular to the Mayoral contest, namely the beauty contest between Boris Johnson and Ken Livingstone.

**The Assembly Election**

The London Assembly is elected by two different electoral systems. Fourteen Assembly members are elected in constituency seats (usually covering two or three London boroughs) using the standard Westminster first past the post system (see Table 3). A further eleven are elected in a London-wide party list ballot, with those seats allocated using a form of proportional representation (see Table 4).

The Assembly’s Additional Vote system is manifold, but has particular implications for the diversity of candidates put forward by the political parties and the likelihood of those candidates being elected. The London-wide list allows parties to correct for the under representation of women and BME candidates, while London’s ethnic diversity would suggest there is a constituency for BME candidates. The Labour Party has embraced this potential, with 50% of their candidates for the Assembly coming from a BME background. The Conservative Party has been less successful, with only three BME candidates out of a total of twenty-three Assembly candidates. This in part may simply be a reflection of the Party’s composition in London, but it also reflects a lack of political will, where the Conservatives have focused on improving BME candidate selection, devices such as the A-List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate name</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>1st choice votes</th>
<th>2nd choice votes</th>
<th>Total Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boris Johnson</td>
<td>Conservative Party</td>
<td>1,043,761</td>
<td>124,977</td>
<td>1,168,738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ken Livingstone</td>
<td>The Labour Party</td>
<td>893,877</td>
<td>135,089</td>
<td>1,028,966</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* On papers where the 1st and 2nd choice votes are for the top two candidates, the 2nd choice votes are not counted

**Table 3. Constituency Assembly Members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituency</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Votes(%)</th>
<th>Majority</th>
<th>Gain/Hold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barnet and Camden</td>
<td>Brian Coleman</td>
<td>Conservative Party</td>
<td>41.15%</td>
<td>19,693</td>
<td>Hold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bexley and Bromley</td>
<td>James Cleverty</td>
<td>Conservative Party</td>
<td>52.59%</td>
<td>75,237</td>
<td>Hold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brent and Harrow</td>
<td>Navin Shah</td>
<td>The Labour Party</td>
<td>37.27%</td>
<td>1,649</td>
<td>Gain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City and East</td>
<td>John Biggs</td>
<td>The Labour Party</td>
<td>34.69%</td>
<td>31,553</td>
<td>Hold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croydon and Sutton</td>
<td>Stephen O’Connell</td>
<td>Conservative Party</td>
<td>44.08%</td>
<td>42,665</td>
<td>Hold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ealing and Hillingdon</td>
<td>Richard Barnes</td>
<td>Conservative Party</td>
<td>43.15%</td>
<td>28,638</td>
<td>Hold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enfield and Haringey</td>
<td>Joanne McCartney</td>
<td>The Labour Party</td>
<td>33.26%</td>
<td>1,402</td>
<td>Hold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenwich and Lewisham</td>
<td>Len Duvall</td>
<td>The Labour Party</td>
<td>36.21%</td>
<td>16,134</td>
<td>Hold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havering and Redbridge</td>
<td>Roger Evans</td>
<td>Conservative Party</td>
<td>47.67%</td>
<td>43,025</td>
<td>Hold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lambeth and Southwark</td>
<td>Valerie Shawcross</td>
<td>The Labour Party</td>
<td>37.16%</td>
<td>23,648</td>
<td>Hold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merton and Wandsworth</td>
<td>Richard Tracey</td>
<td>Conservative Party</td>
<td>44.85%</td>
<td>26,293</td>
<td>Hold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>Jennette Arnold</td>
<td>The Labour Party</td>
<td>37.95%</td>
<td>28,437</td>
<td>Hold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>Tony Arbour</td>
<td>Conservative Party</td>
<td>40.82%</td>
<td>26,928</td>
<td>Hold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Central</td>
<td>Kit Malthouse</td>
<td>Conservative Party</td>
<td>53.41%</td>
<td>51,381</td>
<td>Hold</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: London.gov.uk
have provide successful, and will probably lead to the Conservatives returning a number of BME MPs at the next general election.

The Assembly election increased the number of BME Assembly Members (AMs) from two to four. Both the sitting BME Assembly Members were returned. The new BME Assembly Members were both elected as Constituency members, with the first Hindu AM, Navin Shah, making a Labour gain against the tide of the night, and the first black Conservative AM, James Cleverly securing a swing for his party of 13.58%, well above the London average. While a promising result, there still needs to be a further three BME Assembly Members before it accurately represents London’s diverse population.

The Assembly’s Additional Vote system has allowed the formation of a party system distinctive from the rest of England (see Table 5); the more proportionate representation of the vote has made five or so parties electorally viable. Critically for the smaller parties, getting above the 5% threshold on the London-wide ballot effectively guarantees at least one seat in the Assembly. While a promising result, there still needs to be a further three BME Assembly Members before it accurately represents London’s diverse population.

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The Assembly’s Additional Vote system has allowed the formation of a party system distinctive from the rest of England (see Table 5); the more proportionate representation of the vote has made five or so parties electorally viable. Critically for the smaller parties, getting above the 5% threshold on the London-wide ballot effectively guarantees at least one seat in the Assembly. The British National Party increased its share of the vote in the London-wide ballot from 4.71% in 2004 to 5.42%, gaining its first seat on the London Assembly.

The election of a BNP Assembly member is a concerning development for race relations in London. However, the scale of the BNP’s breakthrough shouldn’t be overemphasized; the contest was a lot tighter than had been expected, with its share of the vote so close to the cut-off threshold it isn’t in a strong position to go into future elections. Moreover, in Councils where the BNP has previously made gains, the pattern is for that support to wane, as Councillors fail to deliver or are accused of incompetence.

**Conclusion**

The results for the London Assembly election contain a number of trends that have a wider set of implications for a future general election. While the Alternative Vote system allows for a plurality of parties, results from the Constituency seats indicate a return to two party politics. Both Labour and the Conservatives saw swings to their candidates, with the Liberal Democrats’ share of the vote being squeezed in all the Constituency ballots. The Liberal Democrats’ position has been further weakened by the decline in salience of the Iraq war, which had previously helped them win votes with the Muslim community.

Positively, new BME candidates are well received within London, no longer suffering that initial dip in vote share as experienced by those first BME MPs in 1987. Alongside the two main parties fielding BME candidates in a number of winnable seats – Chuka Umunna (Labour) in Streatham, Shaun Bailey (Conservative) in Hammersmith and Rushanara Ali (Labour) in Bethnal Green and Bow, to name only three – it would appear the next General Election will yield significantly more BME MPs than the current fifteen.

**Table 4. London-wide Members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>Votes %</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Change in number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative Party</td>
<td>835,535</td>
<td>34.63%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Democrats</td>
<td>275,272</td>
<td>11.41%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Party</td>
<td>203,465</td>
<td>8.43%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Labour Party</td>
<td>665,443</td>
<td>27.58%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British National Party</td>
<td>130,714</td>
<td>5.42%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK Independence Party</td>
<td>46,617</td>
<td>1.93%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left List</td>
<td>22,583</td>
<td>0.94%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent (Rathy Alagaratnam)</td>
<td>3,974</td>
<td>0.16%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Democrats</td>
<td>25,569</td>
<td>1.06%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect (George Galloway)</td>
<td>59,721</td>
<td>2.48%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abolish the Congestion Charge</td>
<td>63,596</td>
<td>2.64%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Christian Choice</td>
<td>70,294</td>
<td>2.91%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One London</td>
<td>3,430</td>
<td>0.14%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity for Peace &amp; Socialism</td>
<td>6,394</td>
<td>0.27%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: london.gov.uk

**Table 5. Final London Assembly Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
<th>Gain/Loss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative Party</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Labour Party</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Democrats</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Party</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British National Party</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK Independence Party</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: london.gov.uk
From Powell to Phillips; Rivers of Blood to Post-multiculturalism

Rob Berkeley looks at Trevor Phillips’ three key principles of post-multiculturalism 40 years after Enoch Powell’s rejection of multiculturalism in his ‘Rivers of Blood’ speech.

We must be mad, literally mad, as a nation to be permitting the annual inflow of some 50,000 dependants, who are for the most part the material of the future growth of the immigrant-descended population. It is like watching a nation busily engaged in heaping up its own funeral pyre. (Enoch Powell, 1968)

...right now, the urgency of change demands a new social contract in which we the British people reap the benefits of managed migration by pursuing a positive policy of active integration. (Trevor Phillips, 2008)

In the same room in a Birmingham hotel, 40 years apart temporally, but a million miles apart ideologically, Trevor Phillips and Enoch Powell have attempted to shift our political and social understanding of race relations. Both offered controversial and radical statements of their perception of the way in which people from different ethnic backgrounds can co-exist and thrive together in the UK. Powell believed it to be impossible; Phillips to be essential, however difficult. Both argued for a shift in the status quo. Powell, thankfully lost the argument. Can Phillips’ vision prevail? Are we ready for a shift to a ‘post-multiculturalist’ settlement?

Runnymede was founded in the shadow of Powell’s speech. Our first publications stemmed from Gus John’s ground-breaking work in the suburbs of Birmingham. His study of Handsworth in the months after Powell’s outburst was published as ‘Race in the Inner City’ in 1970. John found: resentment of immigrants; youth violence responded to by an increase in the use of stop and search by the police (followed by increased tension with all representatives of the criminal justice system); high unemployment and underemployment of black youth; low expectations of black youth from teachers; police clearing Rastafarian squats; new restrictive immigration proposals from government and the arrival of new communities of asylum seekers (namely East African Asians, Bangladeshis and Pakistanis); overcrowding in houses; white flight; and political indifference. Runnymede reaches its 40th anniversary with similar issues on our agenda. If the problems are familiar, a bold new response to break these patterns is called for.

In a speech which aimed to capture the political attention on the anniversary of Powell’s intervention which has entered our political lexicon simply as ‘Rivers of Blood’, Phillips attempted to open a new chapter in our nation’s story. The Chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission is no stranger to controversy. His various interventions as the last Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality have marked him out as an independent thinker, but also as one who can be a tad careless with the actualité. From his famous ‘Sleepwalking into Segregation’ interview, which he was forced to review a few months later, to his ‘death of multiculturalism’ speeches, Trevor Phillips has spearheaded a rethinking of the ways in which we talk about race, ethnicity and immigration. Having shaken what many saw as the rather cosy consensus on race relations, the ensuing vacuum had enabled some rather unusual issues to surface. Who would have thought that among the first actions of a new Prime minister who had been waiting (im)patiently for a go in the hot-seat would be to raise the Union Flag over government buildings more regularly. Our debate on race relations was taking some rather strange turns. Phillips’ speech on this momentous anniversary was therefore heralded as a culmination of his thinking, an opportunity to focus on what is important (rather than the semantics of what you call it) and a blueprint for the way in which the new commission sees the next stage of race relations.

The meat of the speech revolved around three key principles for a post-multiculturalist settlement:

- Integration is a two-way street;
- Fairness is not just for minorities;
- We must share the benefits and burdens of migration fairly.

Before dismissing these principles as maxims from the school of the ‘bleeding obvious’, it is
worth taking some space to reflect on what these principles include. Integration is back on the agenda and is more than just a semantic change. For many years, integration was seen as akin to assimilation, which Powell advocated for limited numbers of immigrants and both multiculturalist and anti-racists had fought against. We have become more used to the language of integration in recent years – especially as it has been adopted as language of choice by our EU partners. Phillips here marks the shift which puts a responsibility on immigrants to participate in shared democratic structures while also contributing the benefits of their democratic structures while also encouraging the participation of immigrants to share in the responsibilities of living together.

‘Fairness for all’ is hardly a slogan to capture the imagination, but it too marks an important shift in that it highlights the internal diversity of our ‘officially defined’ ethnic groups, the multiplicity of identities, and calls for the building of new coalitions. It also provides a legitimacy in those interested in race equality considering the impact of class, social exclusion and other forms of discrimination. Finally and possibly most significantly, Phillips tries to square the circle on migration – joining a political consensus which argues for managed migration, without really thinking through what the implications might be for equality. The consequences of which can be seen in the worrying proposals for new legislation this autumn [reported on p. 6 of this Bulletin]. It is here where his three principles are weakest. The speech as a whole and the focus on managed migration follows the archetypal ‘third way’ project to ‘make this country at ease with globalisation’ (Tony Blair, 2005), yet the economic trumps the social at all times, capital always trumps labour, equity remains subordinate to economic competitiveness. Ultimately, Phillips admits that this is the area on which ‘we need to do some more thinking’ and it is clear that this is the case.

In the same hotel conference room, 40 years and an ideological gulf separates Powell and Phillips. Powell failed to change the political direction in the way he would have liked – though contributing to the stifling of debate and obfuscation regarding race relations and immigration for a generation. If Trevor Phillips’ speech was meant to deliver a coherent and complete view of the post-multiculturalist settlement, what a new EHRC campaign is terming ‘modern multiculturalism’, then we still have some way to go. The question remains, however, if for Phillips multiculturalism is dead, what takes its place?

**First Steps: The EHRC Sets Outs Its Priorities**

In May, the Equality and Human Rights Commission set out its plan for the forthcoming year. Staff and commissioners have been working hard to develop their initial approach and to set priorities for their work. The four key priorities they have identified are to:

- Analyse, define and target key equality and human rights challenges;
- Change policy and organizational practice to provide better public services alongside an efficient and dynamic economy;
- Engage, involve and empower the public, especially people from disadvantaged communities and areas;
- Anticipate social change, develop new narratives and reach new audiences in ways that strengthen equality and human rights.

They propose to deliver on these priorities by:

- Lobbying for landmark legislation to promote equality and human rights, including a new Equality Act;
- Using their investigative powers to launch a major inquiry into how well the Human Rights Act is currently working;
- Commissioning research on the way social housing is allocated and on the associated community tensions that relate to social housing policy;
- Putting a digital strategy into practice, drawing on the experience of interactive and social networking sites such as YouTube to encourage new audiences to get involved with the EHRC’s work;
- Using their enforcement powers strategically, particularly for the public sector equality duties and in the ‘new’ areas of their remit — age, religion or belief, sexual orientation and human rights;
- Working with business and the private sector to promote fairness in the workplace, including providing high quality information, advice and guidance tailored to individual business needs;
- Providing clear and comprehensive information on equality and human rights and about the work we do for a range of audiences;
- Looking at how to most effectively use the existing public sector duties to promote equality (which apply to most public authorities) as well as our legal and enforcement powers.

See page 10 of this Bulletin for more detail on the EHRC Human Rights Inquiry. Visit www.equalityandhumanrights.com to see the full Business Plan.
Runnymede Trust Consultation Response

to

The Path to Citizenship: Next Steps in Reforming the Immigration System

Michelynn Laflèche expresses concern about the proposals, the framework in which they are situated, and the poor quality of evidence to justify them.

On 20 February 2008, the Home Office published a Green Paper on its proposals for major reforms to the process for acquiring British citizenship, following the introduction of stricter definitions of who can come (the Points-based System (PBS)) and the transformation of how the system is policed (including ID cards and use of biometrics).

The speed with which government intends to move forward with these proposals is remarkable. Indications are that a partial draft bill will be introduced for pre-legislative scrutiny by summer 2008. And the Prime Minister announced the government’s intention to bring the proposals into a draft bill to be announced in the next Queen’s speech in November 2008 through the publication of The Government's Draft Legislative Programme on 14 May, the very day that public consultation was due to end.

We welcome the objective of giving immigration applicants and the wider public clarity about the different stages of the newcomer’s journey to citizenship, but we are concerned about the substantive content of the proposals, the conceptual framework in which they are situated, and the extremely poor quality of evidence of the need for these measures. Our analysis suggests that if the proposals were enacted and implemented, they would result in unfair discrimination on a wide range of grounds and would violate fundamental human rights.

Runnymede’s formal response answers the set questions in detail. But there are two overarching concerns: (1) the overall impact of the proposals and the place of the UK in the European Union as regards integration policy; and (2) the overarching concept of ‘earned citizenship’.

(1) The overall impact of the proposals

The Green Paper suggests that the proposals are in line with the current law and practice in many other EU member states. However, an analysis of the proposals using the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX)4 does not concur.

The MIPEX Index uses 140 indicators to compare the legal provisions in place across Europe to promote the integration of non-EU migrants. The index is based on a normative framework derived from the highest European standards expressed in human rights, anti-discrimination, and social, economic and civic inclusion laws and practices — laws which the UK played an active role in creating and to which we are signatory (with some notable derogations).

When applied to the Green Paper proposals, the following results were found:

- The UK’s score on access to nationality would drop as much as 15 points, falling from its position as the 5th most favourable for promoting integration to 10th, just around the EU average.
- The UK’s score on eligibility would lose its tie for 5th place with Ireland, since the probationary period would make naturalisation longer for most first-generation migrants.
- Given the proposals on economic resources, integration, good character, and active citizenship, the conditions for naturalisation in the UK could go from the ‘middle of the road’ (score 57) to being some of them most onerous in Europe (a score of 26).

The range of additional burdens and restricted rights to be extended over an increased number of years is more likely to alienate rather than to integrate people who choose to come to the UK to work or to join their families.

(2) The overarching concept of ‘earned citizenship’

The Green Paper states that the concept of ‘earned citizenship’ is about ‘…putting British values at the heart of the system’ (p.9) and designed to ‘…contribute to the government’s wider agenda of reinforcing shared values…’ (p.11)

It states that ‘The key feature of the proposed system is that it aims to increase community cohesion by ensuring all migrants can “earn” the right to citizenship and asks migrants to demonstrate their commitment to the UK by playing an active part in the community’. (p.12)

We are deeply concerned with the way in which...
Nearly ten years ago I was invited to speak at a school in East Anglia, to help their learning by sharing with teenagers some of my experiences of war and exile. As this is not one’s usual audience for stories about the war, genocide and exile I thought I would start by asking them a simple question to break the ice: ‘Do you know who asylum seekers are?’ I said enthusiastically. Only one lonely hand went up at the back of the room. ‘Are they criminals, Miss?’ said a young man. What else could he think? He had never seen a refugee before, and from what he was hearing and reading in the press he was quite right to assume that these people must be criminals if they are called all these names. And that was before asylum seekers were accused of eating our donkeys from our city farms or eating our swans from our parks.

Ten years on, it was up to the high court judge to declare that the decision to deny healthcare to refused asylum seekers while they are still here was unlawful.

Mr Justice Mitting said that refused asylum seekers and refugees were ‘penniless’, and ruled that the hospital in the test case had an obligation of care for a Palestinian refused asylum seeker with serious liver disease. All this was happening in the same week that a young gay Iranian was fighting deportation, after his partner was executed for being gay; a leading British broadsheet was campaigning to save a life of a student in Afghanistan who printed online information on rights of women; while other broadsheets led on stories of botched elections and related violence in Zimbabwe.

In ten short years as a country and as a society, we moved from calling asylum seekers names to denying seriously ill people basic human rights. One might forgive a young teenager for his lack of knowledge, but the NHS should know better.

How did this happen? How did we become like this? Fifteen years ago I arrived on these shores straight from a city under siege, blissfully unaware of the unwelcome committee. Exile is never easy, bureaucracies are complicated and Kafkaesque everywhere in the world.
and discrimination exists everywhere. But how on earth did we get to the point where ill asylum seekers, who clearly cannot be sent back, have to take the NHS to the highest court in the land to get help? These were just some of the questions on my mind when I was invited to join the Independent Asylum Commission in October 2006.

The Commission was set up by The Citizen Organising Foundation, a very broad civil society network whose members include churches, mosques, trade unions, schools and other civil society organisations. Many of its members were engaging with asylum seekers and hearing all kinds of stories of hardship, mistreatment and injustice. So they decided to investigate these anecdotal experiences, and they decided to do it properly. For 18 months the Commission held seven all day public hearings in major cities around the UK. We also had a special hearing in Belfast. Human Rights TV recorded our public hearings and testimonies so you can see them on their website (http://www.humanrightstv.com).

We also heard opinions and evidence in closed sessions at Westminster Abbey. And we did not hear just from the usual suspects but proactively sought to engage with a wide range of opinions and experiences. We received 180 written submissions to the written call for evidence from voluntary and community organisations, and personal testimonies from 90 asylum seekers, the police, local authorities, pressure groups and British citizens. The Commission also engaged an independent academic body to gather all published reports on the issue in the past five years to inform the inquiry.

We gathered information on all aspects of the asylum process from all sides of the political spectrum. We considered evidence, asked questions, discussed, debated, questioned again, researched, drafted and re-drafted our interim findings for months. Digested complex legislation, with a cumbersome bureaucratic system in charge of it, and trying to square it with emotional and often traumatic testimonies of vulnerable people, with the backdrop of public ignorance at best and hostility at worst, seemed at times a daunting and impossible task. At the end of March we launched our first report: ‘Fit For Purpose Yet? These are our interim findings. The report paints a grim picture of the asylum system in the UK: detention is overused, access to legal advice is restricted, and the odds are stacked against the people seeking protection. We did identify some positive changes and aspirations to improve the experience of claimants. The full report can be found at the Commission’s website (http://www.independentasylumcommission.org.uk) and hard copies can also be ordered from our secretariat, so I won’t go into too much detail here.

But, what I would like to emphasize is that we chose to publish our findings as an interim report for a number of reasons.

Firstly, we felt that our findings needed to remain open to change and challenge in case we missed something or got something terribly wrong. The Commission is still gathering evidence and testimonies. As I write this, key stakeholder interviews on public attitudes to asylum in Barking and Dagenham, Hackney, Birmingham, Plymouth, Sheffield, Oxford, Cardiff and Glasgow are going on. This work will be complemented by the focus groups in all these cities to understand public views on the issue better.

Secondly, we wanted to engage with the British public to make positive change. Launching just another report, no matter how accurate and objective it does not change much in itself. Preaching to the converted will not help much either. We wanted this report to start a dialogue on how to make the system better, more efficient and fair. We wanted to start reasonable conversations about our responsibilities towards people seeking sanctuary, about natural justice, about fair treatment, about accountability. We wanted to be open to all questions such as what do we do with those who are not in need of protection. That is why the Commission is organising The Citizens Speak consultations, asking for the public’s views on sanctuary in the UK. This involves facilitating over 50 People’s Commissions across the UK to recommend the values and principles that should underpin UK asylum policy. In partnership with Friction TV (http://www.friction.tv) we have already received 200 online responses to videos we posted about the issue.

Thirdly, we wanted to constructively engage with the government – political leadership as well as the civil service. We wanted the UK Border Agency to respond to our interim findings and to have an opportunity to correct any factual inaccuracies and provide answers to concerns raised.

This has been one very busy Commission and its interim findings represent the results of the largest inquiry on the issue of asylum in the UK ever undertaken. The Commission’s main task now is to provide constructive recommendations to improve the system that has struggled to function, to deliver for all citizens and to safeguard the rights of vulnerable people.

Over the next three months the Commission will be publishing three sets of recommendations to correspond with three thematic sections of our interim findings report. Recommendations will also take into consideration government responses to our findings and we will continue to listen to the British public too. So there is still time to get involved and let us know what you think. The first recommendations report: ‘How We Decide Who Needs Sanctuary’. About the asylum decision making process is due on 20 May 2008. This report will include some of the findings of our public consultations and our public attitudes survey too.

The Commission’s work will be completed soon, but the work on improvement of our asylum system is just starting. The Commission’s reports and recommendations will not be sitting on a dusty shelf in a library. Apart from extensive media coverage and very useful legacy websites, we are handing our findings to the Citizen Organising Foundation whose members will continue to make use of it as a campaigning tool to ensure that our treatment of asylum seekers and refugees no longer falls seriously below the standards to be expected of a humane and civilised society.’

Zrinka Bralo is a journalist from Sarajevo who has campaigned for refugee and human rights since her exile in 1993. In the past ten years she has worked as a journalist, commentator and researcher. She is Executive Director of the Migrant and Refugees Forum in West London.
Why Human Rights Provide Added Value

Rosemarie McIlwhan examines the value of human rights, giving examples where human rights legislation has made a real difference to people’s lives.

For many people in the UK the concept of human rights is a negative one, as they see it as being used and abused by prisoners, lawyers and others as a means of getting what they want. However, for many others, the human rights concept has been the backstop which has prevented them being abused or badly treated, not just since the Human Rights Act came into force in 2000 but ever since the UK signed the European Convention on Human Rights in 1953.

There are many reasons why human rights have a ‘bad name’, not least because of media portrayal, but hopefully with the introduction of the new Equality and Human Rights Commission to champion the cause, human rights will cease to be a dirty word and will become something which we all understand and can use to protect ourselves and society. Since the Human Rights Act came into force there has been a lot of focus on human rights as a legal concept which has largely meant that anyone who is not a lawyer has shied away from getting involved, yet human rights concepts such as dignity, equality, respect, fairness and autonomy are concepts which we would probably all agree are desirable in society for everyone. If we can persuade public bodies to change practices and policies without having to drag them into court all the time, then it’s better for the individuals involved and better for the public bodies too. Of course there is a time and place when recourse to the law is the only way, but it shouldn’t be our first port of call.

So what value do human rights really add? All public bodies, in addition to their duties on equality, need to act in keeping with human rights principles, as outlined above. There are specific rights which they must uphold, e.g. the right to privacy, right to freedom of expression, right to life, right to freedom of religion/belief, etc. Whilst these and the other rights contained in the Human Rights Act might not sound like much they can be very effective when used properly.

One example might be in relation to stop and search by the police. Although equality law does not provide any protection from being repeatedly stopped and searched, human rights law would provide an opportunity to challenge the police on grounds of invasion of privacy and discrimination – for example if you felt you were being selected on grounds of race or ethnicity. The police would then have to demonstrate that their actions were proportionate and legitimate.

Another example might be where an older person is in hospital, unable to feed themselves and with no relatives visiting. These people are often left to go hungry because staff don’t have time or responsibility for feeding them. Human rights law provides an avenue to challenge this by requiring public bodies, such as hospitals, to positively protect people’s lives, and this would include ensuring that people in their care are fed properly.

Another element of human rights law which is useful is the definition of discrimination which is a broad definition but is not an exhaustive list. So where the Race Relations Act (RRA) defines precisely who is covered by the Act, the Human Rights Act is not so specific, and this means that minority ethnic groups who aren’t covered by the RRA would still be covered by the Human Rights Act.

There are so many areas where human rights law can help us to improve policy and practice, to gain better access to services and better treatment in accessing those services. Human rights law ensures not just that we should all be treated equally, but provides a baseline below which treatment of anyone should not slip. However this is only useful if we know it and awareness and understanding of human rights is still fairly low. Whilst public bodies should be upholding human rights whether we know about them or not, the reality is that some don’t. We need to be aware of our rights and responsibilities and be able to demand that they are upheld, and where they are not to ask the courts, the inspectorate bodies, the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Government to enforce them.

That need for education on rights and responsibilities along with the need for better enforcement of human rights law are two of the reasons why I will be responding to the EHRC’s human rights inquiry, but the main reason will be due to frustration at the constant assaults on our rights whether that be the disproportionate counter-terrorism laws, ineffective identity cards proposals or an unfair asylum system. I see this as an opportunity to shape the future of human rights work and to explore the potential for human rights law, policy and practice to shape society into a place where everyone’s rights and responsibilities are respected and upheld.

Rights contained in the Human Rights Act

Article 2: Right to life
Article 3: Prohibition on torture
Article 4: Prohibition on slavery and forced labour
Article 5: Right to liberty and security
Article 6: Right to a fair trial
Article 7: No punishment without law
Article 8: Right to respect for private and family life
Article 9: Freedom of thought, conscience and religion
Article 10: Right to freedom of expression
Article 11: Freedom of assembly and association
Article 12: Right to marry and found a family
Article 14: Prohibition on discrimination
Article 1 of the First Protocol: Protection of property
Article 2 of the First Protocol: Right to education
Article 3 of the First Protocol: Right to free elections

1 These article numbers refer to the articles in the European Convention on Human Rights. When the UK created the Human Rights Act they chose not to include articles 1 and 13 of the ECHR as they said that by creating the Human Rights Act they had complied with those articles.
Equality and Human Rights Commission Human Rights Inquiry

Rosemarie McIlwhan explains why it is important that voluntary and community groups play their part in this inquiry.

The Equality Act 2006 gives the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) the power to hold inquiries into any aspect of equality or human rights. On 6 March 2008 the EHRC announced that it was proposing to launch an inquiry to find out how public authorities are responding to the Human Rights Act in England and Wales. (It does not have the power to hold a human rights inquiry in Scotland without the permission of the Scottish Commission for Human Rights.)

The inquiry is being lead by Dame Nuala O’Loan, the Police Complaints Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, with three EHRC commissioners – Francesca Klug, Sir Bert Massie and Neil Wooding – also involved.

The terms of reference for the inquiry are:

1. To assess progress towards the effectiveness and enjoyment of a culture of respect for human rights in Great Britain; and
2. To consider how the current human rights framework might best be developed and used to realise the vision of a society built on fairness and respect, confident in all aspects of its diversity.

The Human Rights Act defines ‘public authorities’; this definition includes not just those bodies which are usually thought of as public bodies but also any private or voluntary organisations which carry out public functions. The scope of the inquiry covers all public authorities.

The EHRC is calling for evidence for the inquiry from those who have experience of delivering and using public services, e.g. hospitals, schools, government offices/departments or services provided by private voluntary bodies on behalf of public bodies. They want to know about how these services treat people and to look at whether this is in keeping with the Human Rights Act – for example are patients in hospital treated with dignity and respect, are young people in the justice system treated fairly, do people in care have autonomy over their own lives, are people from minority groups treated equally in accessing services?

You might be wondering what this has to do with you; however equality is a fundamental human right, included in the Human Rights Act. But human rights go much further than this. The Human Rights Act provides a minimum standard of treatment for everyone regardless of personal attributes and not just in the fields of education, employment and access to goods, facilities and services as the equality laws do, but across the spectrum of public services. One of the key elements of the Human Rights Act was to create a human rights culture. In this sense the Act is more like a public sector duty which requires public bodies to treat everyone with dignity, respect, equality, fairness, and autonomy, rather than just a list of rights and responsibilities. How far we are towards this human rights culture is a central part of the human rights inquiry.

Much is made in the media of the Human Rights Act being a ‘charter for chancers’ and a field day for lawyers; however, rarely do the stories about the children who get access to the educational support they need, or the older people who are now treated with dignity rather than being left to starve, make it into the news. The inquiry is an opportunity to share your positive and negative experiences of human rights in England and Wales.

It is worth noting that the Joint Committee on Human Rights at Westminster has already held a number of inquiries into the application of the Human Rights Act and public bodies, and more information about these inquiries and copies of responses to them can be found at www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/joint_committee_on_human_rights.cfm

Voluntary and community groups have a key part to play in this inquiry, not only by responding as service providers or as representative organizations, but also encouraging and supporting their members and service users to respond as individuals. The EHRC is likely to use the information from the inquiry to determine what human rights work it will carry out over the next few years and to make recommendations on how to improve human rights in the future; therefore it is important that they get an accurate picture of the current situation.

When responding to the inquiry you might want to think about how easy it is to access public services, how you and others are treated when using those services and afterwards. You might also want to consider what improvements you would like to see made, or where you think the Human Rights Act is failing, for example by not providing sufficient protection to asylum seekers or refugees in certain circumstances, or because the definition of public body is too vague or because the UK Government are ignoring their obligations and introducing measures which could be said to breach human rights, e.g. detention without trial.

You can find more information about the inquiry and the feedback form for responding at www.equalityhumanrights.com/humanrightsinquiry

The closing date is 21 June 2008 so make sure you respond before then – at a time when our human rights are under threat from Government and beyond your input matters.
What Can We Expect from Europe in the Field of Migration Policy?

France, which will hold the Presidency of the EU from July to December 2008 has indicated that reaching a more harmonized European migration policy will be at the core of its Presidency objectives. Sarah Isal looks at the French Presidency’s ‘Immigration Pact’.

As the UK is proposing some of the most restrictive measures relating to newcomers and migrants wishing to settle in this country, France, which will hold the Presidency of the EU from July to December 2008 has indicated that reaching a more harmonized European migration policy will be at the core of its Presidency objectives.

When looking at the actual proposals that the French Presidency wishes to put forward, one understands better why Gordon Brown and Nicolas Sarkozy were so cheerful standing next to one another during the latter’s visit to the UK earlier this year! Their vision of future migration in Europe could not be closer, but unfortunately the commonality is to be found in the lack of any progressive migration policy. And Sarkozy now hopes to take the rest of Europe with him in the adoption of a European ‘Pact on Immigration’ which essentially aims to use European harmonization to control migration further – rather than facilitate mobility and promote a European integration policy. In fact the latter does not seem to figure in the Pact itself.

So what is the French Presidency proposing in its ‘Immigration Pact’? The Pact is articulated around five main principles:

1. *Stronger European border controls*. The French will promote a proper European border police to ensure migrants are kept from entering the European Union. It intends to make more use of Frontex, an existing EU agency aimed at reinforcing cooperation between member states on border management.

2. *Some form of harmonization of legal migration policy* across the EU, through for instance a ‘blue card’ system, which will determine the conditions of entry and settlement of highly qualified labour. It will work towards an agreement with EU member states to ensure that they give up collective and massive regularizations of undocumented migrants, arguing that when these regularizations occur in one EU country, they affect another EU country unfairly. This proposal is ironic given that there is currently in France a process of regularization of several undocumented migrants working in the hospitality sector, who had initiated a strike movement, to raise awareness about the fact that they were working and paying their taxes, yet at the same time were not legally resident in France. After their employers, suddenly realizing that their businesses were threatened, started raising this issue with the government, the regularizations were immediately considered, despite the rhetoric and official speeches about being tough on illegal migration!

3. *A joint policy on the removal of undocumented migrants*. One proposal is that Frontex might be tasked with organizing collective flights to deport undocumented migrants. This will be coupled with renewed efforts to punish the recruitment by employers of undocumented migrant workers.

4. *A harmonized asylum policy*. The French are keen to move towards a common asylum policy throughout Europe. They intend to organize a conference on that subject in September 2008, to agree on a potential common definition of the right of asylum.

5. *A European development strategy*. France hopes to promote a common approach to development, including the organization of the second Euro-African conference summit on migration and development (Rabat II).

There is no mention so far of an integration strategy, therefore ignoring past European projects and discussions initiated by the Dutch Presidency in 2004 through the Common Basic Principles on Integration. Similarly there is no mention of low skilled migration. It is difficult to predict at this stage how much of the Immigration Pact will actually be implemented, in an area that remains very much the prerogative of member states. However, given the types of immigration policies developed by various EU members domestically (see the UK example again), it looks like France is simply picking up a general trend that has been witnessed in Europe for a while now. Unfortunately, migration is one example where European policy is not leading the way in progressive terms and NGOs will have to remain active over the next few months to monitor how these proposals actually affect the rights of migrants.

The Role of FE and HE Providers in Promoting Community Cohesion

Debbie Weekes-Bernard is a Senior Research & Policy Analyst and Jessica Sims is a Research & Policy Analyst at the Runnymede Trust.

The Department for Innovation, Universities & Skills (DIUS) has recently issued a consultation document for the role of FE and HE providers in promoting community cohesion, fostering shared values and preventing violent extremism. Debbie Weekes-Bernard and Jessica Sims consider how the notion of community cohesion has become intertwined with the wider Government priority of combating violent extremism.

Recently the Department for Innovation, Universities & Skills (DIUS) issued a consultation document for the role of Further Education providers in promoting community cohesion, fostering shared values and preventing violent extremism – and guidance for Higher Education on the same topic. Both documents highlighted some of the issues that Runnymede has been working on, such as the publication on choice and segregation1 and the publication on race relations on UK university campuses.2 However, in both documents the DIUS has conflated notions of community cohesion with race and faith, in turn linking the race and faith of particular groups as the cause of violent extremism.

The conflation of community cohesion with the prevention of violent extremism

One of the biggest issues of concern with the draft consultation document is the ease with which the notion of community cohesion has become intertwined with the wider Government priority of combating violent extremism – specifically Al Qa’ida influenced extremism. As argued elsewhere, a careful look needs to be taken at the types of discourse which surround the concept of community cohesion, as it seems that some very local events in 2001 have prompted national thinking about relations between groups.3 A critical engagement with this issue is necessary to avoid community cohesion being seen as something required by only a few specific ethnic or faith groups. Worryingly, the clear association between community cohesion and violent extremism, found within both the FE and HE documents, will do little in our view to allay these fears.

Community cohesion and race/faith

There is also some conflation with current work that FE and HE institutions (FEIs and HEIs) are undertaking regarding community cohesion work and promotion of good race relations. Whilst this may demonstrate how well these areas work together, it is also potentially confusing. While DCSF guidance for schools on ways of meeting their duty on the promotion of community cohesion does indeed focus on race and faith problematically, it also stresses that the remit of schools must be wider than race to explore gender, sexual orientation and disability. The ease with which notions of community cohesion becomes conflated with work on race and faith has been explored by us elsewhere, leading some to comment that it adds nothing to existing work on race4 and worse confuses those public bodies already failing to meet their duties under the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000. Such confimation also has the potential to create uncertainty among groups as to ‘who’ may be responsible for combating violent extremism, and the resultant coupling of community cohesion with the prevention of violent extremism does little to rectify this problematic association and the way it will be received at the ground level.

Student societies and segregation

Another problem with the documents concerns FEIs and HEIs involvement with various student societies. We have looked elsewhere at work exploring good campus relations between students,5 and whilst there are indeed difficulties with the way that some student societies can work on an exclusionary level, for many students the motivations behind joining specific societies is not about segregation, but in order to foster friendships around shared interests and important cultural links, especially in campuses where students of certain groups form a distinct minority. Nowhere in the guidance for HEIs questions the potentially exclusionary practices of ‘mainstream’ campus society such as the strong association between alcohol and university social activities.

The guidance and the draft consultation are centred on tackling violent extremism, rather than promoting community cohesion and tackling the multiple forms of discrimination that may happen in FEIs and HEIs. The ways in which the consultation and guidance frames community cohesion are problematic – that the central point of community cohesion is the prevention of extremist violence, rather than an end unto itself. Runnymede’s consultation response to ‘The Role of Education Providers in Promoting Community Cohesion, Fostering Shared Values and Preventing Violent Extremism’, is available at http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/policyResponses/ComCohesionFE_response.pdf
Getting It Wrong. Again

Debbie Weekes-Bernard looks at Conservative Party proposals on countering bad behaviour in schools, in particular focusing on Tory policies on school exclusion.

Recent education policy proposals from the Conservative party have suggested that too little attention is paid to the needs of teachers within the Government’s attempts to counter poor behaviour in schools. Central to the argument within their education working paper is a concern with violent and disruptive behaviour¹ and from this focus one would be forgiven for assuming that the majority of all excluded pupils from schools in England are removed for such violence and disruption. Actual figures suggest rather that 30% of permanent exclusions and 21% of fixed term exclusions from secondary schools in 2005/06 occurred as a result of persistent disruptive behaviour; 11% of permanent and 23% of fixed term exclusions during the same period were due to verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against an adult.² Although these are clearly figures not to be baulked at, what is of importance in interpreting them is that they relate to the numbers of exclusions, rather than numbers of pupils who have been excluded, and that these pupil numbers will often include young people who have experienced these sanctions on more than one occasion. It is this persistent minority of offenders whom the Conservatives wish to target with a variety of proposals which involve restoring a number of powers to teachers, whilst removing the ability of parents to appeal the appeals process in order that their children be reinstated into school. This is despite DCSF findings that of all appeals heard in 2005/06, approximately 24% were held in favour of the parent, suggesting that the majority were unsuccessful.³

Proposals also include abolishing the Government’s ‘one in, one out’ policy, whereby schools enter into local partnerships to share the behaviour management of their pupils; if a child is excluded from a school, that school will agree to take in a child excluded from another school within the partnership. The Conservatives view this as a means of ‘forcing good schools to take pupils expelled from bad ones’,⁴ and forms part of their proposals to increase parental choice of schools from which disruptive children have been removed. We have explored the impact of choice on children from BME families elsewhere,⁵ noting that the inability of parents from low income BME groups to choose schools exacerbates ethnic segregation. Policies which will enable schools to exclude children to ‘specialist facilities’⁶ – a disproportionate number of whom will be from BME backgrounds - and working in tandem with increased parental choice procedures, will create sets of schools segregated both by ethnicity and class.

Conservative proposals also include removing the requirement recently placed on schools to provide educational tuition from the sixth day of a pupil’s exclusion. Although we took issue with the requirement that parents be fully responsible for an excluded child during the first five days of an exclusion,⁷ we welcomed Government proposals that work be provided for children. There are a number of other proposals contained within both the Conservative working paper⁸ and the larger Green Paper on education⁹ which have not been discussed here but ultimately, the preoccupation with an image of a violent and disruptive pupil underclass has formed the entire basis for this current set of Conservative proposals. The populist process of basing policy reform on often anecdotal evidence¹⁰ is not new, but neither is it helpful. There is clear omission of an analysis of race from these proposals, as well as an only partial consideration of class differentials.¹¹ The consigning of groups of pupils, who are disproportionately Black, of Traveller origin, and from lower income families, to the margins of the educational system has simply been reinforced within this set of proposals.¹²

The Conservatives proposals

Conservative party proposals on countering bad behaviour in schools include abolishing the right of permanently excluded pupils and their families to make an appeal against the decision to an independent body. The rationale for this proposal is that appeals undermine the authority of the headteacher, allowing parents to abuse the appeals process in order that their children be reinstated into school. This is despite DCSF findings that of all appeals heard in 2005/06, approximately 24% were held in favour of the parent, suggesting that the majority were unsuccessful.³

3 DCSF, 2007, id
5 DCSF, 2007, id
7 Though very little acknowledgment is made of the poor educational progress of children attending pupil referral units, or indeed of the clear relationship that exists between exclusion and criminality.
8 Guidance published by the then DfES and included within the Education & Inspections Act 2002. It states that a child is excluded in a public school, should the exclusion be automatically imposed upon the parent. We note that given statistics suggesting Black children are now twice as likely to be removed from school by parents or other to experience these sanctions, that this would place urban inner-city families on Black parents, but also on lone working parents.
9 This includes removing the need to give parents 24 hours notice of a school detention, which is exercised only for child safety reasons but to allow parents to discuss the detention itself with staff. Revising the necessity of keeping a written record as to why a pupil was searched for dangerous objects would remove protection of staff in the case of a complaint made for a pupil or parent.
10 This includes removing the need for a pupil to be provided with a notice of detention, or indeed to remove the necessity of giving parents 24 hours notice of detention.
12 The working paper refers to an article in the Times Educational Supplement on inclusion of BME children who have been excluded from school for carrying weapons, and an individual case of a pupil returned to school following an exclusion for carrying a knife in a means of providing rationale for the necessity of removing the independent exclusions appeal process
13 Reference is made to acknowledging the seriousness of violent behaviour in schools serving disarmed populations but not to the subsequent demoting of the children who attend those schools whose removal is necessary for those schools to progress.

RUNNYMEDE’S QUARTERLY BULLETIN JUNE 2008 13
A new White Paper focusing on reform of educational provision for children educated outside the mainstream system was launched on 20 May 2008 by the DCSF. There are currently 70,000 children and young people being educated in alternative provision, about half of whom are excluded from mainstream schools. The other half are pregnant teenagers, young mothers and children with long term illnesses. The White Paper discusses the need to ensure that the educational provision for excluded children is of a good standard and proposes that poor performing pupil referral units (PRUs) be closed and pupil performance data of those attending be published. Private and voluntary sector organizations are being encouraged to run these units in a more innovative way, and behaviour partnerships are to be set up to allow schools to explore running PRUs jointly. A good practice guide for local authorities will be issued later in the summer term. Importantly, Local Authorities are being asked to use these proposals as part of strategies to prevent exclusions. Consultation on this paper will end on 25 July 2008.


A New Look at ‘Gaps’ in Attainment at Age 16

Kerrie Proulx considers research which looks at the interactions between ethnicity, social class and gender and as a result can suggest where the biggest ‘gaps’ in attainment are found at age 16.

When it comes to educational achievement on ‘high stake’ exams at age 16, social class is still the strongest indicator of success, a Government-funded report on ethnic minority achievement has found. The report Minority Ethnic Pupils in the Longitudinal Study of Young People, by Dr Steve Strand from the Institute of Education at Warwick University, found the social class gap in attainment at Key Stage 4 was substantially larger than ethnic and gender gaps in educational attainment.

In 2006 only 20 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals – the Government’s key measure of deprivation - achieved five A*-C grades at GCSE, including English and maths, compared with 48 per cent of other pupils. Despite a series of government initiatives to tackle social inequality in schools, the relationship between poverty and educational outcomes is ‘stark’ concludes the 2006/07 Ofsted report, whilst a recent Sutton Trust report found social mobility in Britain to be amongst the lowest of any industrialized nation.

The ‘polarization’ in academic achievement between working-class pupils and their peers from wealthier homes is an ‘equity issue for all ethnic groups’, Strand’s report says. Drawing on data from more than 13,000 pupils, the study found attainment at aged 16 was negatively impacted across all ethnic groups by low socio-economic indicators including low parental social class, mothers with no educational qualifications, living in single parent households and living in deprived neighbourhoods. Whilst this finding is perhaps not surprising, an original feature of the report is the suggestion that ethnic minority students appear to have ‘greater resilience to economic disadvantage’ than white British pupils. The evidence is based on the finding that white working-class pupils had lower mean levels of attainment at Key Stage 4 than most ethnic minority pupils from poor backgrounds. The claim that white working-class pupils are ‘left behind’ was widely reported in the media.

In effect, the report goes so far as to flip around the well-researched ‘ethnic gaps’ in educational attainment. Several ethnic minority groups that were ‘underachieving’ at Key Stage 3 including Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Black African, had caught up and surpassed white British pupils at Key Stage 4, the report found. But there seems to be a caveat to this finding: the ethnic gap closed, or changed its direction, only amongst pupils from low socio-economic backgrounds – however, this point is not explicit in the report. On the other hand, the research found middle-class white pupils at aged 16 performed better than many middle class ethnic minority groups (e.g. Black Caribbean and Black African).

Together these findings highlight the polarization between social class and educational attainment, which is argued to be most extreme amongst white pupils. The report is concerned with ethnic minority pupils but its ‘most striking feature’ is related to social class and white pupils. ‘There is a need to move from a monolithic conception of white British as a homogeneous group’ in order to recognize the profound differences in attainment at aged 16 between white pupils from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, the report argues.
The report suggests working-class white pupils had ‘disproportionately low attainment’, but it appears that it may be the case that middle-class white pupils had disproportionately high attainment.

A strength of the research is that it considered interactions between ethnicity, social class and gender and as a result it can suggest where the biggest ‘gaps’ in attainment are found at age 16. The finding that the social class gap is more apparent and significant than ethnic and gender gaps is not new. The Sutton Trust report found 40 per cent of young people from the richest 20 per cent of households acquired a degree compared with only 10 per cent from the poorest 20 per cent of households. ‘It is still the case that your educational chances are substantially affected by where you live, the occupation of your parents, the income of your family’, Ed Balls, the education secretary, tells the New Statesman. Strand’s report, however, adds ethnicity to the picture and provides evidence to suggest that social class ‘effects’ ethnic groups differently, which in turn impacts their attainment. The report puts poverty at the forefront of the debate on ethnicity and achievement, which sits well with the Government’s goal to halve poverty by 2010. The report suggests, however, that where child poverty is eradicated, as in the case of the middle class Black African and Black Caribbean groups in the study, ethnic gaps in attainment remain.

‘Which Way Do I Ought to Go from Here?’: The Need for High-quality Careers Advice

Kerrie Proulx looks at the careers advice and information about higher education courses available to young people

Careers advice being offered to young people in schools and colleges is ‘patchy’ and the talents of many young people are being ‘wasted’, a recent sixth-month inquiry into information, advice and guidance (IAG) services suggests. The average adult in the UK spends an average of four years and 10 months in jobs that fail to make the most of their skills, adding up to 132 million working years spent by people in the wrong job, it was claimed.

In Alice in Wonderland an often quoted exchange takes place when Alice realizes she is lost and asks the Cheshire cat, ‘Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?’ and the cat replies, ‘that depends a good deal on where you want to get to’. Alice says, ‘I don’t much care where, so long as I get somewhere,’ to which the cat replies, ‘then it doesn’t matter which way you go’. Perhaps unlike Alice, in terms of education and careers, most young people do care where they go. Nearly three out of four young people say they are likely to go into higher education by 2010. However, to reach this goal it is imperative that young people have access within schools to accurate and impartial information regarding higher education and career options. Young people who do not have access to information, advice and guidance that enables them to make informed educational and career choices are at risk of ending up ‘somewhere’ that fails to make the most of their skills, abilities and interests.

Sir Peter Lampl, Chairman of the Sutton Trust said: ‘While it is encouraging that three-quarters of young people aspire to university, less than half that number currently end up in higher education and those from poorer families are the least likely to progress. So we need to offer more support to young people throughout their education so that they are in a position to realise their ambitions at 18 and beyond’. Research from Staffordshire University that was published by the Sutton Trust in February showed that few students knew about the bursaries or maintenance grants on offer at universities. Middle-class students whose parents had experience of higher education made more use of their parents as a source of information and were more likely to be informed about institutions and financial support, implying that young people who are most in need of bursaries are less likely to be informed. These findings are a further reminder that better support and guidance within schools is needed, particularly amongst students from non-privileged backgrounds, to ensure that ‘no young person loses out’, according to Sir Peter Lampl.

The range of educational options on offer has increased in complexity (e.g. introduction of diplomas) and young people today are confronted with choosing from educational options and pathways from aged...
In the book *Degrees of Choice* the authors describe the difference between ‘contingent choosers’, who are often socially disadvantaged students and the first-generation in their families to apply for higher education, and ‘embedded choosers’, who are middle-class students with an established family history of higher education. Contingent choosers make educational choices based on minimal information and often finance is a key concern. Parents may offer high levels of emotional support and encouragement but they are on the ‘periphery’ in terms of the choice making process, mainly because they lack experience with the higher education process. The decision to apply for higher education often occurs late — towards the end of GCSEs or during A-levels — and students are often not aware of different higher education courses available to them and status distinctions between institutions. In terms of information and advice, contingent choosers often rely on ‘cold knowledge’ (prospectuses) or on the basis of fairly casual comments made by teaching staff.

In contrast, embedded choosers make educational choices based on extensive sources of information and finance is not an issue. Parents are proactive in the choice making process and are able to mobilize various forms of support and information for the student including work placements and discussions with family or friends who have attended university. The decision to apply for higher education is well-established from an early age and it is often linked to entry into prestigious or highly paid professions. In terms of information and advice, embedded choosers often rely on a range of sources including recommendations from friends and family, league tables, career consultants, teaching staff and school seminars with leading professionals. The authors argue that contingent choosers are at a gross disadvantage in the education system, which is increasing in complexity and marketization, due to the fact that embedded choosers have access to information, advice and guidance that has ‘a far higher currency and exchange value’. The appropriate social and cultural capital of embedded choosers gives them a leg up in the choice making process, whereas contingent choosers are more likely to be at risk of making uninformed educational choices. Inequitable social class differences between students are maintained in the education choice making process because not all students have equal access to reliable, accurate and impartial information.

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) has reportedly ‘agreed the quality of information, advice and guidance (IAG) still too often fell short of what young people needed’. Whilst access to IAG within schools may be insignificant for some embedded choosers, it is crucial for enabling contingent choosers to make informed choices. In an effort to improve IAG services nationally, an overhaul took place in April when the responsibility of IAG was devolved from 47 Connexions partnerships to the 150 Local Authorities in England. Under the new arrangements it is expected that local authorities will secure high quality IAG provision for young people in their area by linking school and college based provision for careers education with wider support services including work-based learning providers and Connexions services. Schools and colleges may opt out of existing local IAG arrangements (e.g. Connexions) if the existing provision is poor. New standards of quality have been written to support the development of high quality IAG services across the country and they have defined IAG as an umbrella term that ‘covers a range of activities and interventions that help young people to become more self-reliant and better able to manage their personal and career development’. It is expected that under the new arrangements all young people will have access to the following with their local authority:

- **Information** — accurate, up-to-date and objective information about personal and lifestyle issues, learning and career opportunities, progression routes, choices, where to find help and advice and how to access it
- **Advice** — activities that help young people to gather, understand and interpret information and apply it to their own situation
- **Guidance** — impartial guidance and specialist support to help young people understand themselves and their needs, confront barriers, resolve conflicts, develop new perspectives and make progress

There have been concerns about how the new IAG services will be delivered in practice. For instance, The Institute of Career Guidance has argued that in addition to careers education programmes that are delivered by teachers, students must also have access to independent careers advice provided by appropriately trained career guidance specialists. There has, however, been strong support for IAG that is impartial, that will challenge stereotypes and that will raise aspirations. Whilst the jury waits to find out how effective the new IAG arrangements will be, a key area of concern for all local authorities should be the specific IAG needs of contingent choosers and their parents, who need better support and information to help them decide where they ought to go when they reach educational crossroads.
Investigating Ethnicity in the UK: The Possibilities of the UK Household Longitudinal Panel Survey

Lucinda Platt describes the UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS) which will be the biggest survey of its kind in the world and aims to enable an understanding of the UK population over time. In addition to its broad coverage, one area that is a core aspect of this survey is ethnicity.

In April last year, work began on a major new survey of the UK population. The UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS) will be the biggest survey of its kind in the world and aims to enable an understanding of the UK population over time. The survey is a household panel survey which means that all members of the initial sample of 40,000 households will be interviewed and they will be re-interviewed annually, even if they are no longer living together and have established separate households. This means that it will be possible to discover how different aspects of people's lives change together or sequentially and in relation to those they live with. For example, do people marry people like themselves or do married people become more similar over time?

The UKHLS is based at the University of Essex and is led by a team of researchers from the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) at Essex, and also involves co-investigators from the University of Warwick and the Institute of Education in London.

The survey will ask questions across a wide range of people's experiences, attitudes and behaviours: the work they do, their education and training, their political affiliations, their health, the child care they use, their aspirations, their relationships with others, the caring for others that they do, attitudes to where they live, their leisure, and so on. This will allow a picture of the multiple dimensions of people's lives to emerge as well as enabling investigation of how different aspects relate together at the same point or at different time points. For example, do people from different backgrounds have different aspirations? Do they change over time or with changes in family circumstances? Do people achieve their aspirations? And what is distinctive about those who do or don't? Or, how does people's changing health status affect their employment, their beliefs and their relationships? Survey results will thus be of interest to a wide range of researchers and research users with all sorts of different interests in people's lives and trajectories.

In addition to its broad coverage, one area that is a core aspect of this survey is ethnicity. There has not been a dedicated survey of ethnic minorities in the UK since 1994, when the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities was carried out, and there has never been a panel survey of ethnic minorities. The UKHLS is therefore designed to capture this important and salient topic in three main ways.

1. By asking respondents' ethnicity/ethnic group/ethnic identity.
2. By including questions about issues of relevance to research on the UK's ethnic groups, including on issues of association and belonging and areas where comparison between ethnic groups is of interest.
3. By means of an oversample of selected ethnic groups that thus provides large enough sample sizes to facilitate detailed analysis of these groups individually or comparatively.

Also, the survey leadership comes with the remit to encourage and engage researchers and research users who have not typically used quantitative resources – or who have been mistrustful of them – particularly among those interested in ethnicity and ethnic minorities.

In order to maintain the focus on ethnicity within the UKHS, a group within the wider leadership team for the survey is dedicated to furthering this 'ethnicity strand'. The group consists of myself, Richard Berthoud, Jonathan Burton and Alita Nandi at Essex and Heidi Mirza at the Institute of Education.

In order to engage with issues of topic content, what and how we should ask about people's ethnic identity, and what were the topics of greatest salience for the study of ethnicity and ethnic minority groups, we immediately embarked upon an intensive period of consultation that ran in its first phase from June to October of last year. The consultation involved targeted and open meetings, large-scale mailings, direct email and phone contacts and face-to-face discussions. We attempted to use the consultation exercise to engage with non-quantitative researchers: to address how perspectives from qualitative and theoretical ethnicity research might be incorporated into a structured survey such as this and how the survey might extend its reach among the research and user communities as a valuable and valued resource. And we included grassroots organisations among those who we canvassed for views, holding meetings directly with groups of such organizations, to identify what they regarded as the most salient issues facing their organizations and those on which they would value more information. These groups also provided valuable insights into obstacles interviewers might face, with certain groups on certain questions, language constraints and issues of decorum within households.
The consultation threw up a range of perspectives on what was important in attempting to establish ethnicity or ethnic identity. These ranged from those who thought that any attempt at ethnic group classification was highly problematic and to be avoided, through those who emphasized the importance of collecting information on particular potential 'dimensions' of ethnicity, saw it as complementing ethnic group identification, such as migration histories, religious affiliation and so on, to those who prioritized classifications which would facilitate comparison with other sources (e.g. the Census) and allow consistency in measurement, even if some subtlety was lost.

There were also a large number of topics identified as being important to the study of ethnicity and ethnic groups. These have been summarized elsewhere (see links below), and covered (a) areas which were seen as important to understanding the meaning of ethnic 'group-ness' and the extent to which ethnic groups were groups by other criteria, by asking, for example, about social networks or experience of discrimination; (b) issues which were related to recent or more distant experience of immigration, such as transnational networks, remittances and so on; and (c) topics which were not directly related to any particular understandings of ethnicity or ethnic groups but which potentially varied across groups or revealed inequalities, including income, employment, health and so on.

As well as questions and topic areas, those we consulted also showed a lot of interest in the design and coverage of the oversample. This resulted in a number of interesting and lively discussions about what constituted a 'group', which groups were of particular and/or growing interest, and which were likely to constitute relevant populations for analysis in years to come, given that the survey re-interviews the same people year after year. These discussions highlighted issues around the ways that 'groups' come to be formed or recognized and the ways in which categories such as those imposed by censuses or other forms of data collection may change their membership and meaning over time.

Towards the end of last year, we drew together the main conclusions from the consultation process in terms of what ‘ethnic group’ questions should be asked, what were the priority topic areas for inclusion in the first wave of the survey (given tight constraints on total interview time and the pressures for space from other areas), and who should be included in the oversample (and who should be excluded from it) and how we should screen households to ensure we included the targeted groups. In making these sorts of decision, we were supported by an advisory committee with a wide range of expertise from across academia, government departments and the voluntary sector (including Runnymede). The advisory committee have also proved very helpful in challenging us to ensure that the ethnicity strand does not get lost or diluted within the survey as a whole.

With content for the first wave of the survey now established reasonably clearly, attention has partly shifted to practical implementation issues and to working with the survey organization, NatCen, on: indentifying target languages for translated questionnaires; ensuring effective translation processes; question ‘testing’ for new questions that have been developed to meet the priorities we identified; designing and checking the screen question which will determine who is included in the oversample and what they are asked; developing ‘door-step’ procedures for communicating with those who do not speak English as well as for those who are not selected for inclusion in the survey, and so on. Work is also ongoing on technical design issues relating to the sampling of households to screen for inclusion in the oversample.

These practical issues are all crucial to ensuring that we not only incorporate the three main elements of the ethnicity strand – identity questions, relevant content, and an oversample – into the UKHLS, but that we do so to as high as possible a standard that will ensure the survey is used by existing ethnicity researchers and engages future ones. When the questionnaire for the first year goes into the field in January 2009, we will begin to see if we have succeeded.

Meanwhile, we are also looking ahead to the second year of the survey and what content should be prioritized for that questionnaire. We already have some ideas from topics proposed in the previous consultation, questions which needed more development or wouldn’t fit into the first year’s questionnaire. But we are also interested in hearing further ideas, and welcome comments or communications at any time.

We are also thinking about dissemination for the first year’s data, and how we should support people in analysing it or in using findings emerging from it. To do this it will be important to return not only to those we have already been in contact with, but also to identify new audiences to engage with. We would be interested in hearing from you if you have suggestions or would like to know more about using the survey in the years ahead.

Lucinda Platt, University of Essex

Further information

- further information on the UKHLS see: http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/ukhls/
- summaries of the consultation on the ethnicity strand and priorities identified see: http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/ukhls/consult1/ethnicity/
- overview and proposed topic coverage for the overall survey see: www.iser.essex.ac.uk/ukhls/conference/docs/UKHLS_topic_content_Jan_10.pdf
- the membership of the advisory committee for the ethnicity strand, see: http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/ukhls/about/emac/

To contact Lucinda about the UKHLS, email: ukhls-consult-ethnicity@isrmail.essex.ac.uk or write to: Lucinda Platt, ISER, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, Essex CO4 3SQ or call 01206 873062.
The Census is the most important source of data on the population of the United Kingdom. From employment to housing and from family size to ethnicity the Census collects a wide range of data but also has an enormous impact on policy. This is because funding and delivery is in large part determined by the needs of various populations, and this is typically calculated on the basis of census figures.

Since 1991 the UK Census has included data on ethnicity. These questions are self-reported and included ten categories in 1991 and sixteen in 2001. They are probably familiar to readers because they are also those used on equal opportunity monitoring and other forms. Census categories are therefore important not only for government policy, but also impact the labour market and educational institutions.

Because of the centrality and importance of census data, it is important that the information is accurate and understandable. In the case of the ethnicity question, the changes between 1991 and 2001 responded to the increasing diversity of the UK population, especially the growth of the ‘mixed’ population, but also the diversity within the largest category, namely the ‘white’ group. The Government recently completed a consultation on whether and how to adapt these categories further for the 2011 Census, by which time the minority ethnic population of the UK will be considerably larger but also considerably more diverse.

There were over 600 responses to this consultation, although many of them were sent on behalf of campaigning organizations. Excluding repetitive responses, there were 297 unique responses, which the office for National Statistics (ONS) have divided among four different groups: 1. Central and devolved government (23); 2. Experts, community & special interest groups (139); 3. Local & regional government (89); and 4. Local service providers (46).

As ONS effectively summarize these responses in a number of documents, we will instead raise some of the key issues, including those for moving forward on the 2011 Census categories. Although we are deeply concerned with a number of the proposed changes, three key points must be understood first. First of all, the ethnicity and nationality questions are not and will not be the same for all of the countries in the UK; in particular the questions for England and Wales differ significantly from those in Scotland, a complication we have to sidestep in this review. Second, the 2011 question proposes a new question on ‘national identity’ in addition to ‘ethnic group’, as well as one on ‘language’. Third, to understand the proposed changes for the 2011 Census, we must first come to terms with the existing sixteen categories from the 2001 Census.

### Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2001 Census Question</th>
<th>2011 Proposed Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>White</strong></td>
<td><strong>White</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White British</td>
<td>Welsh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Irish</td>
<td>Other British</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Other</td>
<td>Irish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Any other white background, write in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mixed</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mixed</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White and Black Caribbean</td>
<td>White and Black Caribbean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White and Black African</td>
<td>White and Black African</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White and Asian</td>
<td>White and Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Mixed</td>
<td>Any other Mixed background, write in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asian or Asian British</strong></td>
<td><strong>Asian or Asian British</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>Indian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>Pakistani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Black or Black British</strong></td>
<td><strong>Black or Black British</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Caribbean</td>
<td>Black Caribbean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>Black African</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Other</td>
<td>Any other Black background, write in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chinese or any other ethnic group</strong></td>
<td><strong>Other ethnic group</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Arab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Gypsy/Romany/Irish Traveller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The ‘ethnic group’ question in Census 2001 and Census 2011

The ethnicity question for the 2001 census included ‘single group’ and ‘combined group’ categories (see Table 1). That is, each of the sixteen categories fits into five larger ‘combined group’ categories. These are ‘White’, ‘Black or Black British’, ‘Asian or Asian British’, ‘Mixed’ and ‘Chinese or any other ethnic group’. These larger categories are not obviously equivalent – two carry the term ‘British’ – and they combine race, geography and nationality in different ways. This is probably inevitable given the actual experience of race and ethnicity in the UK, but it partly explains why many experts and community groups are sceptical of the usefulness of these larger categories.

With respect to the ethnic group categorization, the major proposed changes are: 1. increased use of write-in categories; 2. a new ‘Welsh’ category; 3. a newly termed ‘Other British’ category; 4. moving the ‘Chinese’ category from the ‘Other’ combined group to the ‘Asian or Asian British’ heading; and, 5. adding two new named ethnic groups in the ‘Other ethnic group’ combined category, namely ‘Arab’ and ‘Gypsy/Romany/Irish Traveller’.

Before we assess the potential benefits and pitfalls of these proposed changes, it is worth trying to map the broader context in which the question on ethnicity operates. Considering the ethnic group categories one by one, it is immediately obvious that the groups are designed for respondents living in England and Wales, but that they do not fully capture their likely self-identification. To take one important example, the 2001 categories did not admit a ‘White English’ or ‘White Welsh’ response. Partly in response to this problem, a new question on ‘National Identity’ is being proposed for the 2011 Census.

National identity and ethnic group

There are in fact two reasons to amend the discussion on ethnic groups by adding a question on national identity (see Table 2). The first has already been alluded to, namely to disaggregate ethnicity, geography, nationality and race. A second group of reasons are more pragmatic (i.e. political), whether in response to the possibility of greater power or indeed independence for Scotland or Wales, or to address the increasingly torturous debate on ‘Britishness’ (for more discussion of this debate see the review of Multicultural Nationalism on p. 29 of this issue of the Bulletin).

Unfortunately, the proposed question on ‘national identity’ – particularly when combined with the lack of serious amendment to the ‘ethnic group’ question – raises more difficulties than it solves. In proposing these changes, the ONS should have offered greater symbiosis between the ‘national identity’ and ‘ethnic group’ questions. The proposed changes fail on this front in at least two serious ways. First, the ethnic group question continues to modify its characterization of two ‘combined’ groups – Black or Black British and Asian or Asian British – with the term ‘British’. This is not only inconsistent (the ‘White’, ‘Mixed’ and ‘Other’ groups carry no such designation), but incoherent in the context of a national identity question. What if certain respondents wish to declare themselves as ‘English’, ‘Welsh’ or ‘Scottish’ in terms of their national identity – are they still to be defined in terms of ‘British’ even if they identify contrariwise? If the Census is to treat the ethnic group category as a separate question from national identity, the combined categories must be more simply termed ‘Asian’ and ‘Black’.

The second problem is in fact more serious in terms of its political implications. This is that the majority of white respondents in England will be forced to choose ‘Other British’ as their ‘ethnic group’. While the combination of national identity and ethnic group is particularly confused in the case of white groups – deriving of course from the complicated multi-national nature of the British state – the equivocal response proposed in the Census test question is not so much an academic question as a political one. Consider the headlines if 85% of the country is required to identity as ‘Other British’ in terms of ethnicity. This will not only be confusing for the many white people who fail to identify as Welsh or Irish, but potentially alienate a good number of white citizens and even give succour to the arguments of far-right English and British nationalists. And on the other hand, the term ‘Other British’ in this context suggests that Welsh and Irish are also simply sub-sets of the category ‘British’, an implication that not a few Welsh and Irish may find objectionable.

It is hard to understand how the ONS could have got this question so spectacularly wrong. The only possible explanation is that the terms ‘English’ and ‘Scottish’ were considered too politically difficult to concede as ethnic categories. But whatever the sensibility of that view, it is hard to see how the term ‘Other British’
as an ethnic designation gets around those problems. In fact, on any plausible understanding of national identity and ethnic group, it is more credible to argue for Englishness as an ethnic category and Britishness as a national identity. That white people in the UK often (or even typically) have a mixed English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish and perhaps other European background means that all of those identities should have been suggested as possible responses to the ethnic group question.

**Respondents to the consultation**

Only 22% of all respondents to this consultation said they were satisfied with the single ethnic group categories in the test question, a remarkably low figure. At the same time, however, more than 80% of respondents needed ethnicity information, suggesting that the categories must be seriously amended between now and 2011.

Although respondents didn’t agree on the specific way this should be done, they seem to have agreed that the ethnic group question in general required greater refinement or sophistication. Such demands included greater disaggregation of the ‘combined’ categories – to include, for example, Polish, Cypriots and Turks, or Indonesian, Sri Lankan and Vietnamese, while others called for greater specificity of existing categories, such as Nigerian, Somali and Sudanese within the African ethnic group. Other groups also requested new categories, often supported by campaigning organizations as in the case of Cornish, Jewish, Kashmiri and Sikh groups.

It is worth pointing out an important divergence of opinion between government and other service providers and ‘experts, community and special interest groups’. In their overview of the responses, the ONS sometimes glosses these data in a misleading way, and in particular obscures some important disagreements. For example, while the document summary states that ‘the majority of respondents were satisfied with each of the combined group categories’ the closely related question of whether the proposed ethnic group categories were suitable for user needs garnered only 25% agreement. Furthermore, there was a stark difference of opinion between government and experts on this question, as Table 3 reveals.

Table 3. Suitability of the proposed ethnic group categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Combined Ethnic Groups</th>
<th>Single Ethnic group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes  No Partially</td>
<td>Yes  No Partially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central &amp; devolved government</td>
<td>36 45 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts, community &amp; special interest groups</td>
<td>14 71 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local &amp; regional government</td>
<td>30 33 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local service providers</td>
<td>42 42 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All respondents</td>
<td>25 52 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts, community &amp; special interest groups</td>
<td>14 71 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local &amp; regional government</td>
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<td>Local service providers</td>
<td>42 42 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All respondents</td>
<td>25 52 23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The importance of the Census in terms of policy obviously means that the ONS is sensitive to those considerations. However, as this consultation responses reveal, this is only one standard by which to evaluate the suitability of ethnic group and other Census categories. We might instead respond to the actual experience of various individuals in the UK, and some of the existing questions may not best fit the identities or indeed the objective needs of various groups. At the same time, there are significant political implications for characterizing people in particular ways. Ethnic group categories can theoretically ‘create’ particular kinds of interest groups, but in the case of the 2011 Census the greater concern is that it may confuse or even alienate a large majority of the population.

If the 2011 Census doesn’t respond more sensitively to the experiences of minority ethnic groups in the UK, and doesn’t better apprehend the political difficulties in discussions on nationality, the questions on ‘ethnic group’ and ‘national identity’ will fail to achieve their important aims.
Young Children and Racial Justice

Jane Lane

This book has taken more than three years completely out of my life — a totally exhausting experience. So why have I written it?

I am passionate about playing a part in getting rid of racism. It has haunted me ever since Kelso Cochrane was murdered by a gang of white men in Notting Hill in 1958, near where I was living. But it is so institutionalized, so much a part of the ‘system’, its tentacles so embedded in our society that the task is almost overwhelming. It feels as if many people just do not care whether it exists or not.

I decided, with others, many years ago to focus on the early years of children’s lives as being key to trying to break the cycle of learning racist attitudes from generation to generation and thus beginning part of the process of breaking down racism.

Research evidence over 50 years shows that young children ‘notice’ skin colour differences by the age of three and, unless specific action is taken to counter it, very many express racist attitudes to those with skin colours that are not white. By working with families and early years workers in early years settings and with local and national government departments we aimed to identify and address both individual and institutional practices and procedures that not only so clearly discriminated against black children but also distorted the lives of many children, both black and white — racially prejudiced attitudes are not confined to white children although it is only white ones who maintain powerful positions in society and are able to act them out as they grow to adulthood. This is the sad and depressing reality of racism.

But despite the work of many individuals, a few organizations, an increase in resources, training and written information, race relations legislation and some important moves by government both nationally and locally, there remains a significant lack of knowledge about what racial equality means in practice. This lack is reflected in a failure to understand why, in 2008, it is necessary to acknowledge the existence of racism, its connection with early years work, and particularly its institutional aspects, if practice is to be built on solid antiracist foundations. Crucially, many black families have seen little real change over the years.

Although much has already been written in the early years field about what is considered to be good practice for racial equality, little has been said about racism. Similarly training, qualifications, national standards, curriculum documents, inspection frameworks and government policies, procedures and guidance, while being greatly improved with the advent of the national childcare strategy, do not acknowledge the existence of racism or the statutory requirements of the law. The consequences of this mean that, although most people somehow know that racism is bad, they do not see its relevance in the early years or its implications for them personally.

To compound this, people are apprehensive about discussing racial equality issues. They fear being accused of being racist, of making terminological errors, of being made to feel guilty and of being found inadequate and lacking in knowledge. It is far easier to avoid this wherever possible.

If people take time to understand what racism is — that they are not personally responsible for it unless they fail to take responsibility to do something about it — some of this apprehension will be removed. One of the significant barriers to getting rid of racism lies in a reluctance and fear of talking about it, understanding it and to working out ways together of removing it.

I have written this book with the aim of demystifying racism and its implications for early years policies, practices and procedures. I have tried to define it, to analyse it, to explain it and to consider some of the anxieties and questions that many early years workers may think about. With this understanding I hope readers will approach all other aspects of the issues discussed with open and questioning minds. I have tried to be non-threatening, sensitive, compassionate and understanding of the variety of perspectives and backgrounds with which people arrive in the early years field — from workers in early years settings to national and local government, to researchers, inspectors, trainers, policy makers and even government ministers. At all times I suggest everyone tries to work within a no-blame culture.

That is why I have written this book. A well-known sculptor friend of mine once came to talk with some of my evening class students. When they asked him if anyone bought his sculpture he said that not many people wanted his work. They asked why he didn’t make what they wanted. He replied that if he did he would be making garden gnomes.

He was absolutely right. I have not written a book that people may prefer (garden gnomes). I have written what I hope is constructive and what I think is needed. Whether others agree is another matter!
‘Race’ and Domestic Violence in the Media

Zohra Moosa analyses how violence against ethnic minority women is reported in the media and demonstrates how ‘culture’ has replaced ‘ethnicity’ in mainstream discourses on race.

Runnymede’s recent report, *A Tale of Two Englands*, aims to demonstrate how the use of ‘culture’ as an explanatory framework within media reporting on violent crime that affects ethnic minorities is highly racialized. Monitoring two months of newspaper coverage, it examines the place of race and ethnicity of victims and perpetrators in media discourses to demonstrate how particular ethnic ‘communities’ are ascribed pathological cultures, while structural reasons for crime trends and patterns are ignored. In this way the report helpfully provides additional evidence on the theory that ‘culturalism is the new racism’ (e.g. Tariq Modood, 2005).1

Unfortunately, the report deliberately excludes sexual and domestic violence from its analysis on the basis that it would have been difficult to compare violence committed by family members with violence between relative strangers. However, analysing how violence against ethnic minority women is reported in the media offers critically different evidence of how ‘culture’ has replaced ‘ethnicity’ in mainstream discourses on race. Moreover, the problematic use of culture also becomes more evident: ‘culturalist’ framings of violence against ethnic minority women are undermining women’s safety on the one hand and their options for justice on the other. Where women should be expecting support and protection from violence, and proportionate response from the criminal justice system as victims, ethnic minority women are facing lower standards of professional response, misdiagnoses of dangers and threats they face, and racialized categorizing of the gender-based crimes against them.

The use of ‘honour’ as a cultural lens on violence against women

As *A Tale of Two Englands* predicts, the reporting of so-called ‘honour killings’ provides particularly useful examples of how culturalism is the new arm of racism. The case of Banaz Mahmod is one worth examining in some detail as coverage of her murder was widespread.

Banaz Mahmod was raped and strangled in January 2006 after having contacted the police four times for help, and naming her murderers (including her father and uncle) as a threat at least twice. According to evidence from the trial, not only did the police fail to protect Banaz, they actually neglected to file a report of her allegations and also increased the danger she was in by informing her parents of her claims.2

This lack of a professional response and the exacerbation of the danger Banaz Mahmod faced by the police are widely acknowledged in the press coverage of the trial of Banaz’s father and uncle.3 What is interesting about many of the reports, however, is the fact that the reprimands in the media stories are directed at the police for not recognizing that Banaz was becoming a victim of honour-crime — not for failing to intervene in a case of domestic violence. Stories in several different newspapers on 12 June 2007 about the police failings, for instance, all put forward the forefront that Banaz was a victim of honour-based violence (first sentence in the *Guardian*, headline in the *Independent*, headline in the *Telegraph*, third sentence in *The Times* and first sentence in *The Daily Mail*). Background stories on Banaz’s case juxtapose the recorded ‘transgressing kiss’ against ‘British culture’, specifically citing Banaz’s father’s Iraqi, Kurdish and Muslim backgrounds as relevant and explanatory in his murder of his daughter.4 The *Times* article, moreover, argues that it was the police’s failure to adopt the relevant police guidelines on honour-based crimes that led to Banaz’s murder.5

In framing the police’s poor response to the threats on Banaz Mahmod’s life as a lack of understanding about honour-based crime, the media constructs the failure of the police to protect Banaz as a technocratic challenge, rather than an issue of gross negligence or incompetence to a victim of gender-based violence. In turn, this framing allows poor police response to be more readily excused through explanations such as officers not having sufficient training on honour-based violence or the police not understanding the cultural nuances at play. Instead of holding the police to account for its failure to deliver a professional service to all who walk through its doors, the ‘mistakes’ made in Banaz’s case are positioned within a particular, complicated, different space; in this space, a mainstream service like the police has replaced ‘ethnicity’ in mainstream discourses on race.2

2 http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2007/jun/01/ukcrime.karenmcveigh.
4 http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2007/jun/12/ukcrime.prisonandprobation.
6 http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.html#id=1770.
9 E.g. http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/crime/article1918019.ece.
10 E.g. http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/crime/article1918014.ece.
11 One article that did not fit this type includes this one from *The Sun*: http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/article237947.ece.
The ascription of ‘honour’ as a racializing phenomenon

In the media stories about Banaz Mahmod discussed above, honour-crime is framed as a cultural phenomenon on the one hand, and as particular to certain ethnic groups on the other. It is this slippage between problematic ‘traditions’ and their ascription to certain ethnic groups that culturalism is about. For example, in two of the articles, reporters argue that Banaz’s father and uncle felt justified in their actions because of the ‘shame’ they felt at Banaz’s behaviour because of their Kurdish, and non-Western, backgrounds. In deliberately linking ‘honour-crime’ to an ethnic group in this way, and strategically framing it as a cultural phenomenon, the ascription of honour by the media becomes a racializing process: some ethnic minorities are subject to ‘cultural traditions of honour’ that white people and other ethnic minorities are not. The delineation of difference uses ‘culture’ as a reference point, but race as a marker (i.e. Kurdishness).

The BBC’s multimedia coverage offers telling examples of this process. In a number of pieces, its reporters go to great lengths to discuss how Banaz had left an arranged marriage, how she was part of a ‘close-knit Kurdish community’, and how her relationships with her father and uncle were apparently exclusively constructed in terms of notions of honour and shame — a neat package that can clearly be tagged as ‘culturally different’. For example, in ‘How “honour killing” investigation unfolded’, the BBC notes that the police argue they faced difficulties in handling Banaz’s case because of the ‘closed nature of London’s Kurdish community’. The BBC does not point out the fact that her sister and partner were both available for interview, that Banaz herself had reported to the police four times, and that evidence in a murder case would presumably be difficult to come by in any ‘community’. More remarkably, the BBC seems oblivious to its framing of the investigation even though within the same segment, Jasvinder Sareen seemed oblivious to its framing of the investigation even though within the same segment, Jasvinder Sareen was part of a ‘close-knit Kurdish community’, and its reporters go to great lengths to discuss how she was part of a ‘close-knit Kurdish community’, and how her relationships with her father and uncle were apparently exclusively constructed in terms of notions of honour and shame — a neat package that can clearly be tagged as ‘culturally different’.

For example, in ‘How “honour killing” investigation unfolded’, the BBC notes that the police argue they faced difficulties in handling Banaz’s case because of the ‘closed nature of London’s Kurdish community’. The BBC does not point out the fact that her sister and partner were both available for interview, that Banaz herself had reported to the police four times, and that evidence in a murder case would presumably be difficult to come by in any ‘community’. More remarkably, the BBC seems oblivious to its framing of the investigation even though within the same segment, Jasvinder Sareen was part of a ‘close-knit Kurdish community’, and its reporters go to great lengths to discuss how she was part of a ‘close-knit Kurdish community’, and how her relationships with her father and uncle were apparently exclusively constructed in terms of notions of honour and shame — a neat package that can clearly be tagged as ‘culturally different’.

In its Today Programme, for instance, the BBC dedicates an entire segment to discussing ‘the Kurdish community’ entitled ‘“Honour killing”: Kurd culture’. Billing the programme as ‘The BBC’s Today Programme investigates life within the Kurdish community in response to the “honour killing” of Banaz Mahmod’, the BBC thus defines being Kurdish as synonymous with honour killing. This is a mistake for two obvious reasons. Firstly, the ‘Kurdish community’ is not a monolith. Organizations such as the Iranian and Kurdish Women’s Rights Organisation actively campaign against ‘honour oppression’. Second, honour crimes exist outside of Kurdish communities. They have been reported by Catholics and other Christians, as well as by Hindus and Sikhs; they occur in Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, South America and South Asia; and honour ‘defences’ are permitted in the penal codes of Argentina, Bangladesh, Ecuador, Egypt, Guatemala, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, the Occupied Territories, Peru, Syria and Venezuela.

Similarly, in an interview with Banaz’s sister, BBC’s Ben Geoghegan asks Bekhal Mahmod whether she thinks her ‘father and those members of your family of his generation felt that Banaz was bringing shame on them’, Yet Bekhal Mahmod’s descriptions of her experiences at home chime more with notions of control and coercion — familiar conceptual territory for anyone with even basic knowledge about domestic violence. Bekhal does not use the words ‘shame’ or ‘honour’ to explain her father’s treatment of her or Banaz even after Geoghegan introduces the idea. Geoghegan continues this line of thinking when he asks Bekhal what advice she would offer to ‘other Muslim women who might be living in a forced marriage or living in a family environment where they’re at home but living in fear’. Not only is it unclear that Banaz’s marriage was forced (several accounts name it as ‘arranged’), but she was divorced and had moved back in with her parents when she was murdered. In addition, Geoghegan’s tactics to refer to ‘other Muslim women’ suggests that he thinks domestic violence for Muslim women is inherently different to the domestic violence that 25% of British women will face in their lifetime.

To be fair, Geoghegan may have been attempting to be ‘culturally sensitive’: as Bekhal sat across from him in full burka, he may have assumed that she would welcome acknowledgement of her religion in some way. Unfortunately against the backdrop of the rest of the interview and other examples of the BBC’s coverage, it becomes obvious that it is this so-called cultural sensitivity that is the problem. The BBC, like other media outlets, allowed the idea of ‘culture’ to over-determine how violence against ethnic minority women is perceived. As a result, what could otherwise be treated as one manifestation of the broader problem that is violence against women is framed as particular and peculiar to specific ethnic minorities.

Conclusion

Obviously honour-based crime is a real challenge and does need specialized interventions. In foregrounding the ‘honour’ element of the violent crime in press reporting, however, the media effaces the broader – and mainstream – lessons around violence against women, including appropriate police response to women victims of violence and also ethnic minority victims, and the role of patriarchal
structures and patterns of male abuse that typify all gender-based violence against women. For example, it is widely acknowledged that women victims of gender-based violence face extremely poor police responses. The Fawcett Society’s recent campaign on justice for rape victims, for instance, highlighted how failings in basic police protocol directly contribute to the scandalously low rape conviction rate.17 Similarly, there is plenty of evidence that the criminal justice system is institutionally racist, while campaign groups such as Southall Black Sisters have exposed how ethnic minority women face particular challenges in accessing justice and protection from the police.

The problem then is much deeper than the failure to implement special guidelines on honour. On the one hand, the police have yet to demonstrate that they provide fair treatment to women victims of domestic violence generally. On the other, the police have yet to prove that they will provide equitable treatment to ethnic minority women when they report equivalent injustices as white women. The media’s decision to emphasize the ‘honour’ element of Banaz’s murder makes her experience about her Kurdishness and Muslimness, rather than about structural challenges such as patriarchy and how the police treated her. As A Tale of Two Englands also reveals, this rendering, moreover, allows the reader to make the mistake of passing judgement on Kurdish and Muslim ‘culture’ – which only Kurdish and Muslim people have – as the culprits in Banaz Mahmood’s murder.

(Re)thinking ‘Gangs’

Runnymede’s latest Perspectives publication is an analysis by Claire Alexander of the concept of the ‘gang’ and what it means. Here, Kjartan Páll Sveinsson puts the analysis in the context of the recent political agenda.

In Runnymede’s latest publication in the Perspectives series, Claire Alexander takes a critical look at the concept of the ‘gang’ and its meaning in political and public discourses. The paper explores the concept through three interrelated sets of questions. How has the concept of the ‘gang’ been constructed in the media, and how do politicians and policy makers both pick up on and feed into this construction? How does the criminological and sociological research on ‘gangs’ in the US and UK explain the current situation, and are these explanations useful? What are the assumptions underlying the current debate on ‘gangs’, and what are the consequences of looking at youth violence through this lens?

The paper outlines and analyses a number of dangers inherent in the development of the public discourse around ‘gangs’ – one of which is the speed at which the “gang” has moved from mythmaking to policy making (p. 7) – and identifies politicians’ and public institutions’ uncritical adoption of the term as the crux of the problem. Although there are certain signs of ‘gang’ fatigue in the press (none of the murders in 2008 have received the intense media scrutiny that many of the high profile cases of 2007 attracted), teen-on-teen murders are still high up on the political agenda. Indeed, political exploitation and manipulation of the ‘gang’ problem appears to be picking up pace. Boris Johnson made the fight against ‘gang culture’ the central plank of his campaign to become the Mayor of London. ‘It is time we got a grip on the culture of the gangs and gang-related killings’, he professed on backboris.com,1 although his actual policies were substantially more modest. Following Johnson’s victory in the race for the mayorality and Labour’s colossal losses in the May 1 local elections, the Government has launched a major fightback in order to recapture control of the political agenda. The fight against ‘gangs’ is part and parcel of this campaign, and features prominently in the section on ‘Law reform, victims and witnesses bill’ in the Government’s Draft Legislative Programme 2008/09.

With crime a constant contender for the top seat of the British public’s biggest concerns,2 the spectre of ‘gangs’ is likely to be one of the guiding topics for the political agenda in the coming months and years. As a result, we can expect to see the emergence of more policies along the lines of the ‘in-your-face’ policing of youth (in the words of MPS Assistant Commissioner Tim Godwin),3 and the extension of police stop-and-search powers which is finding its way back onto the political agenda. With the offhand and uncritical association between ‘gang culture’ and the African Caribbean ‘community’, concerns about the effect on relations between the police and black people are not entirely groundless. Indeed, one would even be excused for fearing that 15 years of police investment in building trust could shortly and swiftly be undone.

In any case, it will be interesting to monitor the political landscape in the near future, and how the ‘tougher-than-thou’ rhetoric – which is gaining political momentum at a frightening pace – will translate into policies on youth and criminal justice. This report, however, urges a critical rethink of the ‘gang’ in policy and practice. If our understanding of ‘the gang’ is based on a construct of the media, politicians and policy makers rather than empirical evidence, it is actually getting in the way of thinking about effective responses to youth violence. [1]
South Africans

In the Runnymede’s latest Community Study, Kjartan Páll Sveinsson looks at one of the largest foreign national groups in the UK.

South Africans are one of the largest foreign national groups in the UK. According to the 2001 census, there were 132,300 South Africans living in Britain in that year, but analysts expect this figure to be closer to 750,000.¹ This places them amongst the most populous immigrant groups in the UK. South Africans are not by any means invisible – there are numerous South African bars and shops across London as well as newspapers and sport magazines, and a number of South African expatriates have become well known figures in British public life. Nonetheless, as an immigrant group they have sparked little interest in the national media – certainly much less than far smaller groups such as Romanians² – or indeed in academic research.³ Phrases such as ‘community cohesion’ and ‘ethnic segregation’ are seldom evoked when speaking of South African migrants, and South Africans are not considered to be adding to the migrant pressure on public services such as housing.

South African migration to the UK has a long history, and has seen a number of peaks: most notably in the periods of 1960-1, 1976-9, 1984-6 and from 1999 to more or less the present day. During apartheid, these were mostly reactions to political and social events in South Africa, such as the Sharpeville Massacre of 1960 and the Soweto uprising of 1976, as well as a series of legislative changes cementing the realities of apartheid. The latest wave, however, has been triggered by a number of factors, including concerns about violence and high crime rates, a struggling economy and job insecurity, declining quality of public services, and general pessimism about the future of South Africa. At the end of apartheid, Archbishop Desmond Tutu coined the term Rainbow Nation to capture South Africa’s ethnic and cultural diversity. This diversity is apparent in the demographic makeup of the South African presence in Britain. Proportionately, however, these communities are not representative of South Africa; while the overwhelming majority of South Africans are black, the reverse appears to be true in the UK. Accurate figures are hard to come by, as the 2001 census is likely to be out of date. However, the biggest group is without doubt white South Africans. Although the ratio between English speakers and Afrikaners is unclear, some interviewees suggested that Afrikaners could currently comprise up to a quarter of all South Africans in the UK, and that their numbers are growing. The Jewish South African community is also notable, which according to the 2001 census, comprises 9% of South Africans in London.

The themes discussed in the report differ in significant ways from Runnymede’s previous Community Studies. South Africans are affluent and well off relative to many other migrant communities, such as Bolivians or Vietnamese. For instance, the South African employment rate is amongst the highest in London, with a notable concentration in high paid sectors of employment.⁴ Thus, a comparison between South Africans and other migrant groups can be revealing in many ways. For example, the visa application process has become a professionalised and remunerative business, with a number of companies and agencies offering to manage the whole process of UK programmes, work permits and visas available to South Africans. As one interviewee put it:

The whole thing has been professionalized now, so you don’t even go through governments … as a South African you’re dealing with a professionally run company, and you say ‘Do you think I’ll be able to do X, Y and Z? Will I be able to get this kind of visa?’ They process everything for you, they give you an answer back.

In this way, South Africans have access to resources not readily available to less affluent migrant groups, and are therefore more likely to be successful in their visa or work permit applications.⁵ Furthermore, many South Africans are eligible to enter the UK on ancestry visas, which give permission to stay and work for five years and the right to apply for permanent residency. Many of the interviewees of this study had entered Britain this way. The concept of ancestry visas raises problematic questions about access to citizenship, as it implies that some people are genetically more entitled to citizenship than are others. This is particularly apparent in the case of South Africa, where the ‘ancestry’ lines are clearly drawn along racial categories.

However, South Africans can also teach us a lot about how migrant groups can successfully organize themselves in order to optimize their opportunities in Britain. Throughout the apartheid period, South Africans were able to organize themselves, and the exile diaspora, centred in Britain, played an instrumental part in the fight against apartheid. Today, South Africans are an immigrant success story, with a high employment rate and concentration in highly paid sectors. They have also managed to elude anti-immigrant sentiments from the right wing press in a way EU8 migrants have not.
Celebrate Gypsy History Month

Sharon Yemoh describes a month-long celebration of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller history and culture, and explains why it is important, whilst recognizing the discrimination these communities face, to use the celebration of their history and culture as a positive tool in the anti-discrimination fight.

This June, England celebrates the first national Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month (GRTHM). Romani Travellers have lived in England for over five hundred years, and the Irish Traveller community has been present in England for at least one hundred and fifty years. With roots stemming back this far, GRTHM will provide a much-needed occasion to celebrate, learn and share the cultural diversity that GRT contribute to the UK.

Numbering over 12 million, Gypsies, Roma and Travellers are the European Union’s largest ethnic minority community, and in the UK it is estimated that they number around 300,000. Whilst GRTHM is a celebration of this group’s culture, identity and history, even in the UK the complex diversity within the group affords a rich exploration of difference. For example, migrating from northern India in the first century, Romany Travellers first arrived in Britain in the sixteenth century. Irish Travellers on the other hand, are indigenous to Ireland, with many settling in Britain from the 1950s onwards. Yet although their presence in Europe spans hundreds of years, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers continue to be the most marginalized ethnic community and are subjected to discrimination and prejudice in extreme forms. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller inclusion and equality is at the forefront of EU social inclusion agendas. The 2005-2015 Decade of Roma Inclusion marks a regional political commitment by Central and Southern European governments to improve the socio-economic status of Roma. International Roma day, celebrated annually on April 8, is another occasion to celebrate and confront exclusion. Whilst the importance of these initiatives cannot be discounted, as Romani Scholar Ian Hancock asserts, ‘a proper understanding of the contemporary situation of Romanies can only be reached in the context of history’.² It is important to recognize the discrimination that Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities face, but it is equally important to use the celebration of history and culture as a positive tool in the anti-discrimination fight.

In 2001 with support of the local Irish Traveller Community, GRTHM was organized in Brent by Rocky Deans, Head of the Traveller Education Service. Following this success, in 2004 a number of organizations lobbied for a nationwide GRTHM. In 2006, Lord Adonis, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools, gave his support to GRTHM, adding that ‘We can challenge myths, tackle prejudice and be in a position to offer a balanced debate about the issues’.³ Various events for all will be taking place all over the country ranging from football tournaments, music events, talks and presentations, workshops and storytelling. A full listing of the events are available on the official GRTHM website www.grthm.co.uk.

Originating from Indo-Aryan languages over two thousand years ago, the Romani language is based on the ancient Indian language of Sanskrit from which Hindi and Urdu are also derived. Over time Romani has evolved into numerous dialects and has also been influenced by local speech and currently at least sixty different Romani dialects exist worldwide. Many scholars have explored the linguistic complexity of Romani. However, Gypsy Dialects seeks to bridge the gap between the intricate studies of the language to more accessible learning tools. Its purpose is to provide resources for those who want to learn to speak and understand the language. The book is a descriptive and evaluative list of materials in various formats useful for both Rom and Gadže (non Roma). The resources are broken down into printed resources, Internet and electronic resources, and audio recordings and broadcasts. Proctor usefully provides commentaries on each entry enabling readers to assess if the resource will be suitable for their needs. As well as its value as a resource, Gypsy Dialects also provides an overview of a short account of the terminology and scholarship of Romani, and Proctor also explores the issue of Romani being a ‘secretive’ language. All the entries in Gypsy Dialects are up to date and new additional materials will also be posted on the publisher’s website providing an ongoing resource for continual learning.

¹ GRTHM website www.grthm.co.uk, accessed on 4 May 2008.
³ Quoted on GRTHM website, accessed on 4 May 2008.

Gypsy Dialects: A Selective Annotated Bibliography of Materials for the Practical Study of Romani
Edward Proctor
Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 2008
Pp. 128; £50/US$100.00; ISBN 978 1 902806 48 8

Gypsy Dialects
A selecte annotated bibliography of materials for the practical study of Romani
Edward Proctor

Sharon Yemoh is a UKREN intern at the Runnymede Trust.
Critical Thinking about the Uses of Research

Reece Walters and Tim Hope
Centre for Crime and Justice Studies, 2008
Pp. 44; Free to download: www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/evidencebasedpolicy.html; ISBN: 978 0 9548903 6 1
Reviewed by Kjartan Páll Sveinsson

Evidence based policy making’ is a phrase many have come to associate with New Labour. It feels good, sounds credible and effective, and fills the public with confidence. Yet what do we actually know about the current state of evidence based policy making? According to a new monograph by the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies – Critical Thinking about the Uses of Research by esteemed criminologists Reece Walters and Tim Hope – not an awful lot. The Government conceals, suppresses and manipulates not only evidence itself (Walters), but also obscures the methods of gathering this evidence (Hope).

The arguments put forth in the monograph are pretty straightforward, but hard hitting and shocking to the layperson. Hope demonstrates, through a case study, that in spite of claims to transparency, the Home Office peer review process is obfuscated to a point where it fundamentally contradicts the democratic principles of academic peer review. Meanwhile, Walters states in unambiguous terms that Home Office research is essentially so biased that it is not only scientifically useless, but politically dangerous as well. The storyline, as far as Walters is concerned, goes like this: the Government hypes a new approach to policy making, one which is research led and evidence based; the Government then increases funding for external research by 500%; the Home Office peer review process is obfuscated to the point where it fundamentally contradicts the Home Office’s claims to transparency; the evidence cited is not drawn from the extensive body of independent academic research on the issue, but a collection of nine focus groups – organized by the Central Office for Information on behalf of the Border and Immigration Agency. Intriguingly, even the Home Office’s evidence itself contradicts the proposed policies. Even the least sardonic of commentators would take this as an indication that real evidence would in fact dispute the claims made in the Green Paper and are therefore ignored. Indeed, when Runnymede conducted its research into ASBOs, our experience was similar to that described by Walters and Hope; this was exactly what we encountered. The evidence base on which ASBOs were grounded was pretty thin from the very beginning, and our research revealed that there was no particular intention of collecting data such as ethnic monitoring.

Walters and Hope’s monograph focuses exclusively on criminal justice research, which received 68% of the total Home Office research budget in 2006-7. But selectivity is not confined to criminal justice system policies, and their critique should be heeded by researchers in other disciplines as well. The Green Paper The Path to Citizenship: Next Steps in Reforming the Immigration System, for instance, has a chapter outlining the evidence used in drafting quite drastic policies which will, if pushed through, have a pronounced impact on a large number of people. The evidence cited is not drawn from the extensive body of independent academic research on the issue, but a collection of nine focus groups – organized by the Central Office for Information on behalf of the Border and Immigration Agency. Intriguingly, even this methodologically unsound evidence contradicts the proposed policies. Even the least sardonic of commentators would take this as an indication that real evidence would in fact dispute the claims made in the Green Paper and are therefore ignored.

The Centre for Crime and Justice Studies monograph is valuable for third sector organizations, as it exposes the impasse many of us encounter when challenging seemingly badly conceived policies. On issues ranging from single-group funding to gang violence, voluntary and campaign groups as well as think tanks and NGOs should be working with academics and social science researchers to produce and promote critical knowledge and counter-hegemonic ideas. It’s an alliance we would all gain from.
A multicultural English civic identity depends to an extent, it is sometimes argued, on the creation and evolution of devolved elected government in the English regions analogous to developments in Wales and Scotland… the development of a Britain as a community of communities is not about ‘multi-ethnic Britain’ alone; it is for the benefit of all people, not just so-called minorities, and is dependent on much more than just race-specific policies. (The Commission on the Future of Multi-ethnic Britain: 8-9)

When the Commission on the Future of Multi-ethnic Britain called for Britain to be recognized as a community of communities as well as a community of citizens it had in mind the many different ‘groups, interests and identities, from Home Counties English to Gaels, Geordies and Mancunians to Liverpudlians, Irish to Pakistanis, African-Caribbeans to Indians’ (p. 10). Whatever one’s evaluation of the Commission’s framework, it had the undoubted benefit of trying to understand the diversity of all the groups in the UK, focusing not only on ethnic or racial diversity, but also national diversity in the form of the Irish, Welsh and Scottish.

The main theme driving Multicultural Nationalism is that our discussion on these matters remains divided into two languages or frameworks. We talk of ‘multiculturalism’ when we refer to ethnic or racial (or increasingly religious) diversity, while we think of ‘multinationalism’ or indeed devolution as referring to Wales and perhaps more so to Scotland. Based on a large number of interviews, the authors of this book explain how that division is incapable of capturing the experience of the two largest minorities in Scotland, namely the Pakistani and English communities.

This volume helpfully reminds non-Scottish readers that the dominant SNP view of Scottish nationalism is not overtly ‘ethnic’ but a ‘civic’ model of nationalism (while it also recognizes the problems with that distinction). The empirically-based discussions of Pakistani and English views of Scottishness, and in particular how devolution has eased intergroup tensions, is also valuable. At the same time, Hussein and Miller recognize the existing level of racism in Scotland and indeed Anglophobia. In fact, one of their more interesting arguments is that Islamophobia and racism in Scotland may be weaker because of a greater level of dislike against a more important common ‘other’, namely the English.

From a UK-based or British perspective the book offers some real dilemmas. In the first place, it finds very little allegiance to the notion of Britishness – including among Pakistani Scots – in Scotland, thus suggesting that any attempts to link that identity to ‘shared values’ is likely to be unsuccessful. In fact, the views of Scottish Pakistanis – while clearly beneficial for community relations in Scotland – are troubling from a wider UK perspective. Many of the respondents apparently believe that BME communities in England live in ‘ghettos’, have failed to integrate, and some even report prejudicial views about other minority ethnic groups in, for example, London.

As the volume recognizes, the Pakistani experience in Scotland is marked by being a smaller and better off community than their counterparts in England. This arguably creates different opportunities for interaction with other groups in society, but cannot be viewed as normatively better than more large-scale immigration. In fact, the strength of the volume – its strong empirical study of English and Pakistani immigrants in Scotland – also leads to a number of weaknesses.

First, the views of respondents on life in England and BME communities in particular are unlikely to be appreciated by those of us who live south of the border. Second, while people in Scotland – particularly those in support of full independence – obviously have the right to define themselves in line with their experiences and ambitions, jettisoning the category of ‘Britishness’ has greater knock-on effects than simply defining the English as an ‘other’ of Scottish identity. In particular, BME groups in England – most of whom continue to identify as British – are simply ignored on any version of ‘Anglophobia’. This speaks to the quote at the top of this piece, namely whether or not a more ‘civic’ notion of Englishness can be constructed to capture the aspirations and identities of BME people, a project perhaps most notably pursued by Billy Bragg.

Third, and perhaps most puzzling, is the claim that Pakistani and Scottish people can unite against English imperialism. This is odd because the idea of ‘British’ identity was perhaps most obviously forged in the operation of the British Empire, in particular the large-scale participation of Scots in administering the Empire, from the Caribbean to Africa to India to Australia. For South Asians (including Pakistanis), their experience of colonialism was targeted against the British (or even ‘Britishers’) – which included English, Scots and indeed Irish as the colonial masters. If Scotland was indeed ‘imperialized’ by England, we must remember that British India was rather ruled by ‘Britain’, which notably
In this enlightening book, Stephen Ball reminds us about the usefulness of ‘policy sociology’ in helping us understand the directions of education policy. Standing back from the policy fray, he thoughtfully situates New Labour education policy within the broader historical sweep of English post-war education policy and the international trends (or policy epidemics) in education which have seen similar policy approaches developed across national borders. His introduction to key concepts should be required reading both for those engaged in policy making processes and those seeking to influence change in education. Ball’s key argument is that:

The social and economic purposes of education have been collapsed into a single over-riding emphasis on policy making for economic competitiveness and an increasing neglect or sidelining (other than in rhetoric) of the social purposes of education.

Discourse in education policy which revolves around modernization, innovation, transformation, productivity, international competition, and delivery are seen as symptoms of the drive to make public sectors more businesslike. It is a small step from here to one of New Labour’s key arguments that business should become more involved in education. Ball effectively charts the ways in which increasing engagement with the private sector is not a whim or simply a result of big business interests, but central to an understanding of the way in which the ‘old’ public sector must be transformed to face up to ‘new’ challenges. Such discourse has a way of limiting policy options and perhaps indicates why both government and opposition currently present very similar programmes for ongoing educational reform.

Ball provides an insight into the ‘policy technologies’ used in order to ‘transform and discipline public sector organizations and to link the processes and endeavours of such organizations to the political economy of global competition’. Practitioners and policy analysts alike will recognize these tools, many of which can be traced back to the Labour government’s first White Paper ‘Excellence in Schools’: top-down performance management, competition and contestability, choice and voice, and capability and capacity. Having provided a means of understanding the directions of current education policy (no mean feat given the amount, complexity and rhetorical obfuscation of recent policy development), Ball is then able to offer his key critique, namely that equity is no longer a value in its own right in policy. In his section of race equality in education, Ball notes that ‘equity issues in English education are marked more than anything else by a history of policy avoidance’.

Having provided a means of understanding the directions of policy, Ball has also provided the means by which to challenge them. This book is a significant contribution to the education debate.
Migration is the movement of people, which brings an interchange of ideas, styles and creativity. The eight articles in this unique collection offer a fresh examination of the relationship between the movement of people and twentieth-century art. The fourth and final book in the Annotating Art’s Histories series, **Exiles, Diasporas and Strangers** is a collection of essays offering a varied thematic overview of the critical and creative role that migration has contributed to twentieth-century modern art.

Edited by Kobena Mercer, the collection challenges the de-historical view that places cultural difference in the contemporary art bracket, arguing that modernism is actually a product of ‘travelling cultures’. Rather than classifying all migratory patterns as the same, the difference between ‘exile’ and ‘Diaspora’, ‘emigration’ and ‘immigration’, and ‘the stranger’ and ‘the other’ are all analyses independently using a thematic topic-based approach. What is most engaging about the collection is that although each essay follows the same historically sensitive premise, which is explored in Mercer’s introduction, the collection offers a wide variety of global contexts and experiences.

Jean Fisher looks at ‘Diaspora Trauma and the Poetics of Remembrance’ through the lens of slavery and colonialism, and how the past shapes the artistic present. Ian McLean explores ‘Aboriginal Modernism in Central Australia’. While some of the analysis may seem quite technical for readers not familiar with the art world, the collection offers an interesting, critical and thought-provoking read.

The concept of asylum has been shown to be deeply problematic in recent years, as it is caught in the contradiction that lies between border control and a humanitarian response to the migration of refugees to Europe. Since the late 1990s, a series of laws have tried to stop asylum seekers from coming to Britain, displaying a clear political retreat from the spirit of humanity behind the 1951 UN Refugee Convention. In striking a balance between controlling immigration and the protection of refugees, British and the EU laws have been progressively moving away from a commitment to human rights.

In **Reluctant Refuge**, Friedman and Klein provide a useful overview of the history of asylum in Britain: they adopt an historical approach using Jewish refugees as the paradigm for the refugee experience followed by the review of some significant groups who have come to Britain in the last thirty years such as Ugandan Asians, Somalis and Romani, with a focus on the case of refugee children. Referring to these various groups, who fled to Britain at different times and in different circumstances, is shown to be useful for evaluating the value of legislation, as well as considering certain similarities of experience which in the book are rendered vivid by the voice of the refugees themselves. Their personal stories help reflect the criminalization and dehistorization of the concept of asylum and refugee as influenced by the government’s and the media’s rhetoric, which legitimizes hostile discourses and shapes popular opinion while contributing to the association of asylum and lack of documentation with crime and irregularity.

Contesting these prejudices, **Reluctant Refuge** provides an accessible introduction to the history of asylum in the UK, but also to immigration and asylum law. It states the problems related to the law as well as the challenges posed to the concepts of human rights and equality. Essentially, it suggests a more inclusive approach to asylum to prevent the poverty, destitution, social exclusion and stigmatization experienced by many refugees and asylum seekers in Britain at a time when refugee standards of protection are lowering.
Jessica Mai Sims reports on the People in Harmony (PiH) conference aimed at understanding the experiences of mixed race families and young people, and improving services available to them.

At the end of April 2008, People in Harmony hosted the conference entitled 'Understanding the experience of mixed race families and young people: improving services'. Aimed primarily at service providers, the conference sought to raise awareness of the relationship between people and families of mixed heritage and their access and use of public services by presenting research and good practice through a programme of presentations and break out study sessions.

Introducing the main presentations, Dr Chamion Caballero from London South Bank University detailed her recent research on parents of mixed heritage. The project includes experiences of 30 couples self-identified as mixed, their children and parents. The presentation looked at parents who passed on positive identities to their children, which heritage identities they chose to pass on, and what relationships and resources helped or hindered this process.

Unsurprisingly, they found that there was no one method used to foster positive identities in children. Families varied in approaches to negotiating difference - by promoting either single heritage identities, open identities not rooted in any particular heritage, mixed identities that focus on a specific combination of heritages, or a mixed identity in general. For these families, the challenge to the development of positive identities did not stem from internal family conflict but rather external factors such as assumptions and stereotypes by others. Caballero argued that through the research they have recommended a need for more understanding of race and diversity in the wider public consciousness and more positive images of people and families identifying as mixed.

Professor Leon Tikly, from the University of Bristol, then presented on the barriers to educational achievement for mixed race children, particularly mixed White and Black Caribbean boys. As he argues, the first barrier to achievement is institutional racism; the barriers that mixed white and black Caribbean pupils face are similar to those faced by pupils of black Caribbean origin. They are more likely to come from socially disadvantaged background, to be excluded, and to experience low teacher expectations. The second barrier is that their identities are not being acknowledged in schools, LEAs or policy, and that this invisibility in turn makes it difficult for their underachievement to be challenged.

In order to address the underachievement of mixed white and black Caribbean pupils, Tikly argues for new thinking in schools to break with stereotypes and assumptions about race. He advocates a 'culturally learning school' that takes a whole school approach to building positive identities for young people through mainstreaming race equality, recognizing the difference between small ethnic minority groups and including their voices and experiences in the curriculum.

Bradley Lincoln finished the main sessions' presentations with the introduction to his Multiple Heritage Project. The project is a series of conferences in different areas that are aimed at providing an opportunity for young people to explore their identities. Aside from the secondary school aged pupils who participate during the day, Lincoln trains youth facilitators to work with the young people in order to keep the expertise of 'mix’d’ identities within the area. With support from local government, the conferences have been held in Manchester, Trafford, Birmingham, Leicester, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

As Lincoln argues, the conferences provide a safe space for the young people to air their thoughts out loud about their identity in order to support self-confidence in their mixed backgrounds. The discussion that emerges then feeds into reports in which the young people provide their ideas and recommendations on how to challenge stereotypes about ‘mix’d’ people and how they would change the school curriculum to be more inclusive. Lincoln argues that this model can have broader implications for inclusion work in general, through developing exercises to build the confidence of people in smaller groups, and policy consultation of young people.

In the afternoon study sessions delegates discussed the topics of developing self-confidence in mixed race young people, the overrepresentation of mixed race young people in the criminal justice system, making mixed race young children visible in the education system, working with and providing fostering and adoption services to mixed race families, and working with mixed race mental health service users.

While presenters frequently state the caveat that mixed heritage identities are not just ‘black and white’, often in the discussions the terms ‘mixed race’ and ‘mixed heritage’ were used as shorthand to refer to people of mixed white and Black Caribbean heritage. In terms of policy, often it is unhelpful to analyse the mixed race group because it is very broad; as Tikly pointed out, unlike mixed white and Black Caribbean pupils, mixed white and Asian pupils are high achievers. Without a deeper understanding of the different groups in the broader mixed race category, policy that targets the group may be ineffective.
Video ART Postcards: Lesson Plans

Manifesta and the Runnymede Trust launched the Video ART Postcards’ Lesson Plans for Citizenship – on Slavery, Racism and Resistance – at Channel 4 Television Studios on 3 April 2008. The Lesson Plans are designed to be used alongside the films themselves, which were designed and created by young people aged 14 to 19 during a 5-day period in the summer of 2007. Some of the filmmakers attended the launch (see photo a), and several of their films were shown. There is a great diversity to the approaches taken in each film, with each one showing – in their own individual and powerful way – the inhumanity and injustice of the transatlantic slave trade.

The evening was opened by Marion Vargaftig, Manifesta Director, and Michelynn Lafleche, Director of the Runnymede Trust (see photo b).

Wesley Kerr, Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund Committee for London, the main funder of the project (see photo c), spoke about the value of education and the importance of providing young people with opportunities to express themselves.

Professor Chris Gaine and Cristina Bennet, two experienced teachers and curriculum writers (see photo d), explained to the audience (photo e) how they devised the Lesson Plans, using the films as key elements in developing materials to help teachers meet some of the Requirements of Key Stages 3 and 4 of the National Curriculum’s Citizenship module.

After the presentations, teachers and teaching advisers discussed the films and the lesson plans and how they could be put to best use in the classroom (see photos f and g).

All the films can be seen and the lesson plans can be downloaded free of charge at the Runnymede Trust website at http://www.runnymede-trust.org/projects/video-art-postcards.html.

For more information, or to talk about how you can screen these films, contact Marion Vargaftig, Manifesta Co-Director at marion@manifesta.org.uk.
BELONGING: A New Initiative

Following the success of Video ART Postcards, Runnymede and Manifesta have joined forces again for a new transnational initiative, building on the momentum of 2008, the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue.

This new creative video project for ‘teenagers’, BELONGING, will address cross-communal and inter-generational realities of migration and settlement.

Working across Europe, in neighbourhoods in London, Lisbon and Paris and in the context of 2008, the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (EYID), BELONGING will involve teenagers, communities, video/digital media artists, cultural centres, museums and broadcast organizations in an imaginative exercise combining creative film-making and community history learning.

Thanks to the support of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in the UK, Portugal and France, BELONGING officially started in May 2008 and will run until early 2009.

BELONGING will address the notion of ‘intercultural dialogue’ in the personal and communal successes, and the concerns, fears and confrontations that have arisen in the wake of historical and demographic change. The project starts off from the position that knowing more about, and understanding the social and historical context in which contemporary social concerns, anxieties and frustrations arise, is central to assisting people in progressing from suspicion and antagonism to constructively dealing with difference and promoting the value of diversity.

BELONGING will work with a group of about 18 young people, aged 15 to 19, in each of the city locations, and will explore ‘intercultural dialogue’ – grounded in the specificity of their personal and social opportunities as well as the challenges which arise around new migrations and the making of new communities.

Investigating the ‘social archaeology’ of these urban spaces (successive new migrations settling in the same neighbourhoods), the project will look, historically, at the factors influencing social inclusion and social exclusion – treating these as indicators of ‘intercultural dialogue’.

In collaboration with local youth service providers in each of the three cities, BELONGING will engage its young participants in 5-day creative workshops, where they will investigate the social history of their city neighbourhoods, and develop expertise in making imaginative short films using digital media. Assisted by local historians and video artists, each young participant will produce her/his own short film (no longer than 3 minutes) by the end of the workshops.

The films will be exhibited widely, in each of the communities involved -- as well as online, on television, in festivals, museums and galleries. We anticipate that the films will also be presented at events and conferences related to the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, in the UK, Portugal and France, as well as in other European countries.

They will also be used in educational toolkits on cultural diversity, in formal and non formal educational settings.

For more information on BELONGING, contact Manifesta Co-Director Marion Vargaftig at marion@manifesta.org.uk.
Update: Faith Schools and Community Cohesion

Rob Berkeley reports on a Runnymede study which is nearing fruition.

Our faith schools and community cohesion project has reached its final stages and will be published this summer. The study consulted over 500 people from a variety of faith communities and those of no religion, including young people attending faith schools, parents, and teachers. The aim was to understand how an education system with faith schools can best prepare young people to operate successfully in a multi-faith and multi-ethnic society.

Our findings include recommendations for practice and policy at a number of levels. The role and place of faith schools in our education system intersects with a number of crucial policy debates. We found that the debate about faith schools often acted as a lightning rod for a broader discussion about the role of faith in society and relationships between the state and religion; debates which often produce more heat than light. These are discussions that remain at the centre of the political agenda. The forthcoming single equality bill, proposed bill of rights, the high profile launch of the Tony Blair Faith Foundation and the Lambeth Conference will ensure that these debates are prominent over coming months. Yet these debates often seem far removed from the day-to-day experiences of citizens. By looking at faith schools we have been able to understand better how faith can be used and misused in the delivery of public services and in building successful communities of citizens.

We found that faith schools highlighted key tensions in government education, race equality and cohesion policy – forcing faith schools to find means of balancing competing demands. While some schools had come closer to achieving this balance through becoming more inclusive, engaging in successful partnerships, and empowering young people, others had taken approaches which were less successful. We argue that many faith schools have lost connection with their original laudable missions and have become exclusive, inward-looking and unable to connect with other parts of the education system to the degree that they do not contribute to improving community cohesion and indeed become barriers to good relations. We hope, through this report, to begin to influence change in these institutions so that the role of faith in the delivery of public services produces benefits for all and not just the few.

Real Histories Directory – Websites for Students

Sangeeta Dhamelia-York describes how the Real Histories Directory project is branching out by focusing on websites that have been created primarily for use by children and young people to enhance their learning.

The Real Histories Directory is constantly evolving and developing new ideas and initiatives to suit the needs of teachers, parents, students and the wider community. The ‘Topic of the Month’ and the ‘Website of the Month’ are features specifically designed to aid teachers and parents explore the scope and content of online resources and use these resources for practical teaching in and out of the classroom. Following the success of these features, we have incorporated a further dimension to the ‘Website of the Month’ page; we aim to also focus on websites that have been created primarily for use by children and young people to enhance their learning.

This new direction means that students will have the opportunity to find like-minded young people who want to broaden their opinions and aspirations, to develop key skills and create international links. At the same time, teachers and parents will have the chance to access educational resources to support and enhance
their students’ and children’s learning.

With this in mind, June’s featured website is KidLink (www.kidlink.org), a site that has been created for kids to collaborate and network with friends around the world. We have chosen this website to emphasize the importance of creating international connections at an early age. The site serves both teachers and children/young people as an educational tool highlighting the importance of sharing knowledge globally. As a result, children/young people are given the opportunity to enhance their independent learning through joining discussion groups and projects. Teachers and parents also have the chance to support the learning process by accessing modules on KidLink and using the ideas in conjunction with the national curriculum. The founders of KidLink believe this will help to create a generation that will comprehend the importance of understanding and accepting different cultures.

We hope that this new feature will add an exciting new dimension to the Real Histories directory, helping our younger visitors to access the resources in a more directed way.

The photographs on p. 4, 33-4 and 35 were taken by Benedict Hilliard © 2007, 2008.