"When is a group not a group?"

A social psychological exploration of representations of Blackness and Britishness and the influence of the past

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Abstract

This thesis set out to explore constructions of Blackness in UK citizens of African Caribbean descent. It also explored the perceived incompatibility between being both Black and British and considered the ways in which the past was a factor in both these issues.

The thesis investigates these research questions through three qualitative studies: a media analysis, a focus group study and two interviews structured around a sorting task.

The main findings of the research were that the category Black was influenced by the principles of opposition and reaction which gave primacy to the relationship with the White majority. The thesis argues that social psychological assumptions about social groups do not necessarily apply in the same way to racial groups. For example, contrary to other social psychological research, there was no indication that the participants accepted the mainstream negative evaluation and, therefore, no resulting devaluation in collective or personal self-perceptions.

The way in which the White majority were perceived to have established Britishness and Englishness as intrinsically associated with Whiteness over a long period was seen to be a fundamental barrier to identification as both Black and British.

In terms of both the way in which Blackness was constructed and the relationship between Blackness and Britishness, the past assumed a pre-eminent position. The past was viewed through the lens of racial group membership and then used to interpret the present and provided a theme of negative continuity. Options for identifying as both Black and British were constrained by the past as much as the present.
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Chapter 1 - Background

1.1 Introduction

This thesis sets out to explore three main issues from a social psychological perspective:

a) the nature of Blackness for people of African Caribbean descent and heritage in the UK today;
b) the relationship between Blackness and Britishness;
c) The impact of the past on Blackness and the connection between Blackness and Britishness.

The thesis provides a critical review of the literature in these areas and reports and discusses empirical research addressing these questions.

This chapter provides historical and social background information about the population which forms the focus of this research, outlines the research questions and includes a personal reflection on both the motives for the research and the processes involved.

1.2 Historical background

This research focuses on UK citizens of African Caribbean descent and heritage who are the descendants of the immigrants who arrived in the UK after World War 2 - the "Windrush" generation. The historical genesis of this population and a brief overview of the past 50 years are important for setting the context.

Mike & Trevor Phillips' book "Windrush: the irresistible rise of multi-racial Britain" was part of a wider project including a TV series for Channel 4. It consisted of interviews with members of the Windrush generation asking for their memories of their personal history and the times through which they lived. It also includes interviews with academics such as Stuart Hall, Ceri Peach and Paul Gilroy, along with other commentators who have both personal and professional perspectives on the period. In addition, the book provides historical information about numbers of migrants, and other socio-demographic data. Both the content and the ownership of the project make it ideally suited for providing background information to this research and it is for these reasons that I unapologetically quote extensively from it in this introductory chapter. I have not drawn on the personal interviews quoted in the book.

"Spain, Portugal, France Holland and Britain had colonised most of the region by the middle of the seventeenth century; but during the turmoil of the Napoleonic wars, Britain acquired the largest portfolio of territory. During this period the demand for cheap labour to cultivate the colonists' crops of tobacco, rice and sugarcane, was met by the institution of slavery. Ships set out from England with trade goods for the west coast of Africa where they exchanged their merchandise for African blacks. The next stop on the notorious 'Middle Passage' from Africa was
the West Indies, where slaves were exchanged for various products. The final stage of the triangle was the return voyage to England." [Phillips & Phillips, 1998 pages 10-11]

Slavery was abolished in the Caribbean in 1834; it had formed the initial point of contact for the descendants of Africans in the Caribbean and the British and was accompanied by an ideology of racial difference and the racial superiority of White over Black. As a result of the slave trade there was a significant influx of Black people to the UK and concentrations of Black people in the slaving ports (particularly Liverpool and Bristol), these populations have survived to the present day but are not the population under investigation – they have a different (though complementary) history and experience. This research focuses on those who voluntarily migrated to the UK in the twentieth century.

"....In the heyday of Empire the award of British citizenship was more or less simultaneous with the acquisition of new territories by Britain. From the point of view of the colonies, British citizenship was a symbol of British power and ownership rather than the seal of an individual's contract with the State. In any case, British citizens were not signatories to some mutually agreed charter of citizenship. Instead, they were subjects of the British sovereign. So the touchstone of citizenship was not acceptance of a schedule of rights and duties. It was allegiance to the symbol of the Crown". [Phillips & Phillips, 1998 page 74]

As British subjects, a number of men and women from the Caribbean (and other British colonies) had fought for Britain in the Second World War and had spent time in the UK. Following the end of the war, the Caribbean suffered economically and there was significant unemployment. Both the war experience and the post-war economic slump acted as spurs for emigration to the UK (and the USA).

EMPIRE MEN FLEE NO JOBS LAND: 500 HOPE TO START A NEW LIFE TODAY

"Five hundred unwanted people, picked up by the trooper Empire Windrush after it had roamed the Caribbean, Mexican Gulf, and Atlantic for 27 days are hoping for a new life. They include 430 Jamaican men. And there are 60 Polish women who wandered from Siberia, via India, Australia, New Zealand and Africa to Mexico, where they embarked in the Empire Windrush. The Jamaicans are fleeing from a land with large unemployment. Many of them recognise the futility of their life at home." (Daily Express, 21 June 1948)

The arrival of the immigrants in the UK was not wholly welcomed by the indigenous population and over the next 30 years the phenomenon of the Windrush generation, later Caribbean migrants and their descendants became a socio-political challenge for the White majority and a personal challenge for Black individuals. The combination of both these forces resulted in violence in the 1970s and 1980s.

"What made the citizens of the United Kingdom different from any other British subject was that natives of the British Isles saw themselves as being at the head of the hierarchy of British nations. The idea which underpinned this role and held the whole structure together was a belief in the racial supremacy of whites born in Britain. Throughout the heyday of the Empire the idea developed mystical overtones, linked as it was with the notion that the British had a destiny to rule over 'lesser races'. For a time in Britain the belief in the divine right to racial ascendancy was
assiduously fostered and propagated by a variety of means, from children's fiction to government propaganda. Although it was clear that it was the middle classes who took up the White Man's Burden and set out to accomplish the 'civilising mission', it was also clear that racial supremacy was a potent myth which permeated through all levels of society." [Phillips & Phillips, 1998 page 74]

"Our memory also encompasses a time when, as immigrants and the children of immigrants, our status as citizens was contestable, a matter of political will and argument. During the time when we grew up it was clear that to most of our fellow citizens there was an inextricable link between nationality, citizenship and race. Inevitably the first question we were asked by new acquaintances would turn out to be 'Where do you come from?' To be British was to be a white Anglo Saxon and, whatever that meant, it was not us." [Phillips & Phillips, 1998 Introduction – page 3]

"...It's the younger generation that take the front line in the seventies, and they are a deeply troubled generation, because they feel deeply the sense that they don't know who they are. They're not British, 'cos the British don't want them; they're not Caribbean, because they've never seen the Caribbean, nothing to do with it. They called themselves African for a long time, but of course, they've never been to Africa, either..." [interview with Paul Gilroy in Phillips & Phillips, 1998 page 296]

As the quotes from Phillips & Phillips (1998) show, the impact of immigration resulted in a loss of identity which was strongly rooted in the reception which the immigrants and their descendants received in the UK.

As Chryssochou (2004) points out, the experience of migration is often difficult and there are some common themes in the experiences of immigrants eg lower status employment compared with their country of origin. The Windrush immigrants experienced all of these but in addition, despite the prior expectations of the Caribbean migrants that they would be recognised as British because of the imperial relationship, they experienced widespread and pervasive racial discrimination:

"On the other side of the coin, the Caribbeans were more or less crushed by the country's indifference, coupled as it was with casual discrimination. The adjustments they faced went deeper than differences in the weather, styles of speech and clothing. It was the colour of their skins which ensured their isolation and began to shape their relationship with British society. This was no trivial irritant because, when all the other factors were taken into consideration, it was the West Indians' colour which the British nation took to be the characteristic which defined their status and potential." [page 96]

In addition while immigrants who are visually indistinguishable from the indigenous population tend to have children whose success is not hindered by the migration experience, for the Black population, disadvantage and discrimination continued into subsequent generations much as slavery was inherited. It was these elements which made the experience of the Black immigrants distinctive.
1.3 Current socio-economic background

Sociological and political approaches have informed social policy in ways which tend to explain any alienation felt by the Black Caribbean population in terms of social and economic disadvantage. There is no doubt that there has been and continues to be a racial penalty for this population in areas such as education, employment, health and housing and that, as Stuart Hall points out, the post-Windrush experience has been mixed with significant problems remaining:

'Well I've called it fragile on two grounds. One, it's fragile because it's a minority rather than a majority experience. You could not look at the position of black people in British society and say it has been a majority success story. That is not the case. And those communities remain vulnerable, because they're poor and remain vulnerable 'cos they're marginal and unemployed, and remain vulnerable because they're black. So I want to insist on the double sided nature of this. It's partial and it's temporary because some will make it and some will not. And those being left behind are in serious trouble, and we have to think about them alongside the success stories. But its fragile also because it depends on what happens to Englishness and British society itself, which had been transformed by their presence, but which contains deep roots of racism, which contains a long imperial history, you know, which could swing back the other way. I don't think any of these things are permanent. I'm not a permanent optimist in that sense, you know. I mean, if there were floods of black refugees coming out of a Europe which had gone a different way from Britain – saw we didn't join the EMU and all that – and a really strong anti-foreigner climate began to develop in Britain, perfectly possible, that would have its spin-off in attitudes towards the indigenous black population, too. So, none of these battles are forever, they're not won completely. What I think has happened is this kind of tilt in the balance of forces, and the tilt has been towards the opening – the possibility – of being black and British. That's as far as I think one can say it has gone' [interview with Stuart Hall in Phillips & Phillips, 1998 pages 389-390]

The existence of racial discrimination has been recognised by successive governments and legislation outlawing discrimination based on race in specific areas was passed. Despite over 25 years of race relations' legislation, significant inequalities continue.

A recent survey of 99 organisations found that 3.4% of senior managers and none of the chief executives were from an ethnic minority background. In 2000, 75.8% of the White working age population were in employment, compared to 57% of the ethnic minority population. This is despite the fact that, overall, unemployed ethnic minorities have better qualifications than their White counterparts and when they are employed they tend to be under-employed in relation to their qualifications.

In education 29% of African Caribbean pupils gained 5 or more GCSEs at grades A-C compared with 47% of White pupils. In addition African Caribbean pupils are four times more likely to be excluded than White pupils.
In housing, Black households are twice as likely to be living in housing deemed unfit. African Caribbeans are a third more likely to suffer ill health than the White population. Infant mortality is 100% higher for children of African Caribbean mothers compared to White mothers.

In terms of contact with the criminal justice system Home Office statistics show that African Caribbean young men are over-represented at each stage of the process with African Caribbeans being six times more likely to be stopped and searched than White people. African Caribbeans account for 12% of the total male prison population and 18% of the female prison population. [Source UK Government Race Equality Strategy].

A numerical analysis of education and employment data is attached at Appendix 1 which illustrates the relative disadvantage of ethnic and racial minorities compared with the White population on a number of measures, but also illustrates the different profiles for different ethnic and racial groups. As the title of the last survey of ethnic minorities illustrates – “Ethnic minorities in Britain: diversity and disadvantage” (Modood et al 1997) the picture is not homogeneous and there appear to be as many differences between non-Whites as there are between White and non-White. What is significant in these tables is the evident under-achievement of African Caribbeans relative to most other ethnic minority populations who have had a shorter history in the UK. For example, the Pakistani and Bangladeshi group demonstrate extreme disadvantage, but they are also represent the most recent wave of non-White immigration to the UK; other data suggests that those who emigrated from Pakistan and Bangladesh tended to be from relatively disadvantaged socio-economic groups within their country of origin as shown by high levels of illiteracy in their mother tongue. Taken together, these tables suggest that the problems of the African Caribbean population are not solely, or even primarily, a consequence of immigration and minority status.

1.4 Black or British?

The sense that there may be a potential conflict between nation and race was raised most graphically by Lord Tebbit’s cricket test. “Lord Norman Tebbit, then a Conservative peer, proposed a ‘cricket test’ as touchstone of British citizenship, Britishness, he argued, should be defined by examining the West Indians’ loyalties when the West Indies team played England.”

“This sense of the inability to conceive of identity, of national identity as a complex phenomenon; the inability to see that people’s allegiances might be multiple and that, actually to see their encounters with difference, their encounters with otherness not as danger, not as jeopardy, but to see them as something that was potentially enriching to the life of a national community: that was what struck me as peculiar. What troubles me more about the Tebbit remarks was that people in our own community would actually buy into that model of thinking of identity as well, that somehow or the other they, as a consequence of their rejection. As a consequence of their...
emiseration and their marginalisation, would begin to say, "Yes, it's true, actually. You can't hold on to a complex identity, you have to be either one thing or the other, and if we are externalised that we will be external, we will be other." That seemed to me to be more worrying. Norman I would have predicted that from; but I didn't like the idea that people were so depressed and so squashed and so boxed in by the ways in which their life chances were undermined that they too would accept that sense, that truth about themselves, that black people have no future in this country over the long term, that the only way to escape those pressure is to leave. Now a number of us generationally, politically, and so on, have rejected that option. We didn't necessarily predict a rosy future, but we knew we weren't going to go anywhere." [interview with Paul Gilroy in Phillips & Phillips, 1998]

Perhaps as a result of new Millennium tension, the late 1990s and early 2000s saw the UK national media identifying a 'crisis of national identity':

"But if its history is the Union Jack's strength, it is also its weakness.....The flag – and with it the very notion of Britain and what it means to be British means – is losing the mythologised identity that has held it together" Jonathan Glancey writing in The Guardian in January 2000

Phillips and Phillips' memories of being asked where they came from and their knowledge that Britishness was associated with a White Anglo Saxon heritage was revealed as still current by a profile in The Guardian:

"Lee is 19 and knows what it means to be English: 'you have to be white and born in England'. Lee confesses to being 'a bit racist – I'm being honest' and possibly as a response to the fact that he was being interviewed by an Asian reporter he confesses that he knows it's a bit bad.

However, as the Parekh report shows, whether or not White British people were willing to accept non-Whites as authentically British, the very presence of these non-White populations in significant numbers over 50 years itself was seen as posing a threat to the definition of what it meant to be British. This was compounded in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries by the perceived threat of European centralisation and national devolution in Wales and Scotland. There was a sense that British and particularly English national identity was under threat from a number of different angles as identified (in order to be refuted) in Robin Cook's 2001 "chicken tikka masala" speech.

"Britain confronts a historic choice as to its future direction. Will it try to turn the clock back, digging in, defending old values and ancient hierarchies, relying on a narrow English-dominated, backward-looking definition of the nation? Or will it seize the opportunity to create a more flexible, inclusive cosmopolitan image of itself? Britain is at a turning point. But it has not yet turned the corner. It is time to make the move." [Phillips & Phillips, 1998 pages 14-15]

The recognition that many Black people after 50 years do not feel themselves to be British, together with the sense that some White British people feel that a multi-racial Britain negatively challenges their understanding of Britishness gave rise to the research questions for this study.
1.5 Group and category entativity

In this section I discuss three inter-related issues which inform the way in which the research questions are addressed in this thesis. As described above, the African Caribbean population had a distinctive genesis in slavery and the inter-racial context has dominated the history of the Caribbean since then.

I argue that the nature of this genesis has had an influence on the entativity of the group which limits the explanatory power of social psychological theories and approaches which assume that different groups have similar levels of entativity or fail to address category origins and their effect on entativity. The way in which the entative nature of the racial category Black differs from others is illustrated by contrasting South Asians as an ethnic minority with the Black racial minority in the UK.

Campbell (1958) carried out an analysis of group entativity or 'groupness'. Campbell defines entativity as "the degree of having the nature of an entity" which seems somewhat like a circular definition, but he goes on to suggest principles or criteria which encourage entativity:

- Common fate, similarity, proximity, resistance to intrusion and internal communication. The larger the number of criteria which are fulfilled the more the category is likely to be seen as a group rather than a category.

Other theorists have suggested other criteria for what constitutes a group:

- Members define themselves as members of a group
- Others define them as a group
- Shared norms
- Interdependent goals
- Internal structure

Taking account of the factors above, I would argue that, other than in terms of common fate or definition as a group by others, Black people in this country lack any significant degree of internal group entativity. I suggest that one of the reasons for this is that the Group and its label were not originally based on an internal objective reality, but rather on an externally observed and imposed reality. Because of the power dimensions in play at the time of that observation (from slavery onwards) the perceived "groupness" was given a label "Black" which then stuck.
I would differentiate an imposed label from an accepted one on a number of different dimensions. An accepted label implies equality of labelling, even if the content is different and related to intergroup dynamics. Thus everyone has a national label, even if that is mainly salient in an intergroup context and if the content of that national label varies from nation to nation (indeed it has to for the act of labelling to have a point or make sense). However, race is not an equally imposed label especially in situations of minority/majority racial differentials. To be Black, is not automatically for someone else to be White.

The original Caribbean immigrants to the UK would not have seen themselves as "Black", they would have self-defined as either British citizens or Jamaicans or Antiguans etc and while they had elements in common, they also had different traditions, cuisine and rivalries with each other. It was only on arrival in the UK that they and their descendants became "Blacks" - a largely externally imposed homogeneity. Not only is this category imposed from outside but it also has a negative impetus - that of racial discrimination, for example, the definition of racial groups for race relations legislation. It is not to say that the label was passively accepted by those who it was applied to, and indeed the use of the term Black rather than coloured, West Indian or immigrant can be seen as an attempt to take ownership of the categorisation. However, what all these category labels have in common is that they are a statement of "otherness", of "racial minorityness" rather than any sense of intrinsic meaning or content.

When a group is labelled by others rather than by itself, without a corresponding content, and is also defined by those others primarily in a negative way, then logically it should become "problematic" for individuals to identify with that group because there is no "payoff" for that group identification. Group membership has to "give" something to individual members (in terms of identity maintenance) in order for there to be successful identification - this is not to say that members of stigmatised groups automatically incorporate this negative evaluation into their own self-concept and thus regard themselves as inferior but equally there is little to be gained psychologically from group identification or an embracing of the imposed category.

In the case of the Black group, the common element binding the group together "sense of common fate" is also externally determined in the form of racial discrimination and this then leads to the paradox of "that which binds the individuals together and contributes to 'groupness' is also that which as individuals they are desperate to escape" - so it is not that they want to escape the group or stop being Black from a sense of shame, rather it is that what being Black is about in the UK is primarily the potential or possibility of being racially discriminated against.
Therefore, as far as the UK Black population is concerned there can be no automatic assumption of individual identification with the group/category “Black”, and that identification “as” a Black person should not be confused or conflated with identification “with” the Black social/racial group. There are three main reasons for this:

1. The racial category is an imposed/ascribed relatively impermeable category stemming primarily from racial discrimination. This is in contrast to other group identities which are either claimed/enacted and/or permeable.

2. The predominant mainstream evaluations associated with the category tend to be negative or limiting.

3. The content of ‘Black racial identity’ is largely inextricable from the group’s present and past intergroup relationships, particularly with the dominant White group.

In contrast “Asian” and possibly also African minorities in the UK had and have pre-existing cultural alternatives including religion which offer continuity, cohesion and distinctiveness in the UK intergroup situation. For the Caribbean group the historical genesis of the group’s existence is slavery and, the content of the group’s past is therefore immediately located in an intergroup context.

I have argued that the label Black as applied to a racial minority is in some ways distinct from other group or category labels. A similar argument has been advanced with respect to sexual orientation. Kitzinger and Wilkinson (1993) argue that the terms ‘heterosexual’ and ‘lesbian’ are not symmetrical; the consequences of accepting them are different. Safe and uncontested labels denoting dominant group membership can readily be shrugged off as unimportant. Equally they go on to state that heterosexual and lesbian are not opposite ends of the same continuum, lesbian is an intrinsically politicized identity whereas heterosexuality is not, therefore the two terms are not equivalent and do not occupy the same conceptual space. I would suggest that the same principles apply to the categories Black and White.

For these reasons I tend not to refer to Black people as a group in the psychological sense, I prefer the use of the terms population or category (as in lay usage rather than from a self-categorisation theory perspective) which have less psychological and emotional baggage. I have conceptualised ‘Blackness’ in a variety of ways throughout the thesis. Rarely, it is used as an identity, often it is a social representation and on a number of occasions it is conceptualised as part of a discursive repertoire. This is not a reflection of epistemological chaos; rather it is a reflection of the three
main ways in which Blackness functions in response to the research questions which are asked of it.

For example, I have avoided defining Blackness in terms of identity (personal or social) or in terms of level of identification, because to do so would involve making assumptions about the content of Blackness rather than looking at the processes involved in the way that Blackness is constructed. Using the ‘ethnic’ model then it is possible for an individual to have a Black identity or not and for an individual to identify more or less with that Black identity as measured by a number of outcomes, behavioural, cultural and ideological. This is not the focus of this research, the data produced in the course of this research has meant that Blackness is conceptualised in different context-specific terms. Blackness is also discussed in terms of the consequences for interactions at differing levels in terms of the subjective experience of participants. Thus the way in which Blackness is defined in this thesis is a reflection, both of the ways in which it is used and defined by the participants, but also in terms of the differing contexts in which it is used in the empirical studies and theoretical discussions.

I should stress here that I am not contesting whether Black people would identify themselves as Black, but rather than the origin and content of the category is distinct from that usually used to define groups. This clearly needs to be investigated empirically, because if the assumptions underlying theories of group membership do not apply to this group then the predictions of those theories are also likely to be inappropriate. This is relevant both for the further development of social psychological theorising about groups and for the construction of any model which can be applied to the UK Black population.

1.6 Ethnic v racial minority groups

The predominant social representation of the Black group by the White majority is negative. This is also the case for many other minority groups in the UK, for example, those of Asian origin. However, the difference between the Asian and the Black groups is that the Asian groups are primarily ethnic groups, whereas the Black group is primarily a racial group. This means that the content of the category label differs; for the ethnic group, group membership is associated with a distinctive cultural repertoire which is independent of the experience of discrimination (though, it can precipitate discrimination with the phenomenon of Islamaphobia being the most obvious). This repertoire is likely to consist of language, religion, cuisine, cultural modes of behaviour – all of which are distinctive in some way and provide an alternative focus for group esteem, identification and cohesiveness.
For a racial group, the defining qualities are the physical properties of the racial group and the common fate associated with the experience of being perceived primarily in terms of group membership. This is not to suggest that there is not a culture which is distinctive for the Black UK citizens of Caribbean descent; the population differs from others on the basis of language, cuisine, and other cultural forms. Rather the issue is that the elements which are unique to the group in the Caribbean and in the UK are directly or indirectly a consequence of the Black/White inter-group context originating in slavery. For example, patois is a linguistic form which originated during slavery incorporating African terms which were not specific to one tribal language, and which could, therefore, be commonly understood; it also made use of English and other European colloquialisms and was used to avoid being understood by slave owners as well as for intra-group communication. Cuisine was altered by the physical removal from Africa to the Caribbean; culturally the slave owners denied ethnic and tribal names and customs. The current culture of the Caribbean is very much a product of the slavery and colonial experiences.

By contrast, for example, the cuisine associated with those of South Asian origin altered on arrival in the UK, but was not fundamentally changed on the Indian sub-continent as a result of British imperialism. One area where the Caribbean experience differs from that of Asia is in religion. Slaves in the Caribbean were encouraged to become Christians and while the liturgical form of Christianity practiced in the Caribbean and the African Diaspora is distinctively Black, the content of the religion is not distinctive in the same way that Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam differ from Christianity both in theological terms and also in the associated behavioural forms.

The discussion above suggests that racial groups are different from national and ethnic groups in the degree to which they have entativity with one being externally imposed and the other relating more to the traditional way in which groups are constructed. It also argues that the historical origins of groups have an impact on their entativity and development and that these differences have both theoretical and social consequences; in particular political and theoretical approaches that conflate ethnicity and race are flawed. All of these issues inform the approach to the research questions, they influence the way in which I have approached the construction of Blackness and also the attention paid to representations of the past. In terms of addressing the issue of how Black people in the UK construct the category Black, there has been no relevant research done to investigate this issue and furthermore the major theoretical approaches in social psychology do not provide a framework for addressing the issue of the origin of a group and the definition of what constitutes a group. The early theorising of Campbell suggest that the agreed definitions of groupness have distinctive implications for this population but recent database searches show no empirical research on the issue of group entativity.
1.7 Personal reflection on the research experience for the thesis

My parents left Guyana for the UK in 1956 on a boat whose name they can no longer remember. They have spent their adult lives in the UK working and raising their family; so my origins, life and heritage form part of the background to the following research questions.

When I left university following my undergraduate studies, I went to work as a Civil Servant where I did a variety of jobs. My last post involved working in International Relations for the UK Education department in the early 1990s, I was part of the team that was negotiating the Socrates programme for the promotion of the European dimension in education of school-aged children. As part of this job I needed to attend international meetings in Brussels and speak and vote on issues as the UK representative. I was aware of a degree of discomfort about 'masquerading' as a 'real' British person when I was well aware that in the UK there were a great many people who did not regard me as authentically British and that I myself did not have a very positive emotional attachment to Britain.

For my Masters' dissertation I looked at whether White and ethnic minority children (9-11) had different social representations of Britain and whether, using Breakwell's integrated paradigm, this had any identity effects. One of the limitations of that study was that it focused only on the present and I was interested in exploring the historical components of these issues which my personal experience told me was important.

A race-based conception of the past continues to affect how I see and interpret the present. On the one hand I look at the experiences of my nephews and niece and recognise that things have improved substantially since I was their age (0-15 years). On the other hand, I am also very much aware of how little has changed during my lifetime and of the ongoing gulf between Black and White in the way in which the world is perceived. My mother told me tales of how, when we were small children, White people used to offer her money to touch our heads because it was considered lucky. As a result, many Black people (including myself) are very wary about having their heads touched. During a meal out while on holiday in the Mediterranean this summer, the waitress rubbed my head. My (White) partner looked somewhat bemused and commented that I'd made a friend (White interpretation based on an individualistic historically informed representation of the action). I explained my perception of why she had done it and why I, therefore, felt this to be anything but a friendly gesture (Black interpretation based on a collective historically informed representation of the action).

I grew up with parents who referred to "English" people as an euphemism for White people. I spent my childhood in a mixture of multi-racial and predominantly White areas which resulted in a
sense of dislocation from both White and Black communities. The lack of belonging within a White neighbourhood was accepted as natural and the family never questioned why we were the only family in the road not to be invited to the street party for the Queen’s Silver Jubilee in 1977. It was less easy to be reconciled to the lack of acceptance from Black people. This lack of acceptance re-surfaced during the research for this thesis when my attempts to set up focus groups and interviews with Black people were repeatedly (and occasionally rudely) rejected. Allende (2003) talks of how writers often use their sense of not belonging to power their creative work. In some ways it might be argued that my own sense of not belonging was a driver for this research.

During the course of the research for the thesis I was reluctant to answer the questions which I asked of my participants. What, for me, was the content of the category Black and what was the nature of the relationship between being Black and being British?

The process of exploring them with others has helped me reconcile some of the ways in which the social issues played out in my own life. The experience of asking other Black people about their sense of Britishness and Blackness probably raised more questions for me at a personal level than it has resolved. An experience with a Greek friend helped crystallise some of the issues. We toured ancient sites such as the Acropolis which has a statue missing because it is in the British Museum, my friend kept saying "you" had stolen the statue and should give it back and I eventually had to explain to her that she could not include me in the "you" of British imperialism who plundered the world for their own benefit. I have no ability to place myself in that historical version of Britishness because despite my technical Britishness in the twenty-first century, it has no connection with the Britishness of the past. Those people were not my ancestors, my ancestors at that time were just as much victims of British imperialism as the Greeks. So any sense I have of Britishness certainly has no historical component.

On the day that Yasser Arafat died I had my hair cut. During the course of a 10 minute cut, the hairdresser told me that I was of mixed race despite the fact that I told him that I had 2 Black parents and 4 Black grandparents; he told me about the experience of a UK-born Black friend of his who had failed to last a year living in St Lucia because the local people regarded him as English and therefore fair sport for exploitation. He also referred to the mess that "we" (ie the British) had made of the Middle East at the end of the Second World War. In short, he found all my racial and national buttons while giving me a great cut.
1.8 Terminology

Throughout this thesis I talk about the racial category Black, I have made no attempt to deconstruct what is meant by race and as a result this could be seen as a reification of the concept of race and contributing to or endorsing a racially divided (and potentially divisive) worldview. It has not been my intention to reify race, but rather to treat it in the way in which it is treated by Black people in daily life. Race, racial difference and racism are facts of life for racial minorities in the UK and it would be disingenuous for me to pretend otherwise. Neither I nor any of the Black participants found it problematic to talk about race and Blackness and this thesis and the terminology used reflects that.

1.9 Race and racism

Social scientists, including social psychologists, tend to consider race to be a social construction rather than a ‘real’ category and are reluctant to acknowledge racial physical differences. This leads to a refusal to accept the distinction between a recognition of those differences and the ways in which these differences have been used by racists as the basis for division and discrimination. I would argue that referring to physical differences associated with different racial groups does not automatically result in racism any more than referring to physical differences between males and females (of any species) necessarily results in sexism. However, because the language of physical difference has been appropriated by the right wing to do so within a social psychological context has become problematic.

There is no doubt that the identification of racial differences has most often been used as a way of defining and justifying racism. Solomos and Back (1996) are typical in that they opt to sidestep the ‘existence’ of race by proposing to explore “the ways in which it becomes a form of collective social identity in particular social and historical circumstances” (page xiv). On page 4, they define racism as something which is “used to refer to ideas which defined some racial or ethnic groups as superior and others as inferior”. Similarly, Chryssochoou (2004) defines racism as: "discrimination based on the reification and essentialisation of racial differences". I would happily accept these two definitions of racism and agree that, so defined, it is a serious social problem to be eradicated. However on page 58, Solomos and Back quote Goldberg’s definition of a racist: “Racists are those who explicitly or implicitly ascribe racial characteristics of others that they take to differ from their own and those they take to be like them. These characteristics may be biological or social “ (Goldberg, 1990, p296). According to this definition, I am a racist and the references to race throughout this thesis are racist. My perception of racial difference stems from my own personal experience.
As a Black woman living in a predominantly White society I have been able to identify, through personal experience, the distinction between the physical differences associated with race and racism. I am aware of my physical difference from the majority population every time I buy shampoo, sunscreen, plasters, hand-cream, stockings or cosmetics. It could be argued that these daily challenges are examples of institutionalised racism, or it could equally be argued that manufacturing and marketing companies are in the business of making money and do so in the easiest way possible, by tailoring their products to a majority market. Unlike the USA, there is no "Black pound" to stimulate a demand for products specifically to meet the need of non-White skin and hair. In a more positive sense, I am also reminded of my race when health care professionals enquire about my sickle cell status. This question is only asked of those who visually appear to be of African descent in recognition of the fact that disease is not colour-blind. These reminders of my physical differences from the majority population are very different experiences from that of racism which I also encounter in a variety of forms on a regular basis. I provide two personal examples of how the physical and the social collide to produce racism. When my mother arrived in the UK and looked for secretarial work through recruitment agencies, she was 'fortunate' to get regular placements because the agencies were able to reassure their clients that while she was coloured, she was not too dark. I have often been in social situations when White people have assumed because of my skin colour that I was of mixed heritage, and therefore, qualified as "one of them" which in turn allowed them to make racist comments. It is from this personal perspective that I am able to talk of race as a physical entity rather than a social construction. Racism is the construction of people and societies; race is the construction of the physical world.

In her memoir "Notes of a White Black Woman" (1995), Judy Scales-Trent shows both the arbitrary nature of racial definitions and illustrates the way in which race is embodied in the physical being. In it, she describes her experiences as an African American with the physical appearance of an European American. She describes the daily problems (including physical danger) she experiences and her sense of being excluded from both Black and White communities. She starts by quoting (Page 3) "Virginia's 1924 law:

"The term 'white person' shall apply only to the person who had no trace whatsoever of any blood other than Caucasian, but persons who have one-sixteenth or less of the blood of the American Indian, and not other non-Caucasic blood shall be deemed white persons."

She also cites two examples of the rules on nationality and race being rewritten arbitrarily. In the first case it was a young girl in Alsace in 1871 who changed nationality overnight from French to German. The second was a child in Virginia (USA) in 1785 who was transformed from Black to White when the definition of Negro was altered to mean anyone who had one Black grandparent, rather than the previous rule where it had to be at least 1 Black great-grandparent.
It would be easy to consider the 'confusion' caused by the physical disynchronicity in Scales-Trent's appearance as the problem of the White population and their racism. However, Scales-Trent is very clear that her lack of physical Blackness requires her to explicitly state her affiliation with other Black people. She recounts telling her Black counterparts stories of her experiences with White racism as ways of "stating allegiance, of claiming kinship" (page 59) and staking a place in the Black family. It is clear here that the physical manifestation of Blackness is as important to the African American population as it is to the White population. This importance results from the label Black describing an oppositional category which exists, to some degree, as a consequence of the collective common fate of the experience of racism. This is further exemplified (p63) by Scales-Trent's example of the national association of black law students who required that a student should renounce her Puerto Rican mother in order to join (her father was African American) – the definition of who is Black is important to the Black community as well.

While Scales-Trent declares herself to be comfortable with the fuzzy boundary she inhabits, she also notes that she and her sibling and cousins have tended to choose darker-skinned partners, thus producing offspring who are unambiguously physically identifiable as African-American.

1.10 Anti-racism

Solomos and Back (1996) are not unique in identifying an absence of consensus about what is meant by the term anti-racism. They identify how it has meant different things at different points and different historical circumstances. However they argue that there are both positive and negative elements which appear in its various incarnations. The negative element consists of opposition to racist arguments and policies. The positive is the articulation of new ways of recognising and living with cultural difference. I would argue that the two elements are actually very different things and this is evidenced by the lexical slippage in the oppositional reference to race and the constructive reference to culture.

Anti-racism itself has been criticised for its role in essentialising difference and there is an identification of the problems which occur when the same arguments used by minorities ("Africa for the Africans") as part of anti-racist strategies are also used by majorities from a different perspective in pursuit of racist objectives ("Germany for the Germans").

I would argue that anti-racism involves challenging racist assumptions, discourse and practice. While racism is not the focus of this thesis (indeed I have made strenuous attempts to avoid
making it so), I would hope that one of its effects is to challenge racism and to promote the positive elements of racial diversity.

To conclude, Michel Wievorka (1995) quotes Guillaumin (Page 1) “Imaginary and real races play the same role in the social process and are therefore identical as regards their social function: that is precisely the sociological problem.”

1.11 Research questions:

1 How is Blackness constructed by those of African Caribbean descent and heritage in the UK?

2 What is the basis of the perceived incompatibility between being Black and British?

3 How do constructions of the past influence the construction of Blackness and the perceived incompatibility between being Black and British?
Chapter 2 – Literature review: empirical and theoretical

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the empirical literature covering the three main research questions. It also starts to explore how social psychological theories may be used to address these issues and their potential limitations. It concludes with an outline of the way in which this thesis aims to address the research questions.

2.2 Empirical research on Black identity in the UK

Previous UK research on Black identity provides much to inform this study. The area has been approached from a number of theoretical bases, some of which start to address the issues of identity and place in society addressed in Mike and Trevor Phillips’ book. I have excluded from this review studies which focus on children; research where race is used as a variable in consideration of other issues or where the focus was on another issue such as the effect of racial identity on health, behaviour or esteem. It also excludes studies which look at the ethnic or racial component of personal identity. Specific research done with the African American population is discussed in more detail in chapter 5.

Possibly the most quantitatively productive orientation in the UK has been that of threat, this approach looks at whether and how minority ethnic or racial status poses threats to individual and group identity eg Hitch (1983), Kitwood (1983) and Weinreich (1983). This perspective also looks at coping strategies for dealing with the threat and is associated with Identity Structure Analysis (ISA). ISA is both a theoretical framework and a methodological instrument, theoretically it is heavily influenced by Erikson’s developmental model and aspects of it, both basic concepts and their operationalisation, have been criticised eg Lange (1989).

The literature shows little evidence of the recent influence of discourse psychology, though theorists working with Verdonk (1989) based their definition of identity (for migrants from Spain to Switzerland and the Netherlands) at least partially on speech patterns, holding that identity is created through the awareness engendered by repeated patterns of speech in which the subject is “I”. Verkuyten (1997) also used a discourse approach in looking at the ethnic minority identities of the Turkish population in the Netherlands.

Hutnik (1986) criticises research which ignores the dual memberships of ethnic minority populations by minimising the role of majority group membership. She also differentiates between
ethnic identity and ethnic minority identity and the corresponding need to look at how the structural situation of minorities is both different from, as well as related to, the ethnic aspect of group membership. For her, this definition leads on to the need to study how the minority group sees and relates to the majority group and culture as well as the internal workings of the minority group itself and the individual's relationship with it. She also argues from within a Social Identity Theory paradigm that there are degrees of ethnic identity rather than an either/or situation in which an individual either has an ethnic identity or does not. Hutnik's research on ethnic minority adolescents (1984) notes that South Asians (a prototypical ethnic group) trend to use nationality as a way of defining and distinguishing themselves whereas "West Indian" adolescents tended to use skin colour thus illustrating the different ways in which ethnic and racial minorities self-define.

Dove in an early study (data collected in 1972) of 545 UK 15-16 year olds (20% West Indian, 11% Asian, 55% White British, 15% Greek Cypriot) showed the importance of race in self-definition. Non-whites were more likely than White participants to mention race, ethnicity or nationality (eg 66% of Blacks compared with 8% of British Whites). Over 50% of minority group individuals mentioned race, ethnicity or nationality (when grouped together) despite the fact that, as this was a qualitative study, the race of the participant would generally have been visually apparent. A methodological shortcoming of this study is that Dove does not provide any information about his own ethnicity. In this study, a photo test was designed to elicit spontaneous mention of race, ethnicity or nationality. Self-identification by race, ethnicity or nationality was also measured by a self-description task. In the photo test, non-whites were more likely to mention race, ethnicity or nationality than whites. Self-identification again showed that non-whites were more likely to mention race, ethnicity or nationality (66%) of Blacks compared with 8% of British Whites. Over 50% of minority groups when grouped together. In terms of values associated with race and ethnicity, 50% had neutral comments, 25% positive and 25% hostile – most hostile comments came from White Britons.

Jayaweera's (1993) qualitative in-depth interview study of 20 Black (both Caribbean and UK born) women in Oxford explored Black women's perception of their position as racial/ethnic minorities in the context of class and gender positions and showed the importance of the majority view in self-definition in the minority/majority context. Results are discussed in relation to perceived discrimination and disadvantage in employment and other areas. Jayaweera also looks at choices between individualistic and collective social change options. However, the women themselves bring out the issue of ascribed identity and the limitations this places on options to identify as British — "...because English people see you as Black."
Of these three studies, only one (Jayaweera) looks at Black people in a non-comparative context. However, they all raise important points which are explored in this research. The issue of minority status and the corresponding minority-majority power dynamic together with its interaction with racial or ethnic group status; the role of skin colour and appearance for Black people in self-definition and the impact of the view of the majority on possibilities for self-definition. The difference between ethnic and racial groups and, in particular, the visual differences embodied in a racial group is hinted at in Dove's study and I have followed up this point in this research. Jayaweera highlights the relationship with the majority in terms of self-definition and Hutnik looks at differences in the ways in which ethnic and racial minority groups relate to the White majority.

Alexander's (1996) ethnographic study looks at the way in which young Black men negotiate and construct their racial and gender identities in the domains of home, work and relationships. This study is important because it looks at the lives and perceptions of Black men from their own perspective. In the chapter about work the issue of incompatibilities is raised with career success in a White-dominated environment being associated with 'selling out' or 'going white'. The study, however, does not aim to look at Blackness from a collective perspective; rather it explores a variety of identity negotiation styles in individuals.

By contrast, in common with many sociological studies, Wrench et al's 1996 qualitative study of African Caribbean men's educational experience explicitly approaches their employment and education experiences as problematic and focuses on those with minimal qualifications and career under-achievement. This study, as with many others, focuses on the young men's perceptions of racism in the workplace and the effect that this has on their possibilities for occupational success. The emphasis on racism, in studies such as this, effectively positions the participants as victims and offers no options for taking control of their lives. This critique is not intended in any way to minimise the real power of racism in the workplace for the Black population but when it is offered as a somewhat simplistic explanation for unemployment and under-achievement it ensures that the determinants of Black success and failure are positioned externally and effectively perpetuates the victimisation.

Gilroy (1987) looked at the interaction between race, history, class and other social divisions in the UK from a sociological and cultural studies perspective and considers the need to reconceptualise social hierarchy in the UK in ways which include race. Hebdige (1975) also working within the cultural studies paradigm has studied different sub-sets within the Black population such as Rastafarians as an example of youth sub-cultures.
Wallace (1979) looked at (from a Black American perspective) the complex intra-group interaction between race and sexuality and the effect which the past has had on the perceptions of issues such as inter-racial relationships.

All these studies have been important in exploring different aspects of the Black experience and in looking at Blackness in ways other than as a 'problem'. However, they are not primarily social psychological studies and I would argue that there is a space for a social psychological perspective on Blackness in Britain (from a non-comparative perspective) which also integrates the influence of history.

2.3 What research has been done on the perceived incompatibility between being Black and British?

As discussed in Chapter 1, there is a perception in both the White majority (eg Tebbitt, 1997) and the Black population that there is not necessarily an easy co-existence between race and nation.

In order to investigate possible bases for conflict between race and nation, it is important to look at some of the empirical research which has been conducted on UK national identity. Williamson (1988) defines UK national identity as "a prevailing sense of what it means and feels like to be British". He is one of the few authors to acknowledge that emotions are associated with the concept. He also sees national identity as being affected by the relative international status of a country as well as its domestic situation, the international dimension is clearly particularly important for a former imperial power such as Britain but it is a dimension which is not acknowledged elsewhere.

Billig (1995) does not see the concept of national identity as useful; rather he argues that the psychological study of national identity should search for the common-sense assumptions and ways of talking about nationhood. He defines national identity as more than an inner psychological state or an individual self-definition: it is a form of life which is daily lived in the world of nation states. If national identity is considered worthy of interest and investigation, it is presumably because the researcher sees it as a potentially powerful force and this potency must stem, at least in part, from its collective nature. It is perhaps ironic that Billig, at the same time as rejecting the national identity concept is one of the few authors to recognise that it may be a plural rather than singular concept. He acknowledges the competing interpretations of history within a nation: "Different factions, whether classes, religions, regions, genders or ethnicities, always struggle for the power to speak for the nation, and to present their particular voice as the voice of the national whole, defining the history of other sub-sections accordingly." Billig quotes Stuart
Hall on identity "the notion that identity has to do with people that look the same, feel the same, call themselves the same is nonsense”. He argues that an identity is not a thing, rather it is a shorthand description for ways of talking about the self and community. Such an approach would suggest that a search for consensus in national identity may be mistaken.

Billig’s empirical study (1997) of family conversations about the British royal family shows discursively the assumptions of race, which form part of the British national identity. Billig analyses how, in the discussion of whether royalty would be allowed to marry someone who was not White, jokes are used and the use of the word ‘white’ is avoided. It shows how the royal family is used as a prototype for Britishness and the ways in which the implicit association between Whiteness and Britishness is maintained discursively if not explicitly.

In the literature, national identity has been discussed in the context of other concepts such as national pride and nationalism. For example, Rose (1985) defines national pride as "the psychological hinge that joins self-fulfillment with public purposes of Government". It is not clear to me how this definition might differ from a more utilitarian definition of national identity. Smith (1989) defines nationalism as "an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining the autonomy, unity and identity of an existing or potential nation." Within this definition national identity is one of a number of component parts of nationalism.

Dougherty et al (1992) used social representations theory as a basis for their investigation of national identity in Argentina and England. They argue that social representations and social identity are inextricably linked "a social identity evokes a corresponding social representation that contains the beliefs, values and 'facts' about the group that are recognized by all that identify with the group. When thinking in terms of a specific identity, the associated social representation serves to mediate and channel the content of what is learned i.e the meaning of the identity.” However, they do not investigate in any way whether or to what degree their subjects identify with their nation, rather they assume that use of a nationality label is the same as national identity. This fault is not peculiar to studies of national identity; much research in the social identity tradition attracts this criticism.

The issue of national identity has frequently been considered in the context of the historical development of nations, for example, Connor (1990), Buse (1993) and Smith (1994 &1989) all looked at the degree to which there was a feeling of awareness, belongingness or solidarity among the vast majority of the population which extended to fellow nationals beyond the local group in the past. Buse identifies a distinct historical window (1860-1890) in which he argues that the city of Bremen became subsumed within Germany. Connor uses his historical analysis of a
number of European societies and the records of those emigrating to the US from Europe to show that feelings of nationality rather than regionality emerged much later than is normally assumed.

Most commentators regard aspects of modern life such as widespread print media and universal education, if not modernity or Capitalism per se, as fundamental to mass feelings of nationality and presumably a national identity. Empirical studies of national awareness in less industrialised areas of the world where there are low levels of literacy and education would provide either useful support or a possible counter-argument to this view.

Condor’s (1996) empirical work attempted to investigate the apparent absence of an English national identity. She found the sense of Englishness to be confused rather than absent describing the English national character as "Janus-faced", both decent chap and yobbo. This finding is more plausible than the usual vision of a singular national identity, but I believe that it could be taken further with a temporal focus. It could equally be that her studies reveal an antipathy to "us as we were in the past - imperialist etc"; an antipathy to others "as they are now - nationalistic, arrogant etc", but no vision or agreement of what "us in the future" should be like. The English national identity uncovered appears to be defined both in relation to others and in relation to a representation of what is feared in the group's past rather than what is desired or aspired to in the future. It is interesting that she does not deal with the problem, both theoretical and methodological, of the overlap between national identity and nationalism despite the fact that it is obviously linked in the minds (as shown by their discourse) of her subjects.

Abell et al (in press) looked at how people in England and Scotland used the geographical reference to the island status of the United Kingdom in different ways to achieve different discursive purposes. In the Scottish sample, the island image was used to look at the distinction between Scotland and England. In comparison the English sample used the same island image to draw a physical barrier between Britain and Europe.

Trew (1983) in looking at national identity in Northern Ireland was interested as much in within-group differences as in between-group differences, the latter having been the primary focus of much research. Her research compared samples of young people living in Belfast and those living in a relatively peaceful rural town, she found that there were differences between Catholics in different environments as well as the expected differences between Catholics and Protestants. The research also illustrated the degree to which the definition of "nation" in Northern Ireland is a focus of dispute; this clearly has implications for any researcher attempting to study national identity in such an environment.
2.4 National sub-groups

Sub-groups were considered by Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1994) who discuss the relationship which women have with the nation. They are clear that women should not be seen as a homogenous group but, nevertheless, identify five major forms which characterise the relationship between women and state: as biological reproducers of ethnic collectivities; as reproducers of the boundaries of ethnic/national groups; as participating centrally in the ideological reproduction of the collectivity and as transmitters of its culture; as signifiers of ethnic/national differences - as a focus and symbol in ideological discourses used in the construction, reproduction and transformation of ethnic/national categories; as participants in national, economic, political and military struggles. These roles are primarily conservative in that they assist in perpetuating the status quo. However, Phillips (1996) sees a tension between the conservative, reproductive role of women and the radical challenges which the Feminist movement has made to a largely male national identity. The implication, though not made explicit, is that in either case one might expect males and females to have differing national identities.

Larsen et al (1992) investigated the degree to which different US social groups ranging from members of religious groups to prisoners shared the same national identity. They found few differences between the groups, they also found that the way in which Americans saw themselves was very similar to the way in which foreign students resident in the USA saw Americans.

The research on sub-groups is relevant to the African Caribbean population in the UK if ethnic and racial groups are conceptualised as sub-sets of the national group. While the findings on sub-groups are equivocal, they suggest that the differences, where they exist, stem from a common baseline of national self-definition. National identity is not conceptualised as being identical for all members of the national entity and these studies therefore look at the different ways in which different sub-groups identify with the nation rather than differing degrees of national identification for those groups or an absence of national self-definition in some sub-groups.

The work on national sub-groups has tended to look at ethnic rather than racial groups and the focus within that has been on which values and behaviours might be considered incompatible e.g. Verkuyten (2002) looking at the discourse of ethnic identity for minority group members in the Netherlands. Gellner (1997) argues that what characterises the modern nation is the fact that participation is not mediated by any significant sub-groupings. Technically this may be correct but
it ignores the effect sub-categories have on the psychological contract between individual and nation.

2.5 Incompatible categories

A number of studies have looked at the issue of sub-group membership and its compatibility with national identity. Hofman and Rouhana (1976) and Hopkins and Reicher (1996) discuss the extent to which two identities can be in conflict - Arab and Israeli in one case and Scottish and British in the other. Hofman and Rouhana (1976) investigated the relative importance, potency and attractiveness of national (Arab), civic (Israeli), religious, family and occupational identities pre-infitada and found that national and civic identities were most and least important respectively. Though they found religious differences, with Christians perceiving their sense of Arabness as different from that of Muslim Arabs, religion was not seen as important and was allied to older generations. To be Israeli was seen in negative terms, most answered 'no' to the question of whether it mattered to them to be Israeli. All preferred Arab to Israeli when presented as a choice.

Du Bois (1897) felt that the American national identity of Black Americans was a crucial issue. However, more recent research has focused on the Black element of Black American identity while leaving the national factor relatively under-researched. Phinney and Onwughalu (1996) compared Black American and Black African students at a Los Angeles college, both groups scored high on racial identity measures (possibly as a function of the experience of discrimination). For the American students racial identity was positively correlated with self-esteem but not for the African students. The noteworthy finding in this study was that the Black students were unambiguous about their Americanness compared with recent arrivals in the country.

The explicitly multi-cultural immigration policy of Canada over the past 30 years has given rise to a number of studies investigating national identity among diverse groups. Boski (1991) compared the national self-identity of recent and old (WW2) Polish immigrants to Canada and found an inverse relationship - as Polish identity declined, Canadian identity increased. However, self-Polish identity remained stable across gender and generation. Affect towards Poland also remained stable. This study showed that the two identities were not necessarily mutually exclusive or incompatible – it is possible to have a healthy positive Canadian identity while still seeing oneself as Polish and having strong positive affect towards Poland.
Taylor (1972) asked French-Canadian and English-Canadian students to rate themselves for similarity on a number of ethnic and national labels. French-Canadian children rated town, province and French-Canadian as most like self, while English, American and English-Canadian were rated as most dissimilar. English-Canadian children rated town, Canadian and English-Canadian as most similar to self. This study shows how certain identity labels are perceived as mutually incompatible and how the power relationship operates in a situation in which there are no racial differences between the groups.

Trew (1996) looked at compatibility and overlap of self-description labels in the Northern Irish context investigating the use of category labels: British, European, Irish and Northern Irish through a secondary analysis of data collected between 1968 and 1994. She found that Catholics identify themselves as Irish or Northern Irish but not British. Protestants identify as British, Northern Irish or Ulster but not Irish. European was not seen as an identity of choice, but as a tolerable alternative to a rejected identity – Irish or British respectively. Thus, the only commonality is in the use of the Northern Irish and European labels. As it is secondary analysis, there is no 'meaning' element to the labels.

Saeed et al (1999) also looked at the choice of identifying label among Scottish young people of Pakistani heritage. They used a modified 20 statement test using both “who am I” and “who am I not” statements together with a prioritisation of 3 as most important from each section. They also included an open-ended ethnic self-identification question. Of a possible 630 responses, 135 (23%) made reference to race, ethnicity or nationality. Muslim identity was chosen by 97% of the sample. 11% chose Black. 22% chose Scottish, 9% chose British. I am not White was used by 44% and 41% chose it as one of their three most important statements. 22% chose Scottish-Pakistani as their preferred self-identification, within the 59% who chose bi-cultural terms. He compares the choice of Scottish-Pakistani with African American with the inversion of the qualifier – one qualifying the ethnic and the other qualifying the national label.

It is clearly difficult to conclude much from these very different studies looking at very different populations. However, there is one commonality which can be identified; the studies which have looked at potential incompatibilities with national identity have focused on ethnic rather than racial groups. In turn, this has led to an emphasis on specific aspects of the different group memberships which may be considered to be incompatible eg religion. The importance of self-definition and the perception of terms available for self-definition are, however, significant for all groups. There has been no social psychological research investigating the perceived incompatibility between an authentic sense of Blackness and Britishness ie addressing the question of whether it is possible to be a Black Briton.
The assumptions about the relative importance of process and content seem to differ depending on whether an ethnic or racial model of sub-identity is used:

**Ethnic model:** here the assumption is that the basis of compatibility or incompatibility (or assimilation) with the relevant national identity is the degree of congruence or dissonance between the values, culture, mores and behaviours associated with the two identities. Thus, the religious, linguistic and behavioural components of British South Asian minorities are the basis for any potential incompatibility with Britishness compared with, for example the Catholic Irish where dissonance is religious, political and class-based. This is content-based incompatibility and tends to have a degree of permeability. The content also provides an independent group entativity for its members.

**Racial model:** here the basis for [in]compatibility is race and the role of race in the representations of the sub-group or nation. Race, compared with ethnicity, does not *necessarily* come with cultural accompaniments. But if the relevant national identity is represented in racially specific or exclusionary terms, then this gives rise to a perceived incompatibility on both sides, at this point the power differentials attached to the perceptions and power to generate representations and make them stick become relevant and this is therefore a process-based incompatibility as much as/as well as content. This does not provide an independent group entativity for its members.

The degree to which either of these comes into play and the associated consequences depend on whether it is both a racial and ethnic group, an ethnic group or a racial group.

2.6 **Review of research on the effect of constructions of the past on the construction of Blackness and the perceived incompatibility between being Black and British**

Extensive database searches have not identified any research which focuses on how the past affects the construction of the category Black or the relationship between Blackness and Britishness.

2.7 **Review of social memories research**

If one of the important characteristics of the group is its historical genesis then social memory theories should have something to offer. Work in the social sciences on "the past" has been variously categorised as social memories, collective memories, national past, collective remembering and history, indeed they seem sometimes to be used interchangeably. To avoid confusion, I will refer to all these as 'social memories' unless there is a good reason for using or
discussing an alternative term. The heterogeneity of the terms used reflects the different academic disciplines reflected in this field: history, sociology (including historical sociology), cognitive psychology as well as social psychology.

Schuman and Scott (1989) use a definition from Halbwachs: "memories of a shared past that are retained by members of a group, large or small that experienced it." Others use definitions which are related to the purposes of social memories for example, Alonso (1988) quotes Scott as saying that histories are constructions used 'to advance a claim, to levy praise and blame and to justify or condemn the existing state of affairs'.

What all the definitions seem to have in common is that the past is never conceptualised as an 'inert' phenomenon, rather it exists for a reason, whether that reason is continuity between past and present, an impetus for social change in the future, an aid to the creation or maintenance of a group identity or as a political weapon.

The work of Halbwachs has clearly been influential in this arena, he is cited by Coser (1992), Schuman and Scott (1989) and Devine-Wright and Lyons (1997). Wright (1985) was influenced by Heller's "A Theory of History" which attempts to connect historical consciousness to everyday life, a major area of Heller's argument is that everyday life always occurs in relation to a person's immediate locality. This link between environment and social memories appears in a number of papers eg Gross's (1990) analysis of the role of the modern city in remembering. Scribner and Beach (1993) working within a Vygotskian paradigm emphasise the effect of action on memory, this is then linked dialectically to the environment: 'structures in the environment assist in shaping memory processes and that memory affects how we structure the environment around us'.

Stokols and Jacobi (1984) advance an interesting typology which could be relevant to considerations of groupness. They propose that groups can be differentiated "in terms of the temporal depth of their shared experiences, ie the extent to which group members perceive their current goals and activities to be linked to past and/or future events". They identify four main types: Present-focused (shallow past, shallow future); futuristic (shallow past, deep future) traditional (deep past, shallow future) and co-ordinated (deep past, deep future).

They argue that present-focus is likely to occur in the early stages of group formation. They acknowledge that differing sub-identities will influence how one interacts with symbolic elements of the environment citing the example of the differing meanings attached to the wailing wall by secular and orthodox Jews. Stokols and Jacobi (1984) also raise the question "Do groups with enduring traditions behave differently towards outsiders and towards their own physical surroundings than do those without such traditions?" This is another example of the emphasis
placed on the physical surrounding in work on social memory. This is not a wholly methodological
note, given that for groups who have short history in their current place of residence, very little of
the physical past which surrounds them is likely to relate to their own social group. Devine-Wright
and Lyons (1997) state that it is likely that places act as 'cues' for social memories for different
groups. This begs the question of what cues are in use when place cannot fulfill this function for
whatever reason, perhaps because the places of the group's social memories are not related to
current place of residence.

The content of discussions on social memory is heavily linked to discussions of group and
national identity. For example Alonso (1988) looked at the ways in which different groups in
Mexico, including the state, use the past to promote a particular variety of group identity.
Kashima (1980) is unusual in that his paper describes deliberate collective forgetting as well as
collective memory in his discussion of the social amnesia of Japanese Americans interned during
the Second World War. It seems reasonable to assume that if it is not possible to remember
everything and furthermore that social memory functions according to some criteria rather than
randomly, then that which is forgotten is likely to be as much of interest as, if less accessible
than, that which is remembered.

Irwin-Zarecka's (1993) paper on the way in which the more distant past has been used in post-
Communist Eastern Europe links social memory and social change. He describes how radical
changes in the present required a radical new perspective on the past. His analysis shows that
taking a predominantly present-centered approach to the past can be problematic at a number of
social levels (minority group and international) as well as in terms of providing for temporal
continuity.

The issue of how the past relates to the present and whether we reconstruct the past in order to
fit the present or what limits there are on the malleability of the past is discussed by Wright (1985)
who argues that stories told about the past are judged and shaped by their relevance to the
present "they make sense, above all, in terms of their endings, they are used to make sense of
the world, to thematise events". They therefore need to be plausible rather than accurate. Wright
also quotes Zygmunt Bauman who argues that the historical memory of the group 'finds its
expression in the group's proclivities to some rather than other behavioural responses.' Even
when it is not recognised as a concept of the past, this statement may be overly historically
deterministic but it offers an alternative way of thinking about the origins of behavioural aspects of
national or group identities, particularly given that it is often these behavioural characteristics or
stereotypes which are offered spontaneously by members of the public eg Condor (1997) and
therefore seem both deep-rooted and accessible.
Schuman and Scott (1989) found that different generations tended to remember as important those world events which occurred at the time of their late adolescence and early adulthood. Events which were common to different generations were not remembered in the same way. Those young at the time of the event concerned mention their own experience of living through it, those of different ages conceptualise it differently eg WW2 is remembered by those too young to have lived through it for having created the new world order. They argue that the subjective meaning of a memory or event is the crucial element in the translation of experience into future action. They do not go on to explain by what mechanisms this "generational imprint" provide the basis for future action but this could be an interesting element for future research. They also found that for issues which were social changes rather than events, such as the US civil rights and Feminist movements the generational imprinting was only evident amongst the groups (Blacks and Women) affected by the change suggesting that social identity issues are at work in both the imprinting and remembering.

Skowronski et al (1991) investigated 4 main social cognition questions relating to memory: the effects of expectancies and emotional tone on recall, similarities and differences in recall about self and others and how temporal codes are used in temporal judgement.

Alonso (1988) looked at the relationship between how the past is represented and power. Using the example of Mexican history, she discusses how the state, in pursuit of 'legitimate nationhood', finds it necessary to appropriate and re-work the histories advanced by other groups.

Uzzell and Stig Sorenson (1993) describe nostalgia as a mechanism for coping with social change. Nostalgia is also discussed by Wright (1985) who acknowledges that looking back in a nostalgically affectionate way at particular eras (eg the UK's imperial past) can have the effect of minimising the negative reality of that period and have problematic repercussions in the present.

The issue of the relationship between emotion and social memory is explored by Devine-Wright and Lyons and also from a slightly different perspective by Kippax et al (1988) who make the point that 'people cannot experience an emotion unless they share in the common stock of knowledge with regard to that emotion'. Leaving aside the question of whether this is 'true' or not it raises the interesting question of whether and how this applies to more esoteric emotions such as national pride and the issue of how one comes to share in that common stock and whether all individuals and social groups will share it in the same way. The evidence from Devine-Wright and Lyons' study in Ireland suggests that knowledge and emotion do not work together in the same way for all groups. Their study looked at the different ways in which different groups -
traditionalists and non-traditionalists in Ireland - perceived the same places and the resulting differences in the way in which they constructed their national identities, using a questionnaire-based study which identified four historic landmarks. The questionnaires were sent to groups which could broadly be defined as traditional and non-traditional and the results analysed using Correspondence Analysis. They found that historical buildings generate different emotions which are dependent on who is looking at them.

Despite the establishment of a relationship between social memories and national identity, there seems to be relatively little work done on the relationship between the group and the individual. Halbwachs (1951) states that "While the collective memory endures and draws strength from its base in a coherent group of people, it is individuals as group members who remember". If, within this complex relationship it is the individual who acts as the mechanism for the re-construction or transmission of a group memory, what effect does that memory have both on those doing and those receiving the memory and how does this in turn relate back to the group and the relationships between groups in society? Much of the work seems to focus exclusively on differing elements of this relationship eg Kashima (1980) discusses the individuals involved in what he terms the 'collective amnesia' of Japanese Americans relating to the period of internment, he discusses how different generations (exemplified by individual quotations) approached the issue and how this related to the group's continued existence in American society. However, beyond mentioning the racism experienced by the Japanese Americans it is not related to the wider American social memory, for example was the collective amnesia of the internees and their offspring facilitated by the relative omission of this era from mainstream American history or was the amnesia the basis of the omission. The direction of this relationship is particularly relevant to the UK's Black population in that while the colonial and slave periods are important to this population, they are also aspects of British history which the mainstream society might prefer to minimise. Others eg Irwin-Zarecka (1993) look at historical epochs and the way they are used in times of social change, in terms of the way in which history was reconstructed in post-Communist Eastern Europe, but individuals and to a lesser extent social groups are missing from this analysis. Given Schuman and Scott's (1989) assertion that the subjective meaning of memory is "the intersection between personal and national history" such an absence seems problematic.

Middleton & Edwards (1990) look at the way in which the social functions of memory are constructed discursively through conversation and examine both the processes which lead to commemoration and to collective amnesia. Both remembering and forgetting are analysed in terms of the social function which they perform. These objectives are important and are areas to which I have attempted to pay attention in this research. However, for me the various studies
which are reported in their edited book are examples of discourse and conversation analysis which happen to have an aspect of the past as their topic or focus. As I explain in the method chapter, I have opted to use Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as a tool rather than conversation or discourse analysis in order to ensure that the voice of my participants remains audible rather than being embroiled in a more technical analysis of the functions which particular linguistic devices serve.

It is difficult to draw many conclusions from the social memory research. It has used a variety of different theoretical approaches, (within different disciplines), different populations, different historical periods and has looked at different aspects of the relationship between the past and national identity.

Hopkins and Reicher (1996) argue that one of the key aspects associated with the concept of nation is that of its immortality, ie it is a social grouping which both precedes and survives any individual. This is a future-oriented approach to social memories. I have adopted a past-based perspective in terms of looking at how the past has affected the initial genesis of groups and categories and how it has a distinctive effect on the perceptions of category boundaries in contrast with the way in which an analysis of current constraints impact on those boundaries. None of the existing approached to social memories seems to fit the needs of this particular population. As a result, I have taken an distinctive and eclectic approach to both how I have defined social memories and also in the ways in which I have analysed the use of the past.

2.8 Theoretical review
One of the main debates throughout this thesis is about whether the distinctive nature of the UK's African Caribbean population has had an impact on the way it has developed and the way in which it is constructed. As a result of this, I have suggested that the assumptions behind and predictions of the main social psychological theories can not be successfully applied without modifications to this population. This is both an empirical and theoretical challenge. In the thesis' empirical studies I have addressed a number of research questions which seek to explore the distinctive nature of the population and the category Black. In discussing these studies, both the concepts informing their design and the results, I have drawn on three main social psychological approaches in attempt to test their explanatory power.

All the mainstream social psychological theories tend to take groups for granted or to have underlying, unarticulated assumptions about what groups are. From this perspective they then go on to look at how group or category membership impacts on behaviour or sense of self. Thus for Social Identity Theory (SIT) (Tajfel, 1981), group membership predicts individual and collective behaviours,
particularly inter-group behaviours, which serve to enhance self-esteem. Self-categorisation Theory (SCT) (Turner et al, 1987) focuses on how and when a particular group becomes sufficiently important to impact on behaviour. SCT stresses that individuals are members of multiple categories and the importance of those categories to perception and behaviour at any one time depends on their salience (ie their psychological significance). The theory provides a framework in which variations in salience can be described.

However, these theories do not look at the origin of real-life groups or categories or how these origins are perceived by their members and the perceived impact of history on that genesis. The exception to this would be those social constructionist approaches to history (eg Reicher & Hopkins, 2001) which look at how the competing narratives about the history of a group are used selectively and strategically to further modern projects as in the case of the different choices about the origin of Scotland as a nation.

The three approaches which are being investigated are Social Identity Theory, the Integrated paradigm and Social Memories Theory. I discuss here the particular aspects of these theories which I am exploring in this thesis. These theories are then discussed in varying degrees in the empirical chapters and final conclusions drawn in chapter 8.

Social Identity Theory

Tajfel aimed to understand and uncover the origins of discrimination and ethnocentrism. Broadly speaking Social Identity Theory argues that social group memberships and self-perception as a group member are the psychological pre-requisites for the inter-group behaviours of ethnocentrism and discrimination. One of the major tenets of social identity theory is that a) there is a basic need for positive self esteem to be derived from group membership and b) that this need for self-esteem powers the maximisation of intergroup differences and the minimisation of intragroup differences. More specifically discrimination is the result of the drive for group members to maintain positive self-esteem; though as Hogg and Abrams (2003) point out discrimination is not always seen as a negative, when ingroup favouritism is applied within the ingroup it is seen as evidence of commitment to the group and loyalty.

For Social Identity Theory, society consists of multiple social categories which are defined by the opposition between them. Group behaviours eg stereotyping or conforming occur when a social identity is the salient basis of self-conceptualisation and the content of group behaviour rests on the specific social identity that is salient. Social categorisation processes are cognitively generated by social categorisation of self and others. Social categorisation research tends to
focus on the contextual factors which cause individuals to categorise ourselves and others in particular ways.

SIT recognises that not all social identities have equal value. When there is a negative social identity there are four main options open to an individual in his/her enduring attempt to maximise self-esteem:

1 - individual: the relationship between groups stays the same but the individual minimises social identity in favour of a positive self-evaluation through personal identity.

2 - social mobility: the individual identifies with a higher status social group and attempts to join it.

3 - social competition: there are attempts to improve the relative position of the group on an important dimension of comparison.

4 - social creativity: a new comparison dimension is chosen which favours the lower status groups, or the existing dimensions are re-evaluated.

Collective strategies are most likely to be adopted when the social structure is perceived as sufficiently variable to allow for social change. The legitimacy of the points of comparison between groups will also influence whether social change is possible. It would seem difficult for members of a subordinate racial minority group to use any other than the individualistic option especially in a country which favours individualistic strategies and when the boundaries between racial groups are perceived as relatively impermeable. Breakwell (1993) has noted that while Social Identity Theory professes to be a theory of inter-group relations, the processes which it describes are primarily individual; it is the need of the individual for self-esteem which is the driving force behind the processes of comparison. Social Identity Theory has also been criticised by Abrams and Hogg (1988) for its emphasis on self-esteem in the achievement of positive identity. Breakwell (1986) has added self-efficacy, continuity and distinctiveness to self-esteem in an analysis of identity principles for individuals in modern, Western societies; there is no reason to believe that these principles could not apply to social groups as well as to individuals.

As I have argued above, there are a number of areas in which this approach proves problematic for explaining this population and in particular its sense of collective self. Study 2, the focus group study addresses these issues, particularly in terms of the assumption that a socially disparaged or stigmatised group will see itself in similar terms and, therefore, respond in a variety of ways to address the stigma.

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Self-categorisation Theory (SCT)

SCT is discussed here as a development within the Social Identity Theory paradigm. Self Categorisation Theory (Turner et al, 1987) is based on the assumption that people use the same processes to categorise themselves (using a process of self-stereotyping) as they use to categorise other stimuli eg plants. Following on from this, the self-categorisation process operates at three levels of abstraction: inter-individual, inter-group, and inter-species. The salience of a self-categorisation is context dependent and determined by a combination of perceiver readiness – ie an individual’s inclination to use a particular category; normative fit – the social and value component of a category; comparative fit – the outcome of the meta-contrast ratio.

Self Categorization Theory offers the concept of salience as a way of looking at social and group identities, arguing that a social identity is only activated when it is made salient in context. The problem with this is that the thesis becomes unfalsifiable; if a social identity such as race is not activated it is assumed that this is because the context does not have sufficient salience, rather than any other reason, for example, a lack of meaning in the category for the individual concerned.

Social Identity Theory approaches do not explore the origin of group differences but accepts them as real, consensual, unitary and self-evident, Self Categorization Theory makes this tendency explicit by arguing that social categories are used because they reflect social reality. Reicher (1986) illustrates the extent to which social categories are not self-evident in his examination of the conflict between the use of the categories of class and race in defining issues surrounding non-white immigration to the United Kingdom following the second world war. He found that initially non-white immigration was represented in terms of class difference and related to the pressure which this numerical addition to the working class would place on resources such as education, housing and health provision. However, the reality of the colour bar in housing and employment meant that class became an inadequate category and was replaced by race as the dominant categorisation.

A problem with applying the SIT/SCT paradigm to racial minorities is that they seek to explain (and to some extent justify) behaviours which are most prevalent amongst numerical majorities and powerful groups. For example Hogg and Abrams (2003) identify uncertainty reduction as one of the issues which the social identity perspective seeks to explain. They suggest that uncertainty reduction may be an explanation for disadvantaged groups’ acquiescence in their position. This is not to suggest that there can be no discrimination or ethnocentrism in disadvantaged groups or numerical minorities but it is to suggest that it has limited impact and is not likely to form the
prevailing norm for a culture. Both the focus group and interview studies address issues of self-definition and identification in ways which challenge the assumptions of Self Categorisation Theory.

**Social Memory Theory**

The hypotheses of Social Memory Theory as formulated by Lyons (1996) are addressed directly in both the media analysis and in the focus group study. The media analysis looks at the degree to which the UK African Caribbean population exhibits a similar sense of groupness to that assumed by the theory in its collective representation. The focus group study explores the degree to which the past is harnessed in line with the identity principles proposed by the theory.

Social Memory Theory argues that groups are likely to sustain memories and reconstruct them in such a way as to show their continuity - this guides memory when explaining current group identity with consistent constructions of the past, collective self-esteem by claiming success as properly belonging to the group, distinctiveness by remembering and ritualising uniqueness, efficacy through remembering examples of victories (sporting or military) and cohesion by remembering events which emphasise group unity over division.

Lyons' Social Memory Theory hypothesises that when a group's identity is threatened by challenges to its values and what it stands for then the continuity and cohesiveness principles will dominate and there will be an emphasis on the past and an entrenchment of identities. When the group's identity is threatened in terms of its recognition of its existence by others, then the distinctiveness principle will dominate because what makes a group distinct is likely to provide the rules of inclusion and exclusion for the group. When there is a need to empower the group, the efficacy principle will dominate.

**Integrated paradigm**

Breakwell's integrated paradigm (1993) which proposes that social representations theory and social identity theory can be usefully integrated is discussed in study 3 which looks at the interactions between representations and self-categorisations together with the constraints which both representations and categorisations impose on each other.

Social Representations Theory is most closely associated with Moscovici who defined social representations as "...a system of values, ideas and practices with a twofold function...to establish a consensual order.... and [for] communication to take place among members of a
community by providing them with a code for social exchange" (1973). They are social in that they are shared and consensual but also in that they are socially rather than individually constructed. Moscovici has claimed that social representations have a significant part to play in identity formation. For example he argues (Moscovici & Hewstone 1983) that the consensual adoption of representations "establishes a group identity". If social groups such as race, class and gender provide the outline for social identities, then social representations fill in the content and provide the meaning associated with membership of such a group. It is in this sense that social representations have the function of making the unfamiliar familiar and as a result much of the research under the Social Representations umbrella has tended to be descriptive rather than predictive. Because social representations are consensual they also function to limit the range of social identities available to an individual, the process of anchoring means that new social representations are linked with old and this will inevitably have a constraining effect.

There have been many criticisms of Social Representations Theory from a number of different perspectives. Potter and Litton (1985) highlight a number of problems with Social Representations Theory from a discourse approach, for example, they point out that Social Representations Theory treats social groups as unproblematic, when they could also be seen as "social representations constructed by participants to make sense of their social worlds". Billig (1988), arguing from a rhetorical perspective, highlights the possibility that the picture painted by social representation theorists "will omit the role of argumentation and the clash between justification and criticism in the maintenance of social knowledge". Breakwell (1993) suggests that there is a need to take account of power relationships between groups when considering social representations: "A powerful group may be able to impose a representation on some members of a less powerful group but not on all of them". There are also problems with some of the research undertaken under the social representations umbrella, much of the research has been descriptive and focused on a discrete time period, thus ignoring the effect of social change on a particular social representation and also the potential of social representations themselves for promoting or inhibiting social change.

In her integrated paradigm Breakwell (1993) has suggested that there may be both methodological and theoretical benefits in integrating Social Identity Theory with Social Representations Theory. Each theory is able to fill some of the gaps of the other: Social Identity Theory is explanatory rather than descriptive and assumes an affective component in group membership which may not actually exist. By contrast Social Representations Theory is descriptive rather than explanatory or predictive and tends to minimise the evaluative aspect of group membership and identity construction.
Breakwell's integrated paradigm (1993) suggests that intra-group relations will "direct or channel the formation of any specific social representations" so that they serve group purposes but also acknowledges that the relationship between social representations and social identity is reciprocal rather than causal, so that the constraining function of social representations are likely to be instrumental in the formation of social identities. Millward (1995) showed how the integrated paradigm could be used empirically in her study of the social identities of nurses at a time of change in the nursing profession. She found that modern and traditional nurses used different aspects of the social representation of nursing to establish and maintain their social identities as particular types of nurses.

2.9 How does the thesis propose to answer the 3 research questions?

It is clear that there is a long history of research into aspects of Blackness starting with Du Bois in the nineteenth century. Most research done in the US was on African Americans, though since 1990 there has been a greater emphasis on the ethnic identity of the USA's Hispanic population and also on White racial identity (eg Perry 2001). In terms of research on African Americans, most empirical research has focused on issues such as self-esteem and related concepts. Where racial groups have been the focus of US research, the European tradition has looked at ethnic rather than racial minorities. There has been relatively little consideration of incompatible social categories. As a result the literature is not adequate to address the theoretical and practical questions raised by the UK Black African Caribbean population. The equation of identity with identification and of self-identification/description with ingroup identification and the way in which categories have been equated with groups; the way in which the basis of conflict has been conceptualised in terms of ethnic rather than racial categories and the absence of a historical or temporal dimension of much of the research are serious shortcomings which the empirical studies described in later chapters seek to address.

The rationale for the empirical research is, therefore, twofold:

a) empirically the issue of the compatibility between race and nation, together with its historical roots is important to investigate because it has not been researched in this population and it may have the potential to shed some light on some of the social and political issues facing the UK Black African Caribbean population.

b) theoretically by going back to first principles and attempting to deconstruct empirically some of the assumptions which have traditionally underpinned work on groups it provides a
challenge to those assumptions and also their implications as well as a critique of their applicability to different populations.

This research is not an attempt to explain or make causal connections about macro social processes such as political participation. Evidence suggests that levels of political participation amongst the UK Black population are low. For example, before the 1997 General Election, the organisation Operation Black Vote found that of the 60% who were registered to vote only 40% definitely planned to use that vote (Economist, 1997). It can be argued that one of the factors which contribute to this lack of political involvement amongst Black people is likely to be that elements within the construction of both Blackness and Britishness act as barriers to political participation. This would be in accordance with empirical evidence showing that levels of identification with particular social categories is related to collective action (Kelly 1996). It is possible that, in particular, the racially oriented representation associating Whiteness with being English or British may contribute towards limiting Black people's perceptions of opportunities for participation in mainstream UK political and social institutions. I have attempted to explore the potential political and social implications of the findings but the sample size and the methodology used necessarily limit the possibility of making generalisable statements such as Black people have a low voter turnout because they do not feel British.

Causal statements such as the one above necessarily imply a comparative framework; in this case the assumed norm is white voting numbers. This research is not intended to be a comparative study as so many other studies in the past have been which look for an explanation of how why a racial minority differs on some dimension from the majority. I have attempted to look at the Black population in the UK as a self-contained unit as far as possible. The only exception to this is the inclusion of a small White sample which is compared against the Black rather than the other way around.

The sample used tended to be over-representative of educated professional Black people in their 30s and 40s, it could be argued that this gives a misleading impression. However, what it attempts to do is to dispel the assumption (sometimes explicit, sometimes not) that the cause of Black 'alienation' is economic and social disadvantage. While I would not wish to disagree with the view that the UK Black population in general suffers from ongoing economic and social disadvantage. Many of the individuals who participated in this research do not; they may be under-employed relative to their educational qualifications and abilities, but they are not living at the margins of mainstream society. It is, therefore significant that even these people who are doing relatively well in conventional terms feel excluded and sense some incompatibility between their Blackness and their Britishness. In study 3, five people were recruited deliberately to see
whether there were differences between the educated professionals and those who were unemployed, under-educated or working in low-paid, low status jobs, the main difference was in the ability of these participants to articulate their views rather than in the content of their attitudes.

Because this research is qualitative, the implications of the issues are discussed primarily in terms of the subjective experience of the interaction between the personal and the social. In dealing with the issues on a self-contained level, it avoids making the connection between “I feel excluded from an authentic sense of Britishness and this is why I behave in a particular sort of way” which requires some sort of explanation. The participants are clear that they feel excluded, but they do not tend to use it to explain or excuse their behaviour. Often this is because there is nothing to explain or excuse, they are not involved in socially negatively sanctioned activities and, therefore, there is nothing to explain. Their achievements and their ‘issues’ co-exist. This research is not attempting to suggest that if Black people felt more British, they would be more successful in education, employment etc.

Throughout this research Britishness is conceptualised in a variety of ways depending on the aspect under investigation. Both the content and the representation of Britishness are considered in study 3. Both study 2 and study 3 address, in differing degrees, identification and the constraints on identification as British. The use of the past also informs consideration of the processes by which Britishness comes to be constructed in more or less inclusive terms.

2.10 Ontological positioning

I am aware that there may be a perceived ontological clash in the way in which I discuss these issues. On the one hand I use a realist ontology in the background to describe the “facts” surrounding the genesis and history of the population under discussion. However, in the empirical work and elsewhere I adopt a more social constructionist approach which looks at the way in which history and categories are constructed without seeking to correlate them with any objective historical reality. It is clearly not sufficient to state that I am aware that some observers may perceive these two approaches as incompatible and leave it there. The need to look at the facts surrounding origin of the population and its effect on category entativity means that it is not possible for me to take a strong social constructionist approach. For me, the realities of life as a member of this population mean that limits have to be placed on social constructionism and indeed illustrate the weaknesses of its stronger forms. In order for it to be possible to analyse the different ways in which the past are constructed, interpreted and contested, it is necessary to have some “facts” with which to do this.
Having stated above what the research does not do, what does it set out to achieve? It attempts to raise questions about group entativity and to demonstrate some of the consequences of the answers for a real life question. How does the nature of the group impact on the group’s collective sense of self and what impact does that sense of self have for inter-categorical interactions.

I outline below how each study/chapter attempts to contribute to the overall argument:

Chapter 1 – Set out the historical background and the original impetus for the research.

Chapter 2 - This chapter provides a review of the theoretical and empirical literature in the area.

Chapter 3 – This gives details of the methodology used for the different studies and an explanation of why that methodology was chosen.

Chapter 4 – Study 1 (Media analysis): this study looks at the main issues in group construction and group entativity for this population and how they relate to Britishness. The results are discussed in relation to Lyons’ Social Memory Theory.

Chapter 5 – Study 2 (Focus groups): this follows up the media analysis by exploring how group entativity is constructed in a conversational context and the importance of the past in the construction of the category and for the consequent incompatibilities with Britishness. The results are discussed with reference to their implications for Social Identity Theory and Social Memory Theory.

Chapter 6 – Study 3 (Value sorting task, Black sample): this study attempts to explore potential bases for the incompatibility between Blackness and Britishness and to pinpoint the role of the past in influencing this incompatibility. It also provides additional information about the role played by group entativity in these processes. The results are considered from within Breakwell’s integrated paradigm.

Chapter 7 – Study 4 (Value sorting task, White sample): this small-scale study looked at the degree to which members of the White majority followed the same processes and/or came to similar conclusions as the participants in study 3. The differences identified illustrate the distinctive approach taken by the Black participants and show the differing identification and consequent motivations of the White sample.
Chapter 8 - Discussion – this chapter draws together and discusses the key findings of the research. It also looks at the theoretical implications of those findings and possible directions for further research.
Chapter 3 – Method

3.1 Introduction

This chapter gives details of the methods used for the empirical studies and an explanation for the choice of those methods. Each of the studies builds on the earlier research and uses a methodology which is suitable for the issue under investigation as well as providing appropriate methodological diversity.

3.2 Study 1 – media analysis

This study followed two established methodologies. It used Billig’s Banal Nationalism method which refers to the regular flagging of the nation as a means of maintaining nationalist feeling within the nation. The study was informed by techniques used by Billig in his analysis of English daily newspapers on one day eg references to the nation and the use of we. The study also followed the procedure used by Sparks and Campbell (1987) to analyse layout and content coverage. Sparks and Campbell argue that the textual organisation of newspapers ‘construct’ a reader who is the editor’s idea of an average reader ie the ‘inscribed’ reader. The method used to analyse the photographs used in the sports coverage was based on an adaptation of methods used by Beloff (1984) and Finn (1997). The main limitation of the media analysis is that it is secondary rather than primary data and involves analysing data which has already been constructed for another purpose. The data has already been through the journalistic processes of selection and editing in order to meet the needs and agenda of the newspapers’ publishers rather than the research questions of this thesis.

The use of four approaches in the media analysis, analysis of geographical anchoring, analysis of content and layout as well as thematic analysis of content and analysis of visual imagery ensured that the media analysis was both systematic and comprehensive. Links were drawn between the different forms of analysis where possible, for example the allocation of specific pages to different geographical areas discussed in the layout analysis was compared with both the geographical anchoring and the thematic content. For example, the layout suggested a trans-national conceptualisation of Blackness; the anchoring analysis found a heavy emphasis on the UK and the thematic analysis found a resistance to identifying with any particular geographical area.
3.3 Study 2 – focus groups

The focus group study built on the media analysis by opening up its findings to contestation or confirmation through the collection of primary data. It also used articles from the print media to act as stimuli for the focus group discussions.

The use of focus groups rather than individual interviews at this stage was intended to ensure that a variety of views could be captured and to maximise opportunities for debate. A variety of issues were featured in the newspaper articles used in the focus groups and it was those which provided the most fertile data which steered the research. For example, one article was based on discussion in a Black barbershop and had been chosen to prompt discussion of gender issues within the Black population. The article seemed to be of little interest to participants and produced limited discussion; in addition gender issues were not discussed in relation to any of the other issues and, as a result, this topic was not pursued in later studies. Therefore, the focus group study not only generated data, but helped to refine the research questions.

3.4 Study 3 & Study 4 – sorting interview

The value-sort interviews aimed to confirm or dispute the findings of the focus group (as well as going in-depth into one particular issue) by utilising a distinct methodology. A face-to-face interview allowed the interviewees the opportunity to reveal their views about Britain and Britishness in a confidential context rather than a group situation. The use of a sorting task provided a focus for the interview and a stimulus for discussion of relatively abstract issues such as the temporal dimension as well as providing a standardised format. This technique had been used in earlier research with a racially mixed group of children aged 9-11 in an attempt to uncover social representations of Britain (Storey, 1996). The alternative approach of an unstructured interview asking people directly for their views about Britain and Britishness was rejected as being too vague and intimidating. The limitations of direct questioning were borne out by the participants' responses to the first question which asked for an "off the top of the head" description of Britain and British people. The first reaction, from both Black and White participants, tended to be a sharp intake of breath, followed by an "oh", for example:

I – umm, just off the top of your head in a couple of sentences, how would you describe Britain or the British people or both?

ED – British people, British people, what's British (laughing) umm that’s the first thing that comes to mind, what’s British, how would I describe the British people?

Or
I – ok, if I asked you off the top of your head just to define or describe like you know in a couple of sentences Britain or the British people, what would you say?

AG – umm, … oh gosh umm (snifs), in one or two sentences

The appropriateness of the qualitative approach was confirmed by the use of some simple questions in the schedule, for example, participants were asked whether their personal temporal orientation was past, present or future. This type of question is similar to that included in many questionnaires. This question seemed to have an inbuilt response bias with most people opting for a present or future orientation and if the responses had been analysed without the accompanying discussions they would not have revealed the way in which the past impacted on their views of the present and the future. In addition, further methodological support for the use of the value-sort interview technique was provided by the use of a small White sample in study 4. As well as providing content information about differences in the ways that Black and White people represented Britishness, this sub-study was also used to check that the method used was race-neutral and whether the results of the Black sample were a product of the methodology used.

3.5 Overview of empirical data

The fact that the three studies approached the research questions using three distinct methods and produced similar results suggests that there is a degree of validity and robustness for the main findings. The use of indirect techniques as described above provide partial solutions to the challenge of investigating abstract concepts, such as social memories and identification, in non-threatening ways. The relative flexibility of the qualitative methods used also had the benefit of providing information about issues which were not the immediate focus of the study, for example, the value sort technique aimed to uncover which values were associated with Britain over 3 time periods, but they also provided important information about the construction of Blackness.

3.6 Sampling issues

Throughout the period of the research there were significant problems in accessing members of this population. Others (eg Policy Studies Institute 1997) have documented the challenges of doing any research with this population and the need to oversample. For historical reasons (as outlined by Owusu-Bempeh & Howitt, 1999) Black people tend to be particularly suspicious of psychological research and my approaches were not immune from this. Attempts to address related research questions which would have required access to larger samples and which might have permitted the use of quantitative methods such as questionnaires were unsuccessful; for example attempts to gain entry to schools and colleges met with resistance and distressing accusations of racism.
Participants for two of the focus groups were provided through personal contacts. A snowball technique was used to provide participants for the value-sort study, the use of the snowball technique meant that educated professionals were over-represented, this was counter-balanced by the use of a research consultancy to recruit people in unskilled or semi-skilled positions.

3.7 Researcher perspective

All focus groups and interviews were done by the same individual a female in her thirties, UK born, of African Caribbean descent who in terms of race and nationality was matched to the primary target population. This provided advantages in terms of consistency across the data collection but may have had unintended consequences for the interviewer-interviewee dynamic (for example a number of participants assumed that she was of mixed parentage). I discuss these issues in more detail in chapter 1.

Given the topic and the qualitative nature of the research, there can be no doubt that all aspects of the research process were influenced by the researcher’s personal perspective. This is evident from the choice of research questions to the worldview brought to the data analysis. It is plausible that another researcher from a different background would have approached the project differently and possibly have had different findings as a result. Like other qualitative researchers, I see this as an advantage rather than a disadvantage. However, the fact that the research was structured around the requirements of a PhD programme meant that this did not become an exercise in personal subjectivity. Along with the methodological and theoretical rigour required for a PhD, interactions with my supervisor (from a different background) had an important role in requiring me to explain and justify my approach, choices and interpretations and to unpack my personal assumptions and prejudices.

3.8 Rationale for use of qualitative methods

Qualitative methods have a number of advantages over quantitative methods in some areas of research. Interactive qualitative methods avoid the need to specify meanings in advance by allowing participants to contest and revise the meanings which they attach to concepts, in turn this means that the researcher is less likely to unwittingly misinterpret responses. Qualitative methods also tend to allow for the multi-faceted nature of human life as Willig (2001) points out they are concerned with meaning, sense-making and subjective experience rather than the "imposition of preconceived ‘variables’" (p9).
3.8.1 Definition of qualitative research

The simplest and easiest definition of qualitative data is that made to distinguish it from quantitative data. Whereas quantitative data deals primarily with number, qualitative data focuses on words as the data source though sometimes other media such as art, film and other forms of communication such as body language form the focus.

Elliott et al (1999) define the aim of qualitative research as being to understand and represent the experiences and actions of people as they encounter, engage and live through situations. In qualitative research, the researcher attempts to develop understandings of the phenomena under study, based as much as possible on the perspective of those being studied. Qualitative researchers accept that it is impossible to set aside one’s own perspective totally (and do not claim to). Nevertheless, they believe that their self-reflective attempts to ‘bracket’ existing theory and their own values allow them to understand and represent their informants’ experiences and actions more adequately than by using other approaches. In discussing the philosophy which underlies qualitative research, Elliott et al highlight the importance of taking into account matters such as history, language and context. It could be argued that rather than merely taking account of these issues, this thesis moves these issues to centre stage and makes them the focus of the research.

Elliott et al (1999) initiated a debate about the guidelines which might determine publishability of research. They identified seven guidelines which should be shared by both qualitative and quantitative approaches:

1 - Explicit scientific context and purpose
2 - Appropriate methods
3 - Respect for participants
4 - Specification of methods
5 - Appropriate discussion
6 - Clarity of presentation
7 - Contribution to knowledge.

They also specified seven guidelines which they suggested were particularly relevant to qualitative research. I have attempted to apply these seven guidelines to this research to varying degrees and I discuss below the ways in which I feel that the research process meets the relevant guidelines:
1 - owning one's own perspective
In chapter one I provide information about how my personal history meshed with my social psychological research interests to provide some of the impetus for the current research.

2 - situating the sample
In so far as it has been possible to do so without breaching confidentiality and compromising anonymity, I have provided information about the participants which is relevant to their role in the research.

3 - grounding in examples
The use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) means that the generation of themes is a direct consequence of the interpretative element of the research role. However, I have illustrated those themes with quotations in order to show how the themes are a product of the participants' wider speech.

4 - providing credibility checks
As discussed below, the use of differing qualitative methods to address different aspects of the research questions provides a form of credibility check to ensure that the data is not simply a result of the method used. One participant was asked to check the interpretation and use of his comments and he agreed that the way in which his views were represented was an accurate reflection of his experience and resonated as "true". I have included sample transcripts in the appendices to show the full context from which the quotes have been extracted. Full verbatim transcripts of all interview and focus groups are available on request and the audio-tapes from which they were taken are also available. The stimuli used for the focus groups and the card-sorts are also available if required. A sample of one of the newspapers used in the media analysis is included as at appendix 2. Copies of the other newspapers used are available on request.

5 - coherence
The use of super-ordinate and sub-themes provided for by the IPA methodology ensures that complex and potentially overwhelming data can be organised in ways which not only provide information about the data but which allow for clarity and coherence in presentation.

6 - accomplishing general v specific research tasks
I have been careful to emphasise that the conclusions I draw are for individuals within a particular population at a particular point in time and that they do not necessarily have any generalisability to other populations or will continue to be relevant into the future. I have also noted the distinctive
nature of the population under investigation and the way in which this impacts on the possibility of making arguments about existing theories.

7 - resonating with readers.
One of the key advantages of IPA is the degree to which it allows the participants voice to be heard in its original form rather than being deconstructed in ways which distance the reader from the humanity of the participant. In particular the use of verbatim quotes ensures that there is no attempt to ‘clean up ‘or to make the participants’ speech acceptable to a particular audience. I have included strong language and retained dialect usage and population specific speech idioms.

3.9 Interpretative Phenomenological analysis

I used IPA throughout the research (other than the media analysis) in different ways for different studies. Smith describes IPA as “an attempt to unravel the meanings contained in .... accounts through a process of interpretative engagement with the texts and transcripts” (quoted by Willig page 53)

IPA accepts the impossibility of gaining direct access to participants’ life worlds while at the same time aiming to look at issues from the participants’ own perspective.

During the course of this research I was fortunate in being able to attend two ESRC workshops on qualitative analysis, one was at a relatively early stage in the process and the second towards the end of the data collection. At these workshops, there were presentations by experts in a number of qualitative methods (IPA, Discourse Analysis, Grounded Theory and Narrative analysis) and participants analysed the same data using each technique under expert guidance. On each occasion it was clear to me that IPA was the only technique which allowed the research subjects to tell their own story in their own words. Workshop participants were encouraged to bring their own theoretical perspectives to the data analysis, but the ultimate criteria for analysis was whether the subjects' words in the transcript supported the interpretation.

In researching a population which is a minority in terms both of numbers and power it was of paramount importance to me that the analysis was rooted in the participants' own phenomenology and account. All the other approaches used at the workshops appeared in different ways to create a distance between what the subjects had actually said and the researchers’ analysis; for example discourse analysis seemed to present an analysis of words rather than speech and grounded theory offered an analysis of category codes rather than
participants' views. It was for this reason, over and above any epistemological allegiance or methodological dogma, that I felt IPA to be the most appropriate qualitative technique to use.

A crucial element of IPA involves the recognition of the role of the researcher in the research process and in the interaction between interviewer and interviewee. The interpretation and the interpretative framework which the researcher brings to the data is also recognised by IPA and it is that interpretation which distinguishes IPA from a descriptive account of participants' views. At the same time IPA looks at phenomena from the point of view of those who experience them. This is considered to be particularly important in terms of representing members of a population which has had relatively little power over its representation in both the mainstream media and historically in academic research.

There are a number of quotes in chapter 5 which illustrate the distinction between interpretation and phenomenology in the analytic process.

CA – umm I would say if we're breaking this down to its core that I'm probably a person with no home at all umm you need to get this sort of sense of belonging generally to wherever your born but because of the inequalities in the system and the system is modelled for certain types of class people and not for someone of my class, ethnic background unless I'm bringing something to the table which is usually in this country at least sports and entertainment although it getting, it is better than what it was there is an inequality to the system so if there's an inequality to the system you always hark for your parental home but because there are stereotypes and stereotypes which have never been challenged umm if I was to go back home, my reception there is likely to be worse than it is here because you're seen as being soiled by the country you were born in, so in the end I'm a person with no home but technically I'm Black British.

Here we have an example of an individual describing how their current sense of a lack of Britishness feels to them. We get information about how they perceive that experience as evidenced by the use of terms such as 'nomad' and 'a person with no home'. This is the phenomenology of national 'homelessness' for the participants. However, in my analysis I have gone beyond that descriptive process, despite the power of the participants' descriptions. In focusing the analysis on the way in which the participants explain and attribute responsibility for this homelessness (in terms of the attribution to powerful others) I have brought a social psychological interpretative framework to their comments which goes beyond taking them at face-value and looks at attributions and patterns and their social psychological implications.

IPA has been criticised by Willig for its emphasis on language as a data source. She argues that its reliance on a sophisticated use of language may limit the degree to which it can be used with a wide range of participants. I found that the use of practical stimuli such as newspapers and the card-sort provided a partial solution to this problem, though clearly neither of these techniques
could have been used with participants who were functionally illiterate. The stimuli provided a starting point for the discussion and functioned as an "aunt sally" which could be knocked down and allowed the participants to retain a degree of control over the research context. The quotes from two of the focus groups in the annex to this chapter illustrate the degree to which the newspaper articles were contested by the groups’ participants.

The card-sort, in particular, provided a focus for the interview which went some way to diffusing any tension or anxiety. Participants were encouraged to recognise its childlike qualities and to use them to play with the concepts under discussion; this went some way to freeing them from concerns over image protection.

All the empirical data analysis was informed by the IPA approach, though none of the studies followed the classic semi-structured interview format recommended for IPA data generation. The application of IPA principles to non-traditional data illustrated the potential of this technique for research in social psychology. For each study IPA was selected as the most appropriate technique for the data:

Study 1 – The Banal Nationalism and Inscribed Reader methods were adopted as the basis for analysing specific aspects of the newspapers such as anchoring or layout. IPA was considered to be most suitable for the generation of the themes from the content. Grounded theory (Pidgeon & Henwood 1997) was considered as an alternative and was trialled on some pilot data, but subsequently rejected because the use of codes and categories did not provide sufficient structure for the diversity and quantity of data and the results rapidly became unmanageable.

Study 2 – IPA is usually recommended for use in one-to-one interviews, however following personal communication with Jonathan Smith, the originator of IPA, it was determined that a modified application of IPA was suitable for the analysis of themes from the focus groups. The only area where IPA was less appropriate was in dealing with dissent or argument between focus group members. Most of the groups tended to be in broad agreement, however, where the disagreement was significant, these elements of the transcript were subject to a separate analysis.

Study 3 – In this study, the focus of the analysis was the commentary which accompanied the sorting process. The task required participants not only to sort the adjectives along the temporal continuum, but also to explain and account for their choices. Although the results of the sorting task are relevant, they are not analysed as data in their own right, for example, through a multidimensional scaling analysis or cluster analysis. The format produced a considerable quantity of data which took a number of different forms. For example, there was the discussion of
the actual sorting process as well as responses to a number of set questions. The results of the sorting task are presented numerically in tables at the end of each chapter. An initial analysis of the patterns associated with the sorting eg negative v positive did not do justice to the rich complexity of the participants’ accounts and a way to structure and conceptualise the data in order to interpret it was, therefore, required. IPA was the most appropriate technique for this task because the discipline of step-by-step analysis which it requires prevented the wealth of data from obscuring the meaning and allowed themes to be generated. This was an (at times painful) iterative process with a number of different thematic readings being discarded because they did not do justice to the data before the final choice of superordinate and sub-themes.

Full descriptions of the ways in which these methods were used are included in each of the relevant empirical chapters.
Annex - Extracts from focus groups discussing Black press

Focus group 1

M - a bit, who wrote it, where’s that from?
LS - that one was in umm New Nation
M - New Nation?
LS - Yeah
Marg - Those newspapers they’re all much of the same aren’t they?
M - they’re all the same no imagination
LS - do you not think that those papers give a good representation of Black people?
M - no they don’t
Marg - I don’t know if it’s me but
M - they don’t, The Voice I don’t bother to buy it no more
Marg - you buy it but there’s nothing to read in it

.....
M - I used to buy The Voice, but The Voice isn’t saying nothing, it doesn’t say nothing. It’s boring. It does not represent Black people.
LS - What do you think it should have that would make it more representative?
M - not bits and pieces that that happen in the general papers like you know, try and find the news and make news so that Black people can read it, not about who shot who for drugs, more like a school where you know you report on what’s happening
D - They’re always looking for the the bad or the
M - the bad, you know the good things
Marg - not only that you know the information, information people want to know what’s happening in the community they don’t cover, there’s so many things, there’s so many organisations doing so many things
M - so many different things, whenever you approach them, they’re not interested.
Marg - If we said we had 7 women here who have got blond hair and and selling weed
M - got big knockers
they’d be down here, but if we say we’ve got women are having a women’s day and, they’re not interested at the end of the day that’s not news
D - they’re just looking to slander us.
LS - Why do you think that is though?
Marg - because they’re owned by white people at the end of the day and, because it’s not a truly Black paper, it’s not owned by the community.
D - they’re trying to get the Blacks into the White community.
Marg - you know, it’s not owned by the Black Community so, therefore, cos it’s like this, this kind of article by this boy here [pointing at as Good as Goldie] and there’s another one by what’s his
M - with the funky dread
name, that one that does the umm. No he’s sometimes a comedian, that is the most rubbish I’ve
M - Adibyo?
ever read in my life and I’m saying there’s young people out there, young Black people who would write articles that you would want to read these people have nothing to say and yet still [thumping the table for emphasis]
they’ve got space in The Voice and I don’t know why The Voice keeps running those week after
M - stupid articles
week after week after week. Not all of us are Jamaican at the end of the day
D - that’s it Y and they believe that all black people are Jamaicans
are Jamaicans.
M - and then you have the Jamaican Gleaner that caters for Jamaicans
Marg - but if you send the Jamaican Gleaner something, they will print it whether you be from Jamaica but they will highlight what you’re doing
M - that is how it is supposed to be but it’s not being done that way
......
M - and I don’t spend my money on The Voice, he wouldn’t get rich off of me, not any more.
Marg - but then you don’t have anything else to
R - No I always buy it
Marg - you buy it because there’s nothing else, there’s New Nation but
R - I bought both at once
Marg - but you can’t afford to buy 2, I tried buying one week The Voice, one week New Nation but
New Nation’s
M - It’s just as bad as the Voice
so you end up just going back to the Voice, just buying it for the sake of
M - as a Black newspaper
you flick through it but there’s nothing to read.
M - At least if you buy the Gleaner you can read ‘Dear Pastor’ and I enjoy that. I prefer to
R - oh yeah [laughing]
spend my money on The Gleaner and read ‘Dear Pastor’ and have a good laugh than to spend
my money on the Voice and not having a laugh and just reading about what crimes have been
committed by Black people you know.

Focus Group 3

G Actually I found all of it quite depressing and negative [laughing]
P It was cos I was surprised
G All the articles were
P I mean that really surprised me
G Typical really
LS It’s interesting because they’re all taken from the Black press, I mean do you think the
black press gives a good impression of black people, I mean if you’re not Black and you read the
Black press do you think you’d get a good impression of Black people in this country?
G I don’t think you get a good impression no
LS Not even the Black press?
G No no
L Still putting down Black people
LS Why do you think that is?
G I think it’s how much control black people have got over the press, I mean who owns the
press, they might be fronting it yeah but, if they were to print what they really wanted, they’d
probably get sacked, the editor’s get sacked and I think that’s what
P Do you really think that, you don’t think that Black people actually ultimately own these
newspapers?
G No, no I don’t, not the likes of The Voice and umm, maybe the political papers like The
Black Voice which is a different paper that’s
Chapter 4

Black and White and read all over: an analysis of constructions of Blackness in the UK Black print media

4.1 Introduction

An analysis of the Black media was carried out in order to consider self-generated representations of the UK Black population, as distinct from those representations provided in the majority media. This process paid particular attention to geographical anchoring, temporal orientation and group construction as the study was informed by a social memories theoretical approach (Lyons 1996). It looked at category boundaries, content, culture, distinctiveness, criteria for inclusion and exclusion, temporal orientation and associated values.

The aims of Social Memory Theory (SMT) are to explore why certain memories are maintained and/or reconstructed over time; to consider the role of social memories in describing and defining a group identity (national or ethnic); to look at how social memories help individuals make sense of the uncertainties of the present and to determine aspirations for the future. The theory is based on the assumptions that groups have collective identities; that collective identities can be conceptualised in a similar way to individual identities and that social and group remembering needs to take into account group identity processes and contextual social influences.

This study had the overriding research question: “What does a critical reading of the Black press reveal about the content of the category Black?” It is also relevant to look at the content associated with the label to see whether, in spite of its ascription, it can provide a focus for group cohesion and identification. This study also illustrates some of the problems involved in applying social psychological theories of groups and social memories to the Black population.

The analysis of the newspapers was informed by concepts from IPT, SIT and SMT. Evidence of representations of distinctiveness, cohesion, esteem, efficacy and continuity in ways which were predicted by SMT were sought. The identity principles are deemed to operate to meet a threat. According to SMT, the nature of the threat should mean that one or more identity principle would be likely to come to the fore. The analysis also looked for evidence of collective possible selves.
4.2 Background

O'Sullivan et al (1998) page 112, identify the UK ethnic minority press as a response to the inadequate representation of ethnic minority groups in the mainstream media and compared it with the stronger independent Black media sector in the USA. The very existence of separate racially targeted newspapers suggests that the Black population do not consider that the mainstream media meet their needs. There has been a great deal of research which has investigated racial stereotyping and the way in which race is used in the mainstream media in a negative manner eg Gordon & Rosenberg's (1989) analysis of the way in which the print media have represented the presence of Black people in the UK as problematic and as a threat to British society. Thus, one of the functions of the Black press can be seen as providing a trustworthy source of news for the Black population and a source of alternative representations of the population. Despite this, the ownership and control of the Black press means that its status as authentically Black is contested by many Black people.

The Black press also provides a "social service" both to the mainstream authorities eg police, and to readers. This seems to be predicated on the basis that either there are some Black people who will only read the Black press and therefore need to be informed through it of things which are likely to affect them or that some Black people will only trust/believe what they read in the Black press and therefore sensitive issues such as police appeals for witnesses are more likely to get results if they appear in the Black press.

Witness appeals - crime
The 15 July edition of the Caribbean Times offers an example of this. An article describing the murder of a motorist in West London by 2 Black men who shot him from their car is as much an appeal for witnesses as a news item. The item offers no editorial view on the case and merely states the facts as known and the appeal for witnesses including a police contact and telephone number.

Witness appeals – missing persons
A similar item in the 30 June edition of the Voice describes the discovery of the body of a young Black woman in a warehouse in South East London. It details the various bits of forensic information eg dental work, age etc and offers a contact number for anyone with any information to use. This is really a missing person-type appeal. Presumably the authorities feel that an article in a Black newspaper is more likely to produce results and have acted accordingly. There is no editorial or commentary offered on the case.
Promotion of government schemes
A slightly different example is an article outlining the operation of the Modern Apprenticeship (MA) scheme using the example of a young Black man. It describes the way in which under the scheme, he combines work in a bank with his training. This piece is not so much a news item as an advert for the MA targeted at young Black people. It offers information and contact numbers. It is presumably an attempt by MA to show Black people participating in and benefiting from the programme and so to encourage more to join. A further article promotes a special exhibition for Black carers. The organiser identifies Black carers as unaided in their role and sees the purpose of the exhibition as being to provide them with advice, information and help. Contact numbers are offered.

Editorial Advertisements
The Voice also advertises schemes which may be interesting or useful to its readership, but to which they may not have easy access to information. For example, the entertainment section has a short piece which reports that the Birmingham Repertory Theatre has a writer attachment scheme aimed at Black writers, the piece offers details about how and where to apply.

4.3 Method
Four newspapers were selected covering the full range of the Black press. All the newspapers concerned are weekly publications and are published in the UK (as distinct from titles such as ‘The Gleaner’ which are published abroad but widely available in the UK). The papers analysed were The Voice, New Nation, Caribbean Times and The Journal. Of these The Voice has the highest circulation with New Nation being the newest addition and a direct rival to The Voice. Although all the newspapers are tabloid sized, The Journal is stylistically closest to a broadsheet with The Voice having a more tabloid style with sensationalist headlines and “Sun”-type use of puns in headlines.

In his exploration of banal nationalism, Billig conducted a newspaper analysis. He used all English national newspapers (excluding the Financial Times) produced on one weekday. Sparks and Campbell looked at all English broadsheets produced on 6 days of one week. This survey followed the sampling principles used in both these studies and applied them to weekly publications by selecting newspapers from 2 separate periods – the first was late June/early July 1997 and the second was 6-18 April 1998. Two separate time frames were sampled in order to ensure that the themes identified were not a direct consequence of the content of the news items current in a particular week. The issue which spanned both time periods was the legacy of the murder of Stephen Lawrence through the subsequent public inquiry and other legal actions. The
way in which the newspapers were selected for analysis is not intended to be representative, but neither are they atypical of the genre.

4.4 Analytic Process

The first stage was to analyse the structure and layout of each newspaper looking at the geographical anchoring of articles for the full range of each newspaper from news to sport including health, entertainment and other areas. The anchoring analysis considered the perspective associated with a given article, for example a story can be set in a country and appear within a particular geographical section of the newspaper but be interpreted from and anchored within a different country. This process pays attention to structural issues and language use following Billig's Banal Nationalism method which refers to the regular flagging of the nation as a means of maintaining nationalist feeling within the nation. The study was informed by techniques used by Billig in his analysis of English daily newspapers on one day eg references to the nation and the use of we. The analysis of structure relates to construction of group and the definition of group membership. It also links with the more educational and instructive functions of the Black media in terms of providing the readership with an agenda which tells them what issues are or should be considered important to Black people and also offers an 'approved' position on issues of controversy or debate within the UK Black population. Examples of themes which exemplify this function are the negative stance on inter-racial relationships and the emphasis paid to international affairs. These functions might be considered to be part of the agenda-setting which has been widely recognised as one of the functions of all types of media (the Glasgow University Media Group analysed television's role in agenda-setting). Readers may contest the evaluation offered by a newspaper on a given subject, but the selection of an issue as newsworthy pre-determines the context within which that contestation takes place.

The second stage was to do a quantitative content analysis of the types of issues which were covered eg how much of the newspaper was devoted to sport and within that which sports were featured. This followed the inscribed reader methodology described in detail below.

The third stage was to read each substantive news story analytically to look at what the content, headlines and editorial positioning revealed about the representation of Blackness. This meant that consideration of content was secondary to a reading of the sub-text.

The fourth stage was to conduct a thematic content analysis. Within this analysis, patterns recurring across the four newspapers were identified but themes which were specific to a sub-set or only one newspaper were given equal consideration. Two of the newspapers had identical
articles about some issues, in those cases keywords were not deemed to be repetition or evidence of a pattern. The keywords (appendix 3) were identified as recurring. The keywords were grouped into themes which are attached at appendix 4.

Finally a detailed analysis of the photographs included in the sports pages was conducted to ensure that the visual imagery which is an integral part of a newspaper was explored. The methods used for this process were based on research by Beloff (1984) and Finn (1997).

4.5 The inscribed reader

Sparks and Campbell (1987) offer an interesting approach to the analysis of newspapers (they focused their analysis on one week of English broadsheets). They argue that the textual organisation of newspapers 'construct' a reader who is the editor's idea of an average reader ie the 'inscribed' reader. They argue that it is possible to decipher the inscribed reader from an analysis of the quantity of space allocated to different sorts of material and what this says about the assumed readership. Their analysis shows, for example, that the UK quality press universally inscribe their readers as male. The Guardian and the Financial Times were the two papers with the most differentiated readership inscriptions being respectively, the most populist and the most elitist; the most personal and the most public and the most and least political and the least and most statistical in economic coverage.

Sparks and Campbell argue that when a newspaper sets aside a specific section for a sub-set of readers according to socio-demographic group this indicates that the rest of the paper's coverage can be seen as less relevant to this group. They use this analysis to inform their discussion of pages/sections aimed at women. Similar arguments could be made about age-specific sections. However, targetted coverage can also be interpreted as a bid to encourage more readers from that category. It would seem reasonable to assume that all mainstream newspapers inscribe their readers as adult. However, the Sunday Times includes a tabloid insert called the Funday Times which features cartoons and other coverage assumed to be of interest to children. It would seem to be a reasonable assumption that this strategy is aimed at encouraging brand loyalty in the next generation of readers.

The concept of the inscribed reader and the associated methodology was used to inform the quantitative content analysis and also to interpret choice of content and space allocation. This provides the framework for analysis of what the media tells us about the nature of Blackness. This is broadly descriptive in terms of providing a representation of Blackness in the UK in the late twentieth century. This form of content analysis has been applied to the Black press in terms of coverage; the results are presented in the tables below.
4.6 Sporting photographs

Here the method was informed by Belloff (1984) and Finn (1997) who have pioneered the social psychological interpretation of picture rather than text. The photographs associated with the sports coverage was examined in greater detail to see whether they could add anything to the media analysis. In particular this explored whether the construction of Blackness differed in the sporting arena and what role visual imagery played.

4.7 Tables illustrating content of layout

**The Journal (17 April 1998)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content type</th>
<th>No of pages</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK news</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean feature news article</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African news</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters &amp; editorial column</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean news</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International news</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health feature article</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cookery column</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment news &amp; interview</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s section</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music reviews</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts page</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business page</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious section</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem page (+ star signs)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within the news coverage, the vast majority of the space is allocated to UK news, followed by African, Caribbean and international news in descending order. In terms of non-news coverage, entertainment (if music and art are included) has the largest allocation followed by sport and the women’s section. By far the largest proportion of space is taken up by advertising.
### The Journal (9-15 July 1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content type</th>
<th>No of pages</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK news</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News focus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaican news</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters &amp; editorial column</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean news</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International news</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profile article</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agenda</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment: art, music etc</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's section</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men's section</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business page</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious section</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem page (+ star signs)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For this edition UK news again dominates the news coverage followed by Caribbean (including specific Jamaican coverage) and international news. This edition has no specific African coverage. Entertainment and sports dominate the non-news material. This edition is interesting in that it has both a men's page as well as a women's page. The men's page does not appear in the later edition suggesting it may have had limited appeal.

### Caribbean Times (17 April 1998)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content type</th>
<th>No of pages</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK news</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters &amp; editorial</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feature article</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean news</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African news</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious section</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>56.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

News coverage dominates this edition of the Caribbean Times. Within the news section UK news is allocated the most space with Caribbean and African news having an equal allocation of news stories. Sport is the predominant non-news coverage. This edition has more than 50% of its column inches given over to advertising leaving relatively little scope for other types of material within a relatively compact title.
Caribbean Times (15 July 1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content type</th>
<th>No of pages</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK news</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African news</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters &amp; editorial column</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean news</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's section</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious section</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>43.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This edition follows the same pattern of UK news predominating over both Caribbean and African news which have equal coverage in quantitative terms, this equality of coverage may be because the newspaper’s official title is "Caribbean Times, incorporating African Times", which may constrain the newspaper from giving a numerical priority to Caribbean matters in the same way as the other papers. The small reduction in advertising space allows entertainment to feature strongly followed by sports. Within the sports coverage, boxing predominates by 2 to 1 over cricket, the only other sport featured.

The Voice (6 April 1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content type</th>
<th>No of pages</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News (mixed)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters &amp; editorial</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean news</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International news</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American news</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious section</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview feature</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment section</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men's column</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jokey column</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motoring section</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s column</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>53.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>64</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The vast majority of space over 50% is taken up by advertising. News coverage has mixed news including UK news predominating, followed by Caribbean, American and international (including African) news stories. Sport takes up more space than entertainment and miscellaneous other sections make up the remainder.
The Voice (30 June 1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content type</th>
<th>No of pages</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News (mixed)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters &amp; editorial/columns</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean news</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International news</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American news</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious section</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview feature</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment section</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men's column</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jokey column</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motoring section</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's column</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>53.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>69</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this edition the space allocated to news follows the same geographical pattern as above. However, entertainment features more strongly than sport in this edition. The other elements follow the same breakdown.

The Voice has the most diverse coverage of all the newspapers and this is probably a function of its size. There is no specific news section allocated to African news, though it does have specific American coverage unlike any of the other newspapers. News coverage predominates with sport coming in as the next most covered area. The Voice is also the only newspaper to have a page devoted to younger readers including their own agony column. Interestingly The Voice also has a column aimed explicitly at men, though none at women, suggesting it regards its mainstream coverage as being more female-oriented. Sports coverage includes three pages on football. Other sports featured were basketball, boxing, F1, cricket, and tennis.

New Nation (13 April 1998)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content type</th>
<th>No of pages</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News (UK)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News feature (UK)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment Feature (UK)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columnist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters/editorial</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean news</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African news</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment supplement</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising/promotions</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>56</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UK news coverage predominates with African news taking second place over Caribbean news. However, news coverage takes second place to a large pull out entertainment supplement which together with an entertainment feature within the main body of the newspaper forms the vast majority (over and above advertising) of the coverage. The sports coverage remains significant.

New Nation 7 July 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content type</th>
<th>No of pages</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News (mainly UK)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International news</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters &amp; editorial column</td>
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<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columnist page</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health feature article</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's section</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business section</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious/spiritual section</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem page (+ star signs)</td>
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<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
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<td>Sport</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
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<td>56.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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In this edition the news coverage is bifurcated between UK and international news. Within the entertainment coverage the majority of the space is allocated to music which has its own specific section. Excluding music, sports coverage is allocated more space than entertainment. Advertising takes up more than 50% of this edition.

New Nation's coverage is more UK focused than the other newspapers. In terms of explicit international coverage the Caribbean predominates over Africa, with one edition having no African anchored stories at all. New Nation also gives a higher priority to the US than either the Caribbean or Africa, suggesting that they have inscribed their reader as one who identifies more with the situation of African Americans, a racial minority than with those of African descent living in a predominantly Black country. By far the most space (one third) is given over to entertainment, the next biggest slot is for sport, this emphasis on entertainment is reflected in content as well with a number of stories on the news pages relating to entertainment matter or personalities in the entertainment business rather than "hard" news subjects. Combining sport and entertainment as leisure pursuits accounts for just under half (46.4%) of total coverage. Sports featured, boxing (including a dedicated boxing column), football, athletics, basketball, cricket, golf. Within the sporting coverage there is an emphasis on boxing and football. It is likely that the differences in content type between the two featured editions result from the fact that the
publication was still relatively new at the time of the first edition and the newspaper may have been experimenting with differing content emphases in an attempt to establish its market niche.

4.8 General conclusion from inscribed reader analysis

The quantitative analysis shown in the tables above reveals the inscribed reader for all of the newspapers as one who is interested primarily in UK news, then also interested in news from other countries with a predominantly Black population (Africa or the Caribbean) or countries with a significant African Diaspora (mainly the USA), though the emphasis varies between newspapers. The reader is also constructed as having an interest in religion, entertainment and sport.

In terms of the advertising content, the reader is strongly constructed as being interested in public sector employment (including charitable organisations and NGOs) with an emphasis on the social element of the public service eg local government, social services rather than military or police force employment. Over 50% of the advertising including paid promotions falls into this category, to some extent this may be a function of the public services’ political agenda in which advertising jobs or policy initiatives in the minority press serves the function of promoting equal opportunities and positive race relations. However, Sullivan et al (1998) also argue that the social profile of the audience (of all media) is one of advertisers’ main criteria for choice of advertising placements.

The inclusion of a religious page or column in all the papers suggests that the rest of the coverage is assumed to be primarily secular. However, it also suggests that religious readers are seen as a sub-category which should be targeted. Within the religious coverage it is assumed that the form of that religiosity/spirituality is Christian. This is made explicit in a trailer in the 7 July 1997 edition of New Nation which asks readers to approach their ministers with a view to participating in a future column featuring advice from UK Black Christian religious leaders.

In terms of sport, seasonality has to be taken into consideration but the guiding assumption seems to be that (with a few exceptions eg Formula 1) the presence of a Black player justifies coverage of the sport. This gives the sport pages an international flavour and leads to a multitude of sports being covered though some of the papers choose to focus on a smaller number of sports. It should also be noted that sports-related coverage is not confined to the sports pages though this is not unique to the Black press, for example sports personalities featured on the news pages.

In so far as the inscribed reader analysis offers a construction of the Black reader and by extension the UK Black population, there are a number of conclusions to be drawn. In geographical terms there is an interesting tension between the predominance given to the UK as
a source of news, both hard news and sports and entertainment news and the space given to international news and personalities.

The emphasis on entertainment and sport results in a focus on the achievements of individuals rather than the collective. It also suggests a reluctance to engage with the political and social issues raised by the reality of life for Black people in the UK.

The inscribed reader analysis primarily addresses the first research question of how UK Blackness is constructed by Black people rather than the issue of Black Britishness or the influence of the past. However, the inscribed reader analysis has limitations in that it does not look at the way in which the content is constructed and what the implications of the spatial allocation are for the way in which these issues are dealt with. These questions are analysed in the thematic and anchoring sections.

4.9 Thematic findings

There is no doubt that there are mixed messages about the nature of Blackness in the Black media, for example there is some tension between the association of collective Blackness and victim status and the attention paid to particular types of individual Black success stories eg sport and music. The study identified a number of themes in the way in which the newspapers represented the group identity, including representing the construction of Blackness at both national and international levels, emphasising the oppositional context in which the construction took place and an unresolved tension around the notion of Black Britishness.

The key themes are discussed below and contradictions and/or tensions between and within them are considered.

The three main themes were:
1 – Blackness - what it is to be Black. The content of the category is not clearly defined by the Black media. The sub-theme here is a mixed message of both positive and negative intra-group representations, linked with a rather confused theme of in-group favoritism and representations of Black behavioural forms. Definitions of Blackness only emerge in the inter-racial context; thus the definition on offer is not so much in terms of what is intrinsically Black, but the consequence of a given inter-racial situation for Black people. This was not only true of the UK inter-racial context but also internationally. That inter-group context was represented universally in negative terms; this was exemplified linguistically by the use of the battle metaphor in discussions of inter-categorical representations.
2 – The lack of ingroup identification as evidenced linguistically by the absence of the use of the first person plural. Discussion of this theme also draws on the anchoring analysis.

3 – The absence of representations of British or other national identification. In spite of the prevalence of UK anchoring and coverage, race transcended nationality.

These three themes are discussed in more detail below.

4.9.1 Theme 1 - Definition of Blackness

4.9.2 Sub-theme: The influence of the comparative context

As I have argued earlier, the UK Black population is a category rather than a group and that this category has its origins in a majority/minority power relational context, thus what would be referred to as inter-group relations in other groups are described here as inter-category relations. This is not to suggest that the White population is not a social psychological group, but to avoid the implicit assumption that inter-group references represent the Black population as a group rather than a category. The media analysis provides support for the distinctive entativity of this population in terms of the limited evidence of cultural distinctiveness, and in terms of the emphasis on the White 'other' as a source of comparison and definition.

In terms of inter-categorical relations, the relevant ‘other’ was almost universally represented in terms of White (or sometimes Asian), so that the comparator category was invariably White, whether in the UK or elsewhere in the world eg Australia, South Africa, USA. For example:

The Voice – 7 July 1997: the front page story features the arrest of African American R&B star – R Kelly on battery charges. The introductory paragraph states that the star could be facing 5 years in jail “in the notorious Ku Klux Klan state of Louisiana after a violent race brawl which left one man needing 110 stitches in his face”. Here the White other is represented at institutional and personal levels, the alleged victims are described as White and the location of the incident is described in terms of its association with the White supremacist KKK. Similarly:

The Journal – 17 April 1998: the front page story features a possible White backlash in South Africa precipitated by former president PW Botha's refusal to testify before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Here the Black-White inter-categorical relationship is located in the context of the post-Apartheid South Africa.
This links with the theme of racism, and the trans-national and all-pervasive nature of anti-Black racism providing much of the content of the inter-group relationship, the perception of racism as enduring also meant that the temporal orientation tended to be past based. The example from The Journal cited above also illustrates this point in discussing the allegation that President Nelson Mandela was doing too little to counteract the legacy of apartheid, quoting a British consultant on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission:

"Apartheid was more than an oppressive system imposed by the white ruling classes: it has shaped the way that black people treated their own and how they in turn treated coloureds. Before that there was a hundred years of colonisation by the British and Dutch, and these have left lasting scars..."

Here we have a trans-national incidence of racism explained with reference to both the immediate and the more distant past.

The themes of Black people being conceptualised as victims and a trans-national community frequently appear in the same story. Of the 44 instances of Black people being represented as victims (in the 1997 wave), at least 20 of them were stories or articles which also represented the Black community in trans-national terms. For example:
The Voice - 30 June 1997: Page 6 describes an extreme example of trans-national victimisation under the headline “Soldiers tortured Somali boy”. This item described the case of two Belgian soldiers who admitted roasting a boy over a brazier. The article describes the incident and the punishment of the soldiers who were part of a UN peace-keeping force:

“Somalis in the UK have slammed the prospect of two Belgian paratroopers who admitted torturing a Somali boy facing just a month in jail and a £200 fine”

The article goes on to give other examples of brutality by European peace-keepers in Somalia.

Such a high percentage might suggest a further theme of the common element which Black people have across the world is victimisation. This shows not only the influence of inter-racial relations but also the direction in which the relations affect the lived experience of Black people across the world but, particularly, in the UK. Within this context Black people are represented as both innocent victims and morally superior. In terms of the language used to discuss these issues, the battle metaphor was used; this provided a sense of both Black people under attack or under siege and a sense of the need to continually fight to preserve existing achievements and to counter new attacks. It is possible for a battle metaphor to be used positively but the sense in which it is used in the media is of a rearguard action rather than a proactive attack.

Some of these themes are embodied in a newspaper story reported in New Nation and Caribbean Times. This story reports the case of an UK professional boxer who was sprayed with CS gas by police after being stopped near his home. Using the headline ‘Fighting back’ the article
is written using boxing terminology eg terms like "on the ropes" giving an image of an ongoing battle between police and Black people (specifically men). This can also be read in terms of Black people fighting back against the authorities and the police in particular. The article quotes from the boxer and a witness and is very much presented through the victim's eyes and from his perspective, placing the newspaper firmly on the side of the Black man in this ongoing battle. This article gives a representation of Blackness in the UK as being fraught with physical danger. Even those Black people who are physically able to defend themselves in an extreme situation (boxing match) are vulnerable against the (White) forces of authority in the form of the police when going about their daily business. It also achieves the aim of challenging or subverting the mainstream media's characterisation of Black men as violent, by depicting a Black man whose profession consists of legitimised physical aggression in sport as a victim of violence. Thus we have a depiction of Black people in the victim role precipitated by negative inter-racial relations producing a sense of injustice for Black people in a White world represented by the physical danger of the situation and described using the battle metaphor.

For example:
"A former heavyweight boxer who once fought Frank Bruno and Joe Bugner is preparing for one of the toughest battles in his career – against the police."

The representation of Black people as victims has important political and social consequences on two levels. The allying of victim-based stories with the trans-national theme effectively minimises the impact of perceived inequality and disadvantage in the UK. It does this through suggesting that the experience would be broadly similar anywhere in the world. This reinforces the sense that political or social action is redundant. It also promotes a sense of passivity in three ways: firstly through the temporal dimension which reinforces the sense that Black people have suffered racism and discrimination over a long period of time; secondly through the geographical orientation which provides examples of racism perpetuated by White against Black throughout the world and thirdly, in using the battle metaphor of being under attack by discursively blocking the possibility of considering alternative actions to combat the problem. In this way the print media is not offering an empowering picture of what it is to be or what it could be to be Black in the UK. Thus Black people are represented in an inter-categorical context as interacting with White people primarily as victims of racism over time and trans-nationally. This is a predominantly negative representation and in socio-political terms is represented from a passive and fatalistic perspective.

4.9.3 Sub-theme: Groupness

One of the effects of the focus on inter-category conflict and tension was an essentialisation of race in terms of skin colour and physical features, for example a feature on fashion modelling emphasised the difference between Caucasian and Negroid facial features as well as skin colour.
This article describes the issue of Black models in South Africa.

"For many years it has been the case that clients prefer to cast African faces with European features – straight noses and thin lips. 'Black Barbies'.

Tension between mainstream or White society and the Black British community also emerges in the theme of concern over how Black people are represented in the mainstream media and the problems for the Black press of reporting negative information about Black people.

For example, The Voice was heavily criticised by its readership in the letters column for putting a story about the rates of sexually transmitted diseases in the Black community on its front page. The basis of the criticism was that this information would give White people negative information about Black people which would then be used to justify existing negative stereotypes, for example, one reader concluded her letter "to the wider society we are now violent, workshy - and diseased".

This issue, in turn, poses dilemmas for the way in which the Black press covers negative stories. This dilemma is acknowledged in a piece in The Voice about the lack of coverage by the Black media of a story about an Air Jamaica stewardess found in possession of drugs at Heathrow under the headline "scared of the truth".

Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978) suggests that there is an evaluative element to group membership, together with the cognitive and emotional elements. The evaluative and emotional dimensions of groups would seem to be more multi-dimensional when applied to an ascribed category such as race: first, there is the evaluation attached by members of a given racial group to their personal membership of it which may be positive or negative depending on identification and experience, but moreover there is also the evaluation attached to membership of a given racial group by the wider society. This additional dimension can also be applied to the emotional component identified by the theory, in that members of racial minorities could also be said to have an emotional response to the definition and evaluation of their own population by the out-group which is not necessarily the same as emotions directed towards the out-group itself. This awareness of the mainstream representation of Blackness exemplifies this dimension.

In terms of how Blackness was represented, success was associated with sport and music. Within the sporting arena, triumph over adversity for Black sportspeople appeared to be a subsidiary theme, thus this representation of success provides two messages, one is to remind the reader that Black people have it hard and the other is to make higher claims for success when
it is achieved, if an athlete wins a medal despite early poverty and disadvantage, then his/her medal has greater worth than the (implicitly non-White) counterpart starting from a more comfortable baseline.

For example the 13 April edition of New Nation profiles an Ethiopian runner and argues that his success is rooted in his need to run to school as a child, and notes that despite having won cars as prizes he cannot drive.

Similarly, a laudatory profile of Black player John Barnes' season and experience at Newcastle profiles the influence of a Black player on the success of an English football team. This represents Blackness as a success in sporting terms and personalises the team's struggle in the form of the Black player.

If Blackness is about struggle against adversity then Black players must be good for sporting teams who are struggling. However, this type of coverage also reinforces the sense that the domains in which Black success is possible are limited to music and sport.

**Sporting photos**
The photographs which accompanied the sports coverage were analysed separately. Finn (1997) argues that visual image can be analysed to reveal social representations and widespread beliefs. Similarly, Beloff (1984) explains that we 'read' photographs bringing with us personal and social assumptions. This suggests that not only is it possible to analyse the visual imagery which appears on the sports pages, but also that in so doing we can access another level of information about the subjects.

**New Nation – July 1997**
Back page (2 photos): One action shot of the runner Gail Devers and one of the athlete Michael Johnson apparently being led away from the track by a woman (possibly a race official) with her arm round his waist.

Inside back 1: (2 photos): One photo of the athlete Linford Christie on the track bent over with his hands on his knees and his tongue protruding slightly from his mouth. One action shot of the runner Marie-Jose Perec.

Inside back 2-3 (3 photos spread over a double page): One action shot of Mike Tyson in the ring with Evander Holyfield. A head and shoulders shot of Mike Tyson (possibly at a press
conference) in front of a microphone. One of the boxer Julius Francis wearing his ceremonial belt with gloved hands on his waist.

New Nation – April 1998

Back page (2 photos): The main photograph on this page is an action shot of John Barnes being marked by two White players from the opposing team. A separate article features a small photo of a Nigerian footballer mid tackle with a White player from the opposing team.

Inside back 1 (4 photos): One of Tiger Woods with his fist clenched in a victory salute; one of a West Indies cricketer in a celebratory high-five. There is a photo of a boxing match between Herbie Hide and Tony Tucker and an action shot of footballer George Weah.

Inside back 2 (3 photos): A seated, casually dressed Mike Tyson. An Ethiopian runner being carried on the shoulders of his fans. An action shot of basketball player Dennis Rodman.

Inside back 3-4 (4 photos): A double page spread with 4 photos all relating to Mike Tyson (including one of his Bentley). A second photo shows Mike Tyson posing with one of his cars. There is a group shot of Mike Tyson talking to Don King and John Horne and one of Tyson leaving jail with bodyguards and Don King.

Inside back 5 (3 photos): Two photographs feature George Weah, one shows him upside down during a celebratory back flip, the other is an action shot showing him mid-tackle with the opposing team’s White goalkeeper. The other photograph is of athlete Merlene Ottey with her arms raised in celebration after a race.

Inside back 6 (5 photos): One of Ashia Hansen mid-jump. One of Evander Holyfield grimacing in pain with his gloved hand raised to his ear. A portrait shot of a smiling formally dressed Mike Tyson. One of Jackson Kabja with his arms raised at the end of a marathon. One of Paul Fergat smiling at a press conference.

The Journal – July 1997

Back page (2 photos): These linked photos show an action shot of Akinwynde punching at an inset portrait photo of Lennox Lewis.

Inside back 1 (4 photos): the largest photo on the page is a rear view of an unidentified female tennis player bending over and revealing lacy knickers. There are portrait photos of one cricketer and one footballer. The final photo is an action shot of a female basketball player.
The Journal - April 1998

Back page (1 photo): this is a medium-sized photo of the boxer Chris Eubank training in the gym.

Inside back 1 (4 photos): An action shot of footballer Ian Wright smiling while training. One head and shoulders shot of boxer Herbie Hide. An action shot of footballer Taibo West. An action shot of Ronaldo tackling a White Russian player.

Caribbean Times – July 1997

Back page (1 photo): a medium-sized picture of footballer Ian Wright with hand raised in wave/victory salute.

Inside back 1 (5 photos). The main photo is an action shot of Mike Tyson in a boxing match. The remaining 4 photos are of the members of the public (2 male, 2 female) whose comments about Tyson are featured in a voxpop.

Caribbean Times – April 1998

Back page (1 photo): a large photograph of 3 West Indies cricketers doing a lap of honour.
Inside back 1 (3 photos): All relating to Mike Tyson. One shows Mike Tyson posing with one of his cars. There is a group shot of Mike Tyson talking to Don King and John Horne and one of Tyson leaving jail with bodyguards and Don King.

The Voice – June 1997

Back page (5 photos): All the photos on the back page relate to the Mike Tyson/Evander Holyfield fight and associated ear-biting incident; there are two action shots of Tyson and Holyfield in the ring, two head shots of Holyfield sweating and one profile portrait shot of Mike Tyson wearing a vest t-shirt.

Inside back 1 (2 photos): One large action shot of the footballer Ronaldo mid-air above a prone White player from the opposing team. The other photo on the page is a small portrait shot of boxing promoter Don King smoking a cigar.

Inside back 2 (3 photos): One action shot of footballer George Weah. Within one article there are 2 photos, one of Ruud Hullit and an action shot of the footballer Paul Parker.

The Voice - April 1998

Back page (1 photos): One large photo of Jamaican fans at a football match.
Inside back 1 (3 photos): One action shot of a basketball team in action. One portrait shot of the possible player of the year. One action shot of the basketball team captain.

Inside back 2 (2 photos): One photo of boxer Tunlane Malinga training in the ring. One photo of footballer Frank Sinclair holding a trophy above his head.

Inside back 3 (2 small photos): One of footballer Paul Ince pulling the ear of White player and one action shot of footballer Boa Morte.


**Analysis**

All the photos accompanying sports articles were of Black sportspeople with one exception. The exception was in photos of Black footballers. Here there were a number of photos of Black footballers taken from match footage showing them in a confrontation (eg mid-tackle) with members of the opposing team who were White. In only one of the cases did the photo relate to the story which it formed part of - *Journal 1998* - The photo of Ronaldo tacking a Russian player is taken from the match which is discussed in the text.

*Voice 1998* - Here the photo of Ronaldo is irrelevant to the theme of the article which discusses his move from Barcelona to Inter Milan.

*New Nation 1998* - The photograph of John Barnes on the back page is not related to the article which profiles the player’s experience at Newcastle United. The other tacking photograph on the same page of Amokochi is again not directly related to the article which is promoting tickets for Nigeria’s world cup matches (figure 2).

If the photographs do not relate to the text next to which they appear then it is reasonable to assume that they perform some other function. Given that this is the only context in which White sportspeople appear in the newspapers then it is significant that the context is confrontational. Following Finn’s argument that visual images reveal representations it would seem that there is a visual sub-text at play here which promotes a sense of opposition and conflict between Black and White being played out on football matches around the world.

Many of the other photos show Black sportspeople in victory poses (eg figure 1, Ian Wright). The chief exception to this is the unflattering photo of Linford Christie (figure 3) in the 1997 edition of *New Nation*; in this case an unflattering shot has clearly been deliberately chosen to reinforce the
message of the article which is criticising Christie for his decision to give interviews to the mainstream but not the Black press.

It would seem then that the analysis of the photographs in the sports sections of the newspapers illustrates a number of points. It shows Black people in positions of triumph and success. It shows Black and White as oppositional and confrontational with the societal opposition between Black and White being played out on the football pitches of the world. It also uses unflattering photos to reinforce negative textual representations of specific Black individuals.

Religion as the exception to the rule
In behavioural terms Blackness is strongly associated with religiosity and Christianity in particular. All the newspapers have a religious page, which are exclusively Christian. In the Caribbean Times the religious page is entitled ‘Today’s Gospel’. It includes a quote from Mother Theresa under the heading ‘Food For Thought’, it has the UK gospel chart, an album of the week, events listings and a feature on an aerobics video by a Christian dance tutor which is set to a Gospel soundtrack.

The Journal’s religious page is called ‘Spiritual Heights’. It also includes a listings column, a number of small news items and two feature articles including one on the first Black leader of the Evangelical Alliance.

New Nation’s religious page is called “Inspired”, the 7 July 1997 edition consists of a one page interview with an African American gospel singer.

The religious section (spread over 2 pages) in The Voice is called Soul Stirrings, it includes an agony column called ‘Pastor’s surgery’. It includes advertisements for religious (Christian) events, has a listings column and two features, one on gospel music and the other on the history and future of Black-led churches.

Blackness and Islam are represented as mutually incompatible, not only because there is no recognition of the influence of Islam among Black people, but also in terms of the sub-text of stories which represent Christianity and Islam in opposition to each other (eg in boxing Holyfield v Tyson) with Christianity represented as the morally superior victor.

The content of the religious and spiritual pages in all the newspapers results in a depiction of religion and spirituality which is conceived of exclusively as Christian and within that as liturgically gospel-oriented. The focus on Gospel could be because it is primarily a non-White form. Almost all other forms of Christianity and other religions tend to be either White dominated eg Catholicism or practised by a number of different ethnic and racial categories eg Islam. The impression which this emphasis on Gospel gives is of a religious form which originated with and
remains exclusive to Black people across the Diaspora. The Gospel connection also gives the religious pages a strong American flavour and contributes to a trans-national rather than UK representation of Black people. For example:

Caribbean Times – 17 April 1998: the article on the gospel-based aerobics video explains the development of the project in terms of the problems associated with gaining approval to include US gospel tracks on the video.

New Nation – 7 July 1997: the interview featured in the article ‘Connected to the Lord’ is entirely American focused with no UK or European content.

There are also a number of recurring themes in the religious sections which do not appear elsewhere. The overriding one is the need for “Justice”; this is identified as the most important aspect of Christianity for Black people.

For example: in the 9 July edition of the Weekly Journal, the writer describes visits to Jamaica as a child and the dawning realisation of poverty there. She describes her educational and career history and concludes by explaining that she had recently joined the Christian charity, Tear Fund. She explains that her columns will look at Tear Fund’s work and the action taken to ensure that “justice is a reality for all of God’s people”.

The obvious corollary of this is a representation of Black people as having been denied justice and therefore as victims of injustice. The perpetrators of this injustice are not explicitly identified, other than in the context of a particular story but the implicit reading is that they are likely to be White.

This links with another theme that of Black people as morally or spiritually superior to White. For example, the Voice has a religious version of the “Your Voice” column. In the 30 June edition they discuss criticism by the Church of England of the Prince of Wales for not attending church regularly. They ask “ardent churchgoers” whether attending church each Sunday is imperative now. Each of the four interviewees offers a very similar judgement on the Prince - ie that while churchgoing is important how you live your life is what really matters. The column has the effect of counter-posing the negligent White British monarchy with the diligent Black churchgoers and offers a picture of Black = moral/good, White = morally lax/bad. Black religious leaders are represented in the religious sections as spokespeople for the Black population, for example, writing to the Home Secretary to condemn alcopops.

The inscription of the reader of the Black press as Christian is the main exception to the absence of a content-led category definition. There is no obvious reason for this exception though it could
serve the function of reinforcing the passivity associated with the victim role. If the newspapers are not highlighting discrimination and injustice in order to stimulate active opposition, then the religious emphasis and the associated sense of moral superiority may be the only alternative they can offer.

**Summary**

This theme addresses the issue of how Blackness is constructed in the Black media. In terms of content, Blackness is represented in three main ways. Firstly, collectively terms of victim status, secondly as individually successful in the areas of sport, music and entertainment and thirdly as Christian.

In each of these three areas the representation is informed and shaped by an inter-categorical context which was both national and international. The emphasis on Christianity added an element of passivity to the victim representation while the distinction between collective failure and individual success means that collective empowerment and collective social action were not part of this construction of Blackness.

The lack of content which the newspapers associate with the category Black may be a marketing response to the heterogeneity of its readership. However, it may also be an indication of the distinctive nature of the category and the way in which it fails to fulfill some of the criteria of group entativity: Campbell (1958) identified common fate, similarity, proximity, resistance to intrusion and internal communication and proposed that the larger the number of criteria which are fulfilled the more the category is likely to be seen as a group rather than a category. Other theorists have suggested other criteria for what constitutes a group:

- Members define themselves as members of a group
- Others define them as a group
- Shared norms
- Interdependent goals
- Internal structure

At least in terms of the representation provided by the print media, shared norms, interdependent goals and an internal structure are absent from the UK Black population. In addition, the principle of distinctiveness as proposed by Lyons (1996) in Social Memory Theory appears to be missing. The media coverage does not use normative principles or behaviours (excluding religion) to differentiate blackness from other categories or to establish category boundaries.
As described above the anchoring analysis considered the perspective associated with a given article rather than simply geographical setting, for example a story could have been set in a country and appear within a particular geographical section of the newspaper but be interpreted from and anchored from a different geographical perspective. For example a number of the newspapers featured news items looking at trade agreements between the USA and the Caribbean. In each case the item was reported from the USA perspective, featuring photographs of the US Secretary of State rather than Caribbean leaders and reporting the US view on Cuba's membership of Caricom thereby reflecting the USA's foreign policy agenda rather than the economic agenda of the Caribbean nations.

In terms of the space allocated to different geographical regions and the geographical anchoring of individual stories, the predominant influence was Britain – the vast majority of column inches and anchoring was UK-based, for example of 50 stories analysed in The Voice 60% were UK anchored, other possible geographical anchors were US, Caribbean, African, other (eg Europe) and joint or unclear anchoring. For example: the news article discussed above about UN soldiers convicted of torturing a Somalian boy introduces the issue from the perspective of Somalis resident in the UK. This item would be an example of joint UK/African anchoring.

However, in contrast with Billig's findings in his analysis of the mainstream press, there were relatively few references to 'us', 'our' or 'we'. So, while the content was clearly anchored in the UK context it was not done in such a way as to promote a sense of Britishness or inclusivity in its readership. The problematic nature of Britishness for the Black population is made explicit in the content of a column in the 7 July edition of New Nation which poses the question “what is the most insulting thing you can call a Black person?” and provides the answer “British”. This supports the findings of the anchoring analysis, the lack of inclusive language to describe Britishness is clearly not an accident. The detailed results of the anchoring analysis are presented below:
4.9.5 Tables illustrating geographical anchoring of newspaper articles (by newspaper)

The Journal (17 April 1998)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anchoring</th>
<th>Number of stories</th>
<th>Percentage of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (eg European)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear/none</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>99.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For this edition, most of the articles have a UK anchoring, with the second most numerous being African anchoring with twice as many of these as those with Caribbean anchoring. US anchored stories also exceed those with Caribbean anchoring. The remainder are other, joint or unclear. If the UK and US anchored stories are considered together they make up just over 50%, more than twice as many as those with Caribbean and African anchoring combined.

The Journal 9-15 July 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anchoring</th>
<th>Number of stories</th>
<th>Percentage of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (eg European)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear/none</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For this edition, the proportions are somewhat different. Articles with UK anchoring remain preponderant but the number with US anchoring has dropped. There are now more than double the number of articles with Caribbean anchoring than Africananchoring. However, if the US and UK anchored stories are combined and compared with the total for African and Caribbean anchored articles the relative proportions remain the same with UK and US anchored stories making over 50% and Caribbean and African storied making up 23%.
Caribbean Times (17 April 1998)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anchoring</th>
<th>Number of stories</th>
<th>Percentage of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (eg European)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear/none</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this edition UK anchored articles make up half the total. However, over 20% are Caribbean anchored, seven times more than those which are African anchored. The next largest number is those articles with US anchoring. While this is more than twice as many as those which are African anchored it remains a small percentage when compared with the number which had Caribbean anchoring.

Caribbean Times (15 July 1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anchoring</th>
<th>Number of stories</th>
<th>Percentage of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>52.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (eg European)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear/none</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>68</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this edition, the number of articles with UK anchoring is more than half. However, the number with African anchored stories has slightly overtaken the number with Caribbean anchoring. Stories with US anchoring are now the smallest of the named geographical areas. The difference in relative proportions compared with the 1998 edition may be a result of the fact that this edition is more than twice the size allowing scope for greater diversity.

The Voice (3 April 1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anchoring</th>
<th>Number of stories</th>
<th>Percentage of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (eg European)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear/none</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This edition has more than half its articles with UK anchoring and a further 20% with US anchoring, combining these two categories encompasses 80% of the coverage with only a total of 10% of articles reflecting a Caribbean or African anchoring, within this combined category slightly more articles have African than Caribbean anchoring.

**The Voice (30 June 1997)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anchoring</th>
<th>Number of stories</th>
<th>Percentage of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (eg European)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear/none</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For this edition, the largest geographical anchor remains the UK but it has fallen to less than 50%. US anchored articles account for more than 25%. Taken together articles with African and Caribbean anchoring account for less space than those with US anchoring; however in this edition there are more with Caribbean than African anchoring. Again some of the variation between editions may be accounted for by the difference in size with the 1997 edition being half the size of the 1998 newspaper.

**New Nation (13 April 1998)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anchoring</th>
<th>Number of stories</th>
<th>Percentage of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>57.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (eg European)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear/none</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>92</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This edition has more than half of all articles being UK anchored. The next highest proportions are US, Caribbean and African anchoring which even when combined do not equal the number with UK anchoring. Similarly, the combined Caribbean and African totals do not equal the number with US anchoring. When combined UK and US anchored articles account for nearly two thirds of the total coverage.
New Nation 7 July 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anchoring</th>
<th>Number of stories</th>
<th>Percentage of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>55.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (eg European)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear/none</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This edition again shows the majority of articles having a UK anchoring and the next largest being those with US anchoring (over 20%). This edition is noteworthy amongst all of the papers reviewed for having no African anchored articles at all. It also has a very small percentage of Caribbean anchored articles. Over 75% of the coverage has either an UK or US anchored perspective.

Conclusions from anchoring analysis

The anchoring analysis provides another perspective on the role of geography in the representation of Blackness which these newspapers offer. While there is variation across and within titles, there are some general patterns. UK anchored articles tend to be most numerous, often exceeding half the coverage. There is also evidence of significant US anchoring which in some editions exceeds the combined total for African and Caribbean anchored articles. This suggests that the anchoring is predominantly from a Western Multi-racial perspective.

The strong UK anchoring of articles, both news and non-news coverage echoes the emphasis on UK news discussed in the findings from the Inscribed Reader analysis. However it takes it further by illustrating the way in which other geographical regions are treated. For example, coverage of the US tends to be similar to that of the UK in that race is used as an important way of viewing and interpreting issues; to some degree it could be argued that there is a race-based anchoring at work in these instances. The Caribbean is viewed in a number of ways and some of the news articles are clearly taken from a Caribbean–based news agency (based on the use of $US). Others are viewed from the perspective of the UK or the US, for example an article in New Nation (7 July 1997) about the effect of the volcano in Montserrat is entitled "Abbott backs volcano island" and it looks at the efforts by the Black MP Diane Abbott to lobby the UK government on the issue. Here we have an international issue which is firmly anchored in the British political context in a way which is not solely a consequence of the colonial connection between Britain and Montserrat.
4.9.6 Who is defined as us?

In the absence of references to "we Brits", one might expect to find the use of the first person plural in stories which were exclusive or specific to the Black population. These do appear and "we" is also used to refer to ethnic minorities collectively rather than Black people exclusively. References to "brothas" and "sistas" occurred in less formal articles and news articles referred to "the community" when talking about the Black UK population – a word choice designed to promote a sense of unity, togetherness and groupness. However, it is by no means universal and on occasion there is a tension between inclusivity and distance. For example, a leader column in New Nation discussing the effect of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry on relations between Black people and the police refers to 'Black people' rather than we or us. This is highlighted in an interview with Herman Ousely then the Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality in which he refers to "we Black people" in an inclusive way but the (Black) interviewer speaks of "Black people" in the third person which achieves a distancing effect.

Summary

This theme explores further the issue of how Blackness is constructed in terms of the way in which possibilities for identification are represented and the complexities associated with this. The anchoring analysis suggests a strong UK orientation similar to the results of the inscribed reader analysis.

This theme also starts to explore the issue of barriers to Black UK citizens defining themselves as British through the identification of an absence of any linguistic definition of the Black population as British through the use of the first person plural in either the national or international context. In addition, the resistance to the use of the first person plural to describe the UK Black population can be seen as a form of opposition to a representation of Black people as a sub-group within the categorisation British. The emphasis on the UK as a source for the interpretation of international news offers an alternative approach to the representation of Blackness as trans-national. This theme, therefore, identifies some of the contradictions in the media representation. The UK Black population is not represented as British or a sub-group of the British people, but a British perspective informs the way in which trans-national issues affecting Black people elsewhere in the world are viewed.

4.9.7 Theme 3 - Absence of national identification

The trans-national contradiction explored in the anchoring analysis is reflected in the existence of a strong theme which represented Blackness in trans-national terms. The Black community worldwide was considered to be relevant and there was a sense of kinship with other Diasporic
Blacks, particularly in the USA, so Blackness was represented thematically not only as trans-national, but this trans-nationality was represented as both united and as inter-dependent.

For example, The Journal featured a profile of Susan Rice, President Clinton's policy advisor on African affairs, it looked at the distinctive perspective offered by an African American on African affairs as well as the effect of domestic race relations on her career. The choice of this feature shows that the concerns of Black people in America are perceived to be of interest to Black people in the UK and, while providing an example of a successful Black role model, it also shows an interdependence between Diasporic Africans and indigenous Africans.

The way in which race transcended geography is shown in a story about the possibility of a General Election in Australia on the issue of land rights. The focus of this article (The Journal, 17 April 1998) was on the inter-racial relationships between White Australians and the Aboriginal population. It describes a vote in the Senate as "moving Australia even closer to holding an early election based on racial issues."

One of the advantages of the emphasis on international Blackness is that it avoids the category definition which would be required when focusing on the UK Black population; an article profiling a UK Black politician would require an evaluation of attributes and values which might prove problematic in that it would point to a category definition. Because the Black print media in Britain does not provide a strong content based construction of Blackness, there are no non-negotiable cultural values or behaviours (excluding religion) which form the basis of obstacles to British identification. Smith (1994) defines national identity as the particular character of the nation in terms of Weber's "irreplaceable cultural values"; the way in which these irreplaceable cultural values manifest themselves in the UK national identity is not explored by the UK Black media. This only leaves the common fate element of category membership which, as discussed earlier, is allied with victim status. The representation offered by the print media, is that if racism, disadvantage and inequality were eradicated from the UK, then there would be no obstacles in identifying as British. This assumption requires further investigation.

The absence of identification as British may be related to the predominance of stories and interpretations of stories which placed Black people in the victim role either individually or collectively. The problem with this explanation of racism, discrimination and victimisation as the 'cause' of a lack of feeling of Britishness is that the identification of victimisation of Black people was trans-national and very much seen as being universal and ongoing – thus there is no alternative option of identification with another geographical region and indeed rules out the option of change given the temporal link between past and present and the identification of negative continuity for Black people worldwide.
Summary
The effect of the media’s trans-national representation of Blackness is interesting because it does not function to provide an alternative geographical source of identification for the UK Black population. The option of representing Blackness at a supra-national level was not constructed as a positive alternative to Black Britishness because the element which united this trans-national representation was the positioning of Black people internationally as victims of racism. This contributes to the disempowering effect of the representation discussed above in that the worldwide kinship on offer is based on a negative premise. Thus the common fate element of group entativity can be seen as functioning on an international as well as a national level. This theme suggests that the nature of Blackness is similar globally and consists of racially-based disadvantage.

4.10 Conclusions

The media analysis employed a number of different approaches to explore how the Black UK media represent Blackness, the findings were both complementary and conflicting.

The inscribed reader method showed the preponderance of the UK in news and other coverage, it also highlighted the importance of entertainment and sports. The thematic findings reinforced this by showing how success for Black people was usually in the sports and entertainment domains. The strong UK influence was also supported by the anchoring analysis. However, the thematic analysis showed the importance of a trans-national representation of Blackness which was often associated with a representation of Blackness in terms of victimhood. The thematic analysis also showed how Blackness was frequently defined in terms of its response to a negative inter-racial context.

There were relatively few behaviour-based representations of Blackness, the exception to this was religion and Christianity in particular. The strong emphasis on Christianity seemed to be at the expense of the recognition of the influence of Islam for Black people around the world and also for Black people in Britain.

The analysis based on the Banal nationalism methodology showed an absence of Blackness defined in terms of Britishness despite the column inches devoted to UK news and current affairs and the frequent use of Britain as an anchoring point for interpretation of non-British issues.

The analysis of the photographs within the sports coverage added a new dimension to the findings. They showed Black sportspeople around the world in celebratory and victorious poses to
reinforce the sense of sports as an area where Black success was possible, this complemented
the analysis of the text which frequently showed Black sportspeople succeeding against the odds.
The two main exceptions to this were Mike Tyson and Linford Christie.

Most of the sports photographs were of Black people (including fans). However in the football
coverage White players were shown in the same photographs. In most cases these photographs
featured a Black player in a tackle situation with a White player from the opposing team. This sets
up a sense of conflict and opposition between Black and White.

It is not easy to draw firm conclusions from the media analysis; it raises more questions than it
answers:
What are the implications of a lack of geographical identification and in particular the
perceived conflict between Blackness and Britishness?
What is the nature of a population which defines itself primarily in relation to an inter­
racial comparative context, for example is this a strategic decision to deal with the
challenges of the heterogeneity of the category?
How does a representation of a collective self in the victim role influence perceptions of
possibilities for future change?
How important is the representation of Christianity?

The evidence from the media analysis did not support the hypotheses proposed by Social
Memory Theory or Social Identity Theory. Rather the analysis found that the population exhibited
a distinctive sense of groupness which included an absence of collective self-categorisation. This
meant that the first premise of most social psychological theories which is that a group should
define itself as such was absent. As a result there was also no evidence of representations of
possible collective selves.

However, while newspapers and other forms of media have a role in both representing and
constructing the social world they do not exercise unchallenged power in a vacuum. The
inconclusive results of the media analysis suggest a need for further research looking at how
people perceive the key findings.

Chryssochoou (1996) in describing the citizens created as a result of the formation of the
European Union stated that “We are faced with a case where the category exists without
constituting a psychological group, as those who are the ‘elements’ of the group do not
necessarily consider themselves as such.” It seems that the ‘Black Briton’ poses a similar
theoretical and political challenge which is compounded by the way in which Blackness itself is constructed.

The questions raised by the media analysis confirmed the case for further primary empirical investigation of the nature of Blackness and the source of incompatibilities between Blackness and Britishness.
Chapter 5

Study 2 – Focus Groups: “The Sounds of Blackness”

5.1 Introduction

This study is based on the media analysis of the Black press in the UK described in chapter 4. That analysis identified a number of themes which were pertinent to the construction of Black identity in the UK. These were:

a) the lack of geographical focus for identification as shown by the prevalence of transnational themes and the tension between Blackness and Britishness;
b) a collective self-definition primarily in relation to an inter-racial comparative context;
c) the representation of a collective self in the victim role.

The study reported in this chapter set out to explore further the constructions of the content of the category Black. This study opened up the tentative findings of the media analysis to debate by members of the Black population. A primary data study was needed which would give more detailed and personally anchored information and which would explore more deeply some of the issues raised by the media analysis.

5.2 Theoretical rationale

The theoretical rationale for this study is based on a review of the literature on racial, ethnic and national identities and on the theoretical issues raised by the media analysis in study 1. This literature review looked at how ethnic and racial identities were conceptualised, the methodologies used to study them and the dimensions on which ethnicity and race were distinguished in identity terms. Edwards (1992) defined ethnicity as "a sense of group identity deriving from real or perceived common bonds such as language, race or religion". Yinger (1985) defined an ethnic group as "a segment of a larger society whose members are thought, by themselves and/or others, to have a common origin and to share important segments of a common culture and who, in addition, participate in shared activities in which the common origin and culture are significant ingredients". Yinger’s definition usefully includes the views of, and effects of, the society beyond the members of the ethnic group in a way that Edwards' does not, this dimension is particularly relevant to ethnic groups which are also minority groups. Hutnik (1991) raises the issue of the link between ethnic identity and ethnic minority identity and the need to look at how the structural situation of minorities is both different from, as well as related to, the ethnic aspect of group membership. For her, this definition leads on to the need to study
how the minority group sees and relates to the majority group and culture as well as the internal working of the minority group itself and the individual’s relationship with it. She also argues that there are degrees of ethnic identity rather than an either/or situation in which an individual either has an ethnic identity or does not.

Smith (1989) is one of the few authors to attempt to define race "Technically race refers to differential concentrations of gene frequencies responsible for traits that are usually confined to physical manifestations such as skin colour or hair form; race has little intrinsic relationship with cultural patterns and institutions." Smith then goes on to relate race to racial identity development - "Racial identity development is a process of coming to terms with one’s racial membership group as a salient reference group". Wilson (1981) points out in her study of mixed race children, race in the UK tends to be about whiteness and non-whiteness rather than a more accurate or sophisticated labelling. This is reflected in social policy which tends to minimise non-white heterogeneity for administrative convenience.

Beale Spencer and Markstrom-Adams (1990) defined ethnicity as "characteristic of shared unique cultural traditions and a heritage that persists across generations." This definition includes an acknowledgment of the historical/temporal aspect to ethnic groups which differentiates them, to some extent, from other social groupings such as class. Edwards and Doucette (1987), for example, identified a number of external mechanisms such as cuisine, religion, ethnic media and language as well as more abstract factors such as "belongingness" which are consciously used by a group to maintain their ethnic identity.

Theorists are split on the degree of overlap, if any, in definitions of race and ethnicity, for example Beale Spencer and Markstrom-Adams do not see race as co-equivalent to their preferred definition of ethnicity, but see an overlap between the two for groups such as Black Americans. Hutnik by contrast sees a clear difference between ethnic and racial groups, the latter resulting from ascribed characteristics, the former being culturally based and internally regulated. Based on these group definitions she sees people in the UK of Asian origin as ethnic minorities and people in the UK of Afro-Caribbean origin as racial minorities.

Three main findings of this review informed the media analysis and, therefore, the focus group study:

1) The need to distinguish between race and ethnicity as different, though potentially overlapping, constructs.
2) The importance of power relationships when race or ethnicity is allied to minority status.
3) The relevance of the majority’s representation of a given ethnic or racial minority group.
4) The differing ways in which ethnicity and race might inform the options for identification with the nation.

5.3 Aims of study

The overall aim of the study was to explore the way in which Black people talk about the experience of being Black in the UK and in particular the meanings, memories, associations and feelings attached to the label "Black". In particular it aimed to gain more information about the following issues:

a) Some underlying information about the "groupness" of the category, ie the factors which promote or inhibit group cohesiveness and which transform the category into a social group.

b) The degree to which Black is perceived to be a racial rather than, or in addition, to an ethnic group.

c) Information about which other social groups are perceived as relevant to the construction of a group identity and on which dimensions eg positive/negative, in-group/out-group.

d) The relationship between racial (Black) and national (British) identity and identification.

5.4 Method

The focus group interviews were all conducted by the same researcher (a female in her thirties, UK born, of African Caribbean descent). Each session was audiotaped and transcribed verbatim. An IPA analysis was done on the transcripts. The interviews ranged in length from one hour to over two hours. In each case the group was assured that the study was confidential and their anonymity would be protected.

5.4.1 Participants:

Participants were recruited from either organisations providing services to Black people (a Black Women’s group and a Black Senior Citizen’s group) or a snowball sample based on personal contacts.

The participants were chosen to reflect as far as possible a range of socio-demographic backgrounds within the Black Caribbean population: a female group, a group of older people and a group of young professionals. Within these categories, these groups were heterogeneous, eg the women’s group had mixed ages, and the other groups had both men and women. One group
included two adolescent males with their mothers. The members of the women's group were mainly full-time mothers who had relatively little formal education. Members of the senior citizens' group tended to be lower down the socio-economic scale. All of the members of the third and fourth groups were employed in non-manual occupations; none were in senior positions within those organisations.

The groups ranged in size from four to ten. The largest group (by virtue of its setting) was the senior citizens' group. Participants were not directly asked for any socio-demographic information and information such as length of time spent in the UK (for those born overseas) emerged naturally during the course of the discussions.

The Groups were chosen on the basis that they were groups catering only for the Black-Caribbean population. The sample is not representative and is not claimed as such, clearly the use of pre-existing groups and personal contacts eliminates a significant portion of the population.

5.4.2 Focus Group Interview Schedule:

The aim of the study was to explore the way in which Black people talk about the experience of being Black in the UK and in particular the meanings attached to the label "Black".

The interview schedule was designed to ensure that the focus groups provided information about the following issues. They aimed to elicit information about the degree to which Black people in Britain feel that:

a) They need a culture of their own which is distinctive (from White or Caribbean or both).

b) The degree to which they feel that the content of their Caribbean heritage already provides them with sufficient cultural support (continuity) to deal with the experience/identity threat of being Black in the UK.

c) Some underlying information about the "groupness" of the category.

d) Information about which other social groups are perceived as relevant to the construction of a group identity and on which dimensions eg positive/negative, ingroup/outgroup.

The interview started with an ice-breaking question about the degree to which people felt that a Black press was a good thing and whether the participants read Black newspapers. It then went on to a discussion of a range of articles from the UK Black press. These articles had been chosen to reflect the main themes identified in an earlier analysis of Black identity as reflected in the UK Black press. The interview schedule had a number of standard questions in it. The aim of these
prompts was to allow the participants to talk in the widest possible terms about the nature of "Blackness" and to avoid restricting discussion to issues of racism. A copy of the interview schedule is at appendix 5.

5.4.3 Data Analysis:

The data was analysed using a modified form of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), an approach which emphasises participants' own accounts of social and psychological events and of their associated phenomenal and social world (Smith 1996) and is, therefore, well suited to the research aims of this project.

5.4.4 IPA stages of analysis

Stage 1: Analysis of an individual case – reading and re-reading a transcript to produce wide-ranging and unfocused notes which arise as responses to the text. These notes/questions are recorded on the left hand margin of the transcript.

Stage 2: identify themes and label them in order to characterise sections of the text. These conceptual themes form the next level of abstraction; these can involve the use of theoretical constructs aimed at explaining the data.

Stage 3: a structuring of the analysis in which themes are related to each other to form clusters which are labelled.

Stage 4: summary table of structured themes with illustrative quotations.

Stage 5: integration of cases. Production of table of master themes.

IPA is most commonly used to analyse transcripts of semi-structured one-to-one interviews and its procedures were adapted for use with the transcripts of focus groups following discussion with Jonathan Smith the creator of IPA.

5.4.5 Methodological Rationale for focus group study

1. Why use focus groups - as opposed to other technique eg 1-1 interviews?

Focus groups are recognised as being a method which is appropriate for collecting information about participants' understandings of and perspectives on issues. In particular as Millward (1995) states "Focus Groups are communication events in which the interplay of the personal and social can be systematically explored". Given that this study involves looking at both the group and individual nature of Black life in the UK, this would seem to make it a particularly appropriate technique. Focus groups are particularly useful for capturing dissent as a number of different views are likely to be aired meaning that there is less likelihood of the agenda being overly
determined by the researcher. As one aim of the study was to explore constructions of Blackness, it was important to use a format which allowed for more than one construction to be advanced and for those constructions to be contested as far as possible.

One of the main advantages of focus groups is that they yield two distinct forms of information. They provide information about people’s views in ways which are not possible through questionnaires or other quantitative methods, but they also provide information about interactions and emotions generated in the process of discussion. A sophisticated analysis of focus groups not only identifies themes generated in the discussion but also some analysis of the process. Thus while at their most basic focus groups will provide information about what participants think about a given issue, they will also provide information about what aspects of the discussion provoked what type of emotion, for example an analysis of the use of humour can reveal a great deal about how sensitive issues are neutralised through jokes.

2. Why use pre-existing groups as opposed to ad-hoc groups?

Pre-existing groups were used mainly as a result of resource constraints. The nature of the population being sampled eg geographic dispersion makes it very difficult to create ad hoc groups. There are also social sensitivities about the racially-based selection of participants eg in a college. Because the population in question is a minority, it would require a massive oversampling of the general population in order to obtain a representative sample. This is a problem recognised by other researchers working on a much larger scale, eg the Policy Studies Institute, and it makes obtaining a representative sample time-consuming and prohibitively expensive.

3. Why use the stimulus chosen?

Each newspaper article was selected to reflect one of the themes identified in the media analysis. As the articles reflect real-life issues, none of them contain only the theme which they have been chosen to illustrate - rather it is the case that this is the theme which is dominant and the article is considered reasonably representative of the theme in question. They were intended to be a “user-friendly” catalyst for discussion; the multi-faceted nature of the articles was intended to generate a similarly multi-dimensional discussion.

4. Why arrange the discussion in this way - why not use “citizen’s panel” format?

The original design for the focus group was task-based. It was based on the concept of an editorial team for an imaginary/hypothetical publication and this design would have been based
on a citizen's panel type format. However when a detailed version was drawn up it soon became apparent that it was overly complicated and ran the risk of not generating the right sort of discussion. In addition it seemed likely that the level of background "noise" which this task would generate was too high.

5. To what extent can the sample be considered representative?

As with most qualitative data, the sample is not claimed as representative, but it is designed to elicit a wide range of views and could be regarded as typical of the population. In the first instance the use of pre-existing groups eliminates a significant portion of the population. Pre-existing groups are used at least in part because they provide a convenient existing sample.

6. Why were the groups used chosen & how were they chosen?

The Groups were initially selected on the basis that they were groups catering only for the Black-Caribbean population and in addition that they reflected one or more desirable demographic variable eg at least one group was chosen because of the probability that it would have a high percentage of older people.

The organisations/groups were chosen by looking through the London business telephone directory for groups which included the words Black/African (or Afro) Caribbean/West Indian in their title. It is acknowledged that this is by no means an objective or scientific method of choosing but it was systematic.

5.5 Main findings

Overall there were five themes identified.
The two superordinate themes were firstly the distinctive way in which Blackness was constructed as a predominantly racial category rather than an ethnic group. Second, the problematic relationship between Blackness and Britishness.

Both of these superordinate themes have a number of sub themes.

The other three themes and their sub-themes are discussed in relation to social memory theory:

1. The lack of internalisation of the mainstream/majority representation of the group
2. The role of the past in constructing the group's present
3. Cultural heritage issues
5.5.1 Superordinate Theme 1 - Blackness as a distinctive category

Within the focus groups, Blackness was constructed as a distinctive category primarily in terms of its entativity and the processes which were used for that construction. The distinctiveness was not strongly linked with cultural content. The focus groups showed how Blackness was constructed so that the source of group distinctiveness and values tended to be situated externally and represented as products of, or responses to, the inter-categorical contexts of both the past and the present.

5.5.2 Sub-theme 1 - the group was described as a product of the inter-categorical context and the role of the past was important in this construction

In this sub-theme, the participants speak about the effect of the nature of the group's past on Blackness in the present. Being Black is described as a product or consequence of adversity and this adversity is represented as being rooted in the historical Black-White relationship.

Marg - by hook or by crook, they're gonna have to accept us
P - I don't think Black people's ever had it easy in this country but that, but that adversity also makes us stronger and what we are, who we are and what we are.
yeah, what we are

[focus group 1]

P - we've got a lot more going for us, I think
LS - why do you think that?
P - Because of our history
LS - what, what bits of it?
P - what we've come through, what Black
D - that's it, where we're coming from
P - and where we're coming from
D - the struggle, the fights we've had to put up with
LS - because things have been tough
D - they still are
[laughter]
Marg - yeah they still are, but we take it on board, we don't give in, we don't give in to it and it's been 400 years of taking it on board and coming through it and if they could have got rid of us 400 years ago they would have, but we're still here and not even in small amounts, we're making the difference
Y - but 400 years ago, the forced us here, we didn't want to come
Marg - no we didn't want to come, but they thought they'd got rid of us
P - no we're here they can't get rid of us, we're here and they can't force us back

[focus group 1]
SJ – Well I've been thinking about what you said about our heritage and stuff and I think a lot of it is going right back, depending on how far back you want to go but umm a lot of our heritage from Africa has been working hard and we have a lot of heritage in terms of royalty for want of a better word and realising that, it's like going back before slavery to a time when we had a lot of pride in ourselves when we believed in ourselves and I think a lot of it is to do with like trying to remember that and also remember the process that our families went through in coming to this country. They were quite brave to come here do you know what I mean when they arrived you know they came off the boat from the West Indies or wherever, they were very very tough to make that crossing how many weeks on the ship to come to this other place you know and I think that we need to remember and realise that over time that we can get that strength back again and I think that's what I've tried to do.

[focus group 4]

G  I think what would have helped if my parents had told me at home, taught me a bit more about my history, so like I had a grounding of where I'm coming from so that when these people come out with their 'oh go back to the trees' you know I could then turn round and say to them 'well actually you know Black people we're, we've done more than that' but I didn't have that.

[focus group 3]

The quotes from focus group 1 illustrate the way in which an antagonistic inter-categorical relationship has influenced the nature of Blackness. While the process is recognised as negative it is distinguished from the outcome which is represented in positive terms. In contrast, for focus group 4, the negativity of the slavery era is effectively deleted when looking to the past for sources of strength. In the quote from focus group 3, the need to have a good knowledge of the history of Black people is rooted in terms of the need to deal with modern racism, rather than in terms of its intrinsic value or as a source of a behavioural code.

In all these cases, the way in which Blackness is talked about, whether positive or negative, is represented as a reaction to the relationship between Black and White both past and present. There is nothing unusual about relationships with other groups and with the material environment having an effect on how a group sees itself. What is distinctive here is firstly the absence of other sources of information about what makes the group the way it is; for example, there are no behavioural dimensions. Secondly, the information about the group is not presented in terms of inter-group comparison. Condor (1996) looking at English national identity notes that 'Quite often descriptions of English life, habits or character were.... spontaneously compared negatively with equivalent habits or practices from other countries. ('really disorganized industry – not like the Germans', 'not at all friendly. Very reserved not like Italians and Spanish who are more fun and like a laugh'). Her findings suggest a content-based process of differentiation. The focus groups' descriptions of what defines the nature of the group are distinctive because they are framed in terms of a reaction or response to a stimulus or process which is set in a context determined by others.
One of the key functions of social memories identified by Lyons (1996) is to describe and define a group identity (national or ethnic). This aim does not seem to be in play here, rather it seems to be that they are being used for another of the functions which Lyons identifies - to help individuals make sense of the uncertainties of the present.

5.5.3 Sub-theme 2 - the values of the group were also a product of, or response to, the inter-group context both historical and current

Following on from sub-theme 1, sub-theme 2 specifically explores the role of the inter-group context in the creation of Black values. Here the emphasis is more on reactions to the current context than the legacy of the past, but similarly reactive processes are being invoked to explain the values under discussion.

G I think sometimes, there's nothing wrong with umm conforming to, as long as you know why you're doing it and umm if you're not making too many compromises and compromising your principles and your values say for instance if I went for a job [laughing] okay umm if I was to go in like wearing an African outfit and an African wrap I mean I know I'm not going to get that job, but if I want the job, I'll put on my suit, I'll wrap up my hair and I'll go in and get, you know. Doesn't mean I agree with that but at the end of the day I want the job umm and I'm not in a position to say 'oh well to hell with and if they don't want me then' that's fine but there are some things that I wouldn't do I think.

LS What do you think, I mean can you think of things that you wouldn't do, I mean do you think that there are a set of say, you know you talked about principles and values being compromised, do you think that there are a set of principles and values that Black people tend to have which are in direct conflict with you know 'White society' whatever that is, if there's such a thing.

G umm

P The only thing, maybe I'm, this is not really what you're talking about, but I find that in the companies that I've ever worked in is that if people say anything umm you know racist things like if they are racist, they might not think they are, certain words for instance, I remember once someone saying about a colour, the colour brown being nigger brown or whatever and she said as if it was nothing and I actually had to say something to her, I said 'look I don't really like that', but I think she was talking to me as if it was just another word and I said look I don't really like that and I mean this particular girl I've had to say a couple of things because I'm like I don't like anything derogatory about anyone whether you're Black, White pink or whatever, if you know D happened to say something or L said something about I know a Pakistani person or I don't like that and they, I would say what I have to say, not horribly I won't get on their case I'll just say 'please don't; speak like, don't talk like that', so there, that's the way I feel about certain things but I don't know if that's exactly what you're talking about.

[focus group 3]
AC – Personally I think there’s still that mentality in some English people that you should be grateful for this position that we’re giving you, I should be grateful that I’ve got to this stage in my career, I think well no I did this on my own, you didn’t do me any favours.

[focus group 4]

WS – but I think for most triumphs recognition comes in there some where, it can there’s your personal feeling about what you’ve accomplished but also recognition that you expect also other people to recognise what you’ve accomplished and once you start to get into that field I think that most Black people feel they lack triumphs

..........

SJ – well that’s right, I think a lot of it is to do with what standards you set for yourself and sometimes yeah we do set lower standards, sometimes that’s a good thing and sometimes it’s a bad thing but I know there are a lot of Black people say I want to be a millionaire by the time I’m thirty and other people say that as well and then it’s is that realistic, is that measurable and all the things we talk about at work and then it’s who recognises what’s a triumph. A lot of Black people don’t, I don’t want to be stereotypical but, it’s like if you’re a Black person and you succeed at sports, that’s triumphant, Britain recognises who you are, blah, blah, if you’re a Black person who achieves in something like computers you know [pointing at AC], no-one will know about it

[focus group 4]

P I just think it’s a real shame personally, I just think that you know if a Black person’s done well for themselves, then everyone should be saying ‘great you’ve done well’, I want to do well too and I’m going to push myself instead of being, to me it comes across as being envious, if people aren’t supporting each other if you understand what I’m saying.

G maybe they feel, they’re only going to let you know a few of us in so it’s going to be me

P but it’s

LS so it’s divide and rule sort of thing.

G yeah, divide and rule type of thing.

[focus group 3]

This analysis is not seeking to argue that there are no behaviours or values which would be recognised as associated with Blackness. What does seem to be distinctive, however, is the degree to which those values and behaviours are contingent on a given inter-categorical context. In the quote from focus group 3 one participant recognises that she was willing to strategically compromise certain aspects of her racial heritage in order to get a job and the other felt that the
value which she felt was most important was anti-racism, whether related to Black people or not. Thus when asked about Black values, the response was related to the exigencies of the inter-group context rather than the internal moral code of the group.

Focus group 4 discussed the issue of who determines the norms and values by which Black people should be judged, the implication was that the standard was set externally by Whites and it is them rather than Black people who define what can be considered to be a triumph eg careers in sport rather than in computers. Linked to this was the discussion about how White people felt that they had the right to determine what level of achievement Black people should accept and be grateful for.

This analysis reinforces the findings of the media study that the category Black has a distinctive form of entativity, with internal norms arising in response to external constraints. It is likely that in the early stages of group formation, cultural norms and values are a response to an external environmental stimulus and it is only later that they become reified as the internal property of a given group. However, the example under discussion here remains distinctive, for as long as the category Black is constructed or co-constructed in response and/or opposition to Whiteness (as highlighted by Stuart Hall), its content will be subject to changes in the construction of Whiteness and norms are unlikely to have an the time to take root and develop in a way which allows them to be reified as Black cultural norms and standards.

This is of more than a theoretical observation; Fordham & Ogbu (1986) show how the process of oppositional identity construction has had direct and negative practical consequences for Black Americans in terms of academic achievement. They argue that one of the reasons for Black students' academic under-achievement is the historical legacy of White Americans' stereotyping Blacks as incapable of intellectual achievement. They reason that this process led Black people to doubt their own ability which led to a re-defining of academic success as a White prerogative which in turn resulted in ambivalence and affective dissonance regarding academic achievement and success. As a minority oppositional social identity has evolved only things which are not part of White life have been defined as appropriate for Blacks and vice versa creating a Black culture. Behaving within the White cultural frame of reference is negatively sanctioned by both the individual and the group. Those who are academically successful are condemned by their Black peers for "acting white" and it is only those who have learned how to manage the burden of "acting white" who maintain academic success; those who behave as "authentically" Black adopt behaviours which are not commensurate with mainstream success.
5.5.4 Sub-theme 3: intra-group division was acknowledged but tended to be attributed to external forces historical and current:

The category Black is clearly not an homogenous one and divisions were identified along the dimensions of race, class and nationality (gender is absent). None of the sub-categories identified were represented in positive ways or in terms which might offer an alternative source of collective identification.

Race

M - yeah we have to re-educate the kids, the children that is coming up now, it's too old, it's planted in us from slavery
Marg - but I also believe, I don't know, I also believe that we’ve got, it's, there’s something in our psyche that's coming from slavery that's whether, none of us are born into slavery and that's the same from 200 or 150 years ago, but something in our psyche is, something is there that
P - it's our background
now we still operating in the same way and it's a change it's to change that
M - It's a change, it has to be changed from the family that the children. Like in the West Indies, you see I'm Black right
R - yeah that mentality of the colour of your skin, that one amazes me
Marg - it’s in our psyche
M - I'm Black and Pam is Black and you're Black. Yes but the banks in the West Indies
P - that all comes from slavery as well
would not employ me, oh I could have the education to work behind the counter, but because my skin is so black and P's is so red, although I might have more education than P, P would get the job, that is the mentality.

[focus group 1]

In the quote from focus group 1, there is an acknowledgement of the continued use of race as a form of intra-group division. The participants distance themselves geographically from its use by using an example from the commercial world in the West Indies, but elsewhere in the discussion they acknowledge its use in the UK context by making direct reference to the interviewer’s skin colour.

The quote shows a negative use of continuity, with the ongoing use of racial discrimination continuing long after its introduction during the slave era. There is an interesting tension between the external attribution of the source of racism in slavery, while at the same time arguing that its had been psychologically embedded within the Black psyche. The psychological reference suggests that a degree of intransigence in the persistence of the use of the concept.
Class/individualism

M - of that thing and I also worked in an old people's home so I have to know what I'm talking about, I'm talking about my life experiences in this country and I think things have not changed, they haven't you see, they haven't changed, so when you see one of those Black girls, you go to the office and you see them and they've got the little job and if you worked with them and if you went in there as just the clerical worker, because they've got the job as a secretary, they wouldn't sit down in the staff canteen and have lunch with you because they're bigger than that, you understand, so there's prejudice among our own people, you understand?

LS - mmm do you think that's one of the problems? I mean for like when we were talking about the politics and so on?

P - there's a lot of prejudice

M - yes, yes yes because a lot of Black people, once you give them an inch, that's their mentality.

Marg - but that's what racism does to people at the end of the day

M - but why doesn't it work in America?

It works, it's the same way in America. What I'm saying is that racism puts people, it divides people as well and you're always striving to be better, that's their aim, always to have us fighting each other.

Y - that's their aim

M - but then we were always good, there was nothing we, I'm no better than P and P is no better than me, we all human beings at the end of the day.

Marg - yes we know that, but that's the effect of racism, the effect of racism is always to make us be competing with each other and not even understanding that because Jenny down the road does cleaning and I might work in an office doesn't mean to say that at the end of the day we're all earning our money, no matter

[focus group 1]

WS – I think some Black people get criticised, some successful Black people get criticised not so much because of their success but because of what they do with their success, the amount of people who experience success and promptly turn their back on their own community is alarming

SJ – It's funny you should say that really because....

WS - And the sort of Frank Bruno mentality they have, version of success of Black success which is as it were you know trying to make people act colour blind and really doing his best to you know to appeal to the White masses even at the expense of ridiculing himself. And then you see these magazines have Black celebrities, more often than not they have a White person on their arm

[focus group 4]

In the quotes from focus groups 1 and 4, two aspects of the negative effects of success are discussed. In the first, racism is blamed for the competitive consequences of occupational success. The idea that workplace competition results in social division is not peculiar to this discussion, though the blame is usually placed on the false consciousness of capitalism rather than racism. For the participants, personal success is deemed to have more negative social consequences for Black people because it appears to obscure the common fate of Blackness. The tale of the secretary turning her back on the cleaner could just as easily form the basis of a feminist critique of the workplace, but despite this being an all-female group and there being
evidence of a discourse of female solidarity in play elsewhere, in this case a fairly universal tale of lack of conflict between individual and collective needs is seen and interpreted from a racial perspective with responsibility being attributed to racism.

Focus group 4, looks at the concept of ‘selling out’ at the celebrity level with the inter-racial relationship being used as a symbol for the lack of racial solidarity in the UK. The participants are careful not to denigrate success for Black people per se, but distinguish it from the effects of success on their subsequent behaviour which is seen as becoming White in all but appearance and, therefore, worthy of criticism.

Criticism of celebrities has been discussed in the media as a particularly British pastime. It is often argued that personalities are built up by the media in order to be torn down and that the British, in contrast with Americans, are not comfortable with success preferring to cheer the underdog. It could, therefore, be argued that the ‘Bruno-bashing’ in focus group 4 is just another example of this. However, I would argue that the specific mention of race differentiates it. Frank Bruno is not being criticised for his achievements, he is being criticised because of the racial implications of the way in which he has used his celebrity status is perceived as negative for UK Black people in general.

National

G  African, if I have to fill out equal opps forms I put African not Afro Caribbean

P  Do you? Why?

G  Because I think umm say someone from ohh India born in this country umm they consider themselves to be Indians.

LS  So you wouldn’t distinguish yourself in that sense from African Africans if you see what I mean?

G  As in African from the continent?

LS  Yeah

G  Umm, I’d like to think, I don’t see myself as any different to them, but they see me as umm a Caribbean or slave baby they call it [laughing]

P  oh that’s horrible

[focus group 3]

M - and I was brought up with a load of old prejudices
Y - and they’re saying that Caribbean children are taught that you know African people are inferior to them and they grow up with that knowledge you know.
M - yes, cos my husband, you know, you couldn’t tell him that he came from Africa.
Marg - exactly, a lot of people still
M - you could ‘ahh i don’t know anything about African…[untranscribable noise]’. But you say but we were originated from there, we weren’t born in Jamaica, St Lucia, Barbados, we were brought there, but they say to you ‘no African’. But we are Africans, that is where our roots come from. That’s where man, man came from.

[focus group 1]

Y - yeah that’s what we need unity, we can’t communicate within ourselves, we’re always arguing
M - cos P is from Jamaica, I’m from St Lucia, she’s from, you see that is it, that’s the beginning of not being together.
R - Jamaicans believe if you say you’re from St Lucia, then they’re oh it’s a small island and you know that’s the first thing
M - small island, you’ve got small brain, they’ve got the biggest brain
LS - do you think that is stronger in us than getting together to deal with the situation here?
all - yes, yes
Y - that this person is from this place, you’re from that place
LS - why is it stronger? Do you think it’s because we want to hang on to our Caribbean roots and so therefore the divisions that are in the Caribbean we bring with us and we want to hang on to them?
M - yes
Marg - but when you’re in the Caribbean the divisions are doesn’t seem to be that great, it’s when you come here. Cos when you’re in the Caribbean, everybody’s Caribbean as far as they’re concerned, whether they be Jamaican, St Lucian or whatever, there’s a mix but when you come here people still have to.
M - they call you small island

[focus group 1]

The way in which national distinctions were described varied between groups. The distinction between African and Caribbean was identified in 2 groups but in differing ways: for example in focus group 3, the Caribbean form of Blackness was represented as inferior to the African form and described in terms of having been tainted through slavery. In contrast, focus group 1 acknowledged that, for the older generation in particular, Africans tended to be looked down on by Caribbeans. Focus group 1 also acknowledged that the fact that the UK Black population was drawn from a number of different Caribbean countries could be a potential source of division.

Summary
The focus groups identified a number of different sources of division within the UK Black population, what is interesting is that the responsibility for intra-group division is attributed externally, either explicitly with references to what “they” will or will not allow, or through references to history which are an indirect or implicitly external attribution. In the quote from focus group 1, race as perhaps the most pernicious form of intra-group division, is attributed externally to the influence of slavery and in so doing absolves Black people from having to confront this issue. Similarly when discussing class differences as a source of disunity, initially the responsibility for disunity is placed on individual Black people, but the individualistic explanation is
contested and the alternative source of current racism is then offered repeatedly as an explanation for this individualistic behaviour. There is, therefore, in this group, a very strong perceived causal connection between the effects of the inter-categorical context and personal beliefs. On the one hand, this can be seen as absolving individuals from personal blame for their actions, but on the other it effectively blocks the possibility of Black people making personal moral choices. Focus group 4 also identified the behaviour of individual Black people as promoting a lack of unity.

The focus groups had no problems identifying dimensions of disunity, but the tendency towards external attributions meant that options for change by Black people were perceived as limited. The external attributions function to distance the speaker from the problems and most importantly from taking any responsibility for the problem and by extension any solution. This links to the representation of Black people as passive victims which was identified in the media analysis, and is discussed further in the next section.

5.5.5 Superordinate Theme 2 - Blackness and Britishness

In his 1897 essay “The conservation of races”: W E B du Bois addresses the racial/national identity issue for Black Americans by asking the question of whether it is possible to be both Negro and American and what are the practical, political and philosophical implications of different answers to the question. This is interesting both because it shows that the issue of race and nationality being perceived as incompatible is not new, but also because this is a question which is no longer asked about African Americans, the current debate about the African American label focuses on the use of the African prefix rather than the American element of the terminology as shown by Philogene’s research (1999). In the intervening 100 years the American national identity has largely become assumed.

The discussions in the focus groups illustrated the degree to which Britishness was a problematic category and concept for Black people. The issues of who defines Britishness, how and for what purpose were all raised showing that for these groups Britishness does not have the 'taken-for-granted' quality often associated with nationality eg Billig 1996. Both race and history feature prominently in the contested representation and these factors are then used to explain why White British people do not accept Black people as British. The sense of not being accepted is used in turn as a partial explanation for Black people not feeling British, though there is a sub-theme within not feeling British of a need for social justice and equity as pre-conditions for an improved sense of Britishness.
5.5.6 Sub-theme 1: who defines Britishness and for what purposes?

It was clear that Britishness was seen by the participants as defined by White British people who decided and defined group boundaries. There is a strong sense of externality to this discourse with repeated use of the word “they”.

M-but then again when they put the categories they put white, they put White English, they don’t put white British, they put White English, cos if you’re born in England, then you’re English then, if you’re born in Scotland you’re Scottish, if you’re born in Wales then you’re Welsh, then so you’re English

D - so what happens if they go over to the Caribbean, they drop, drop and then they come over here, what do they call themselves then?... Say a white woman goes over there she gives birth and the baby comes back and this and that

Y - they’d call the child British innit?

D - they’ll call it British innit, just cos she dropped it there, she aint gonna say well my child’s a Caribbean is she?

[focus group 1]

SC – I would disagree, I disagree because the forms we fill in don’t ask if you’re half Scottish or half Welsh.

WS – no what they do is ask if you’re White.

SC – yeah

WS – as far as they’re concerned, what’s the real form of difference between one form of White person and another form of White person. If you sit there in the pub for example and a White persons starts to say ‘oh these Scots they want this, they want that’, all this said with an English accent and then there’s someone with an equally English accent saying you people have been oppressing us for the past 300 years blah blah blah, he’s Scottish. He doesn’t have to have been born in Scotland, he may have been to Scotland twice in his life, it’s just up the road but he’s Scottish. It’s about how the English relate to other people. You don’t have to speak with a Scottish accent, to be born in Scotland, to even know Scotland to be Scottish. And yet what they’re trying to tell us is you weren’t born in Jamaica, you don’t know Jamaica.

[focus group 4]

WS – I would say that the British idea, they apply to us and we buy it. They apply it to other people, because you were born here, therefore you’re British. They don’t apply it to themselves. You know you get people saying they’re half Welsh, half Irish, were they born half in Wales and half in Ireland? They don’t apply that principle to themselves, they define themselves by their heritage, but they have a problem with us defining ourselves by our heritage. I’ve had people saying to me ‘where are you from?’ and I say Guyana and they say where were you born and I say Britain and then they say ‘well you’re British’. No and then they say yes you are like you know you’re telling me where I’m from? I can tell you you’re born in the Thames or some such ridiculous place? At the end of the say I think that it’s correct that people should define
themselves by their heritage, other people do it and they draw strength and sustenance from it and I think we have to do it too.

[focus group 4]

The repeated use of the term they, and the explicit references to how White people define different categories reinforce the external attributions attached to the perceptions of the process. There is little sense that the categories are open to contestation or that there would be a role for Black people in any potential contestation. This achieves two aims, on the one hand it excludes Black people from the process, but it also absolves them from any responsibility for the consequences of that process.

There is also a perceived agenda to the way in which Britishness is defined. Not only is Britishness defined externally, but there is a functionality to the way in which the White majority define Britishness and in particular the rules for inclusion and exclusion.

M - and there’s no such country as Britain in a sense of, you either English, Scottish, Welsh or Irish. So Black British is not, it’s just a new word to to explain Black people
D - I’m Caribbean
Y - so why don’t they say Black English then?
that’s right
M - but they will not give us the title English
Pam - as far as they’re concerned you can’t be Black and be English
-in unison- English is white
Marg - so when you get those forms, you’ll see white English, but you will not see white British, cos they don’t, that’s why when they have their flags all over the place, their red and white flags, they consider themselves white and English
M - if you have the Union Jack, there’s no Black in Union Jack right? So instead of using the Union Jack, they use the St George’s flag to represent I am W-H-I-T-E and there’s no other person in this country is English

[focus group 1]

P We all were, oh no you weren’t [to G] I was as well, D was L was, I mean again I always think of things maybe very on the face of things, I mean I do class myself as British rather than English because of the fact that I am you know my parents aren’t English, I always think of English people being White people actually.
LS but British people not?
P Well I think that British people are umm people that are in this country but are from all over, I mean I don’t know if you can understand that. It’s like British people are could be Scottish, could be Welsh, could be anywhere. We’ve, our parents have come over from the West Indies umm and are Jamaican, Trinidadian whatever, we are now second, first generation, so I class
myself more British than, I wouldn't class myself as English because though there are are Black people say well I am English. I know that's not quite what that's saying but I would say I'm more British than. I'm not English I would be British or obviously an Afro Caribbean as such, although even that I'm not necessarily, because my father's more Indian, so it's a bit of; we're a total mix really, but you know umm. I that article where it was saying that he's selling himself out and all this sort of thing, I don't think.

[focus group 3]

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I - ....you know Britishness doesn't show on any of us. My children were born here and being British, all they see when both of us walk down the street is two Black people, so at the end of the day... Britishness to me doesn't, because there's a thing that Britishness goes with Whiteness if you know what I mean

[focus group 2]

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It was clear that Britishness and, to a greater extent, Englishness was perceived as racially defined and inextricably associated with Whiteness. This racial definition was perceived as being aimed at excluding Black people from authentic Britishness and more specifically Englishness. It is notable that there is no representation of incompatible values or behaviours, both of which could be considered to be more permeable categories when compared with race.

The over-riding view expressed was that White British people saw Whiteness as an integral part of Britishness and Englishness and this meant that non-White people would not be accepted as British even if they desired that label. Focus group 4 emphasises the way in which the emphasis on race is seen as cutting off Black people from a potential source of strength with the rules of classification based on birthplace being applied differentially and to the detriment of the Black population. Focus group 1 echoes this sense that the options available for Black national definition are limited and inferior to those used by the White population for themselves.

5.5.7 Sub-theme 2: The result of the emphasis on race particularly is a representation of White British people not accepting Black people as British

The following quotes go on to illustrate the consequences of the race-based definition of Britishness:

R - you can, you can't, you can't be Black British because you're not accepted as as Black British are you?

[focus group 1]
I - I think it's partly that, that you do have to feel but you may feel that, but you're not made to feel that way, ... you try to umm, but you do need to feel that you're making a contribution and that you can actually do whatever it is that you want to do, if you're not made to feel that way then you're always on the outside, on the edge.

that's right
You're not fully accepted.

[focus group 2]

Marg - There’s racism in America but
M - you know where you stand
Marg - Exactly, if you go, if you go to represent American, be you Black, White Chinese or anything, you're American and you're representing your country
M - you’re classed as, what is it, what they call them?
Marg - American, African American, Italian Americans
Y - the last word is American
M - they know they are American, but they don’t call us, this Black British man has won this thing, they don’t say that, they don’t say that.
Marg - do they, you’re British when you win and a week later you’re something else, of Caribbean, of West Indian parents
M - West Indian parents, no matter if you’re born and you’re third generation British, you do not have that title
Marg - and if you manage to commit a crime, well you’re definitely not British, you’re. They’ll definitely find out what island your parents are from
M - so that’s why I’m so glad they lost the World Cup, I was one not cheering for them. I rather the French, the German, the Italian [hitting the table after each nationality for emphasis] beat them

[focus group 1]

The quote from focus group 1 illustrates not only the perception that it is the White population which defines the inclusion criteria for Britishness, but also how those rules can be changed. This is contrasted with the perceived consistency of the American hyphenated labels. There is a sense of powerlessness for Black people not only in terms of the rules which have been set, but in terms of being powerless to influence the criteria for those rules. This has clear implications for the possibility of a sense of Britishness. One obstacle is the sense that the criteria for identifying as British are set unilaterally and are not available for negotiation, this gives rise to a perception that there is a hidden agenda at work designed to benefit the White majority.

There is a limited incentive to identify as British if at any point the rules can be changed to effect a re-exclusion. In contrast in America, racism is acknowledged but it is not seen as being associated with the national label which flows from a baseline of acceptance of the common nationality. This is compared with the UK where racism is perceived to inform the race-based process of national classification. Thus the racial nature of the construction of Britishness is represented as having a number of functions: it is used by White people to exclude Black people
from the national category or to offer them an inferior version; it is used by White people to bolster their own sense of national identity at the same time as denying that benefit to Black people; and it limits the options for those Black people who might wish to identify as British.

5.5.8 Sub-theme 3: Black people not feeling British.

This sub-theme also has an associated strand about the need for social justice and equity as preconditions for an improved sense of Britishness.

**R** - I am born British, but I don’t see myself as British

**R** - Cos I don’t, I don’t feel Black British, I may be Black British but

[focus group 1]

**G** For me, I think I’m a, if you ask me what’s my nationality I say I’m British a British citizen, but ethnic origin I’d say is African not Jamaican

and

**G** I never really talk about being British, it’s only like if I’m filling in a form the I like have to say my nationality

**P** Me too

**G** I would never ever say I was British because I don’t feel British, to be British is to go out there and have the same rights as my White counterparts

[focus group 3]

**LS** – so relating to the American comparison, we have obviously in recent years we’ve had the growth of the African American and people have said that’s an indication of integration and stuff. To what extent to you think that Black people here regard themselves as British?

[long pause]

**AC** – only in terms of passport

[focus group 4]

**H** - wouldn’t say regret, it’s good to travel to learn something, but then the treatment after make me more than regret. If I’d been back there, I’d be better off or something because people who live there have their own home have everything and I have nothing here.

**LS** - Does anybody else feel you know that they made, that if they had their time again that they wouldn’t make the decision to come to this country?

**FV1** - No

**FV3** - No I wouldn’t say so, this country done a lot for people

[general agreement]

**LS** - what sort of things are you thinking of when you say that the country’s done a lot?
FV3 - yeah well, most of us in the West Indies, we didn’t have a job. You could live but not as good as when you come and work here you know.
LS - so mostly in sort of financial terms, that sort of thing
FV3 - financial, financial
LS - and people feel, that they would agree with that - yeah?
[general agreement]
FV3 - yeah, financially we’re better off.
LS - what about in terms of feeling that you belong or feeling at home or
FV3 - No Black people feel that they belong here, I don’t think so
[focus group 2]

H - there’s discrimination even in jobs, if a Black man phone up for a job and he’s talking as a West Indian or whatever, they’ll say ‘oh the job just gone’ and then another White person phone up and they say ‘oh come along and have an interview’. I mean that is very bad is it? So with that all that going on up to now you see and the poor young people leaving school and there’s no future for them, there’s no jobs for them ..... 

The quotes from focus groups 1 and 3 show the distinction drawn between a technical and an emotional sense of British nationality. It is interesting that focus group 2 consisted of older people who had chosen to emigrate to the UK some years ago and their comments reflect how they had effectively traded material benefits for any sense of national belonging which they might have subsequently experienced in their country of origin. This trade-off is not available to subsequent generations which meant that disadvantage and discrimination became obstacles to Britishness in a different way.

5.5.9 Contradictions in content or consistency in process?

In this section, I highlight a number of the quotes discussed above and look at the issues raised in more detail. In the themes identified above, each of the quotes is used as evidence to support the different reasons which the participants offer to explain the perceived conflict between Blackness and Britishness. This section explores any perceived inconsistency between the first two sub-themes.

SC – I would disagree, I disagree because the forms we fill in don’t ask if you’re half Scottish or half Welsh.

WS – no what they do is ask if you’re White.

SC – yeah

WS – as far as they’re concerned, what’s the real form of difference between one form of White person and another form of White person. If you sit there in the pub for example and a White persons starts to say ‘oh these Scots they want this, they want that’, all this said with an English accent and then there’s someone with an equally English accent saying you people have been
oppressing us for the past 300 years blah blah blah, he's Scottish. He doesn't have to have been born in Scotland, he may have been to Scotland twice in his life, it's just up the road but he's Scottish. It's about how the English relate to other people. You don't have to speak with a Scottish accent, to be born in Scotland, to even know Scotland to be Scottish. And yet what they're trying to tell us is you weren't born in Jamaica, you don't know Jamaica.

[focus group 4]

WS – I would say that the British idea, they apply to us and we buy it. They apply it to other people, because you were born here, therefore you’re British. They don’t apply it to themselves. You know you get people saying they’re half Welsh, half Irish, were they born half in Wales and half in Ireland? They don’t apply that principle to themselves, they define themselves by their heritage, but they have a problem with us defining ourselves by our heritage. I’ve had people saying to me ‘where are you from?’ and I say Guyana and they say where were you born and I say Britain and then they say ‘well you’re British’. No and then they say yes you are like you know you’re telling me where I’m from? I can tell you you’re born in the Thames or some such ridiculous place? At the end of the say I think that it’s correct that people should define themselves by their heritage, other people do it and they draw strength and sustenance from it and I think we have to do it too.

[focus group 4]

M - but then again when they put the categories they put white, they put White English, they don't put white British, they put White English, cos if you're born in England, then you're English then, if you're born in Scotland you're Scottish, if you're born in Wales then you're Welsh, then so you're English

D - so what happens if they go over to the Caribbean, they drop, drop and then they come over here, what do they call themselves then?...Say a white woman goes over there she gives birth and the baby comes back and this and that

Y - they'd call the child British innit?

D - they'll call it British innit, just cos she dropped it there, she aint gonna say well my child's a Caribbean is she?

[focus group 1]

R - you can, you can't, you can't be Black British because you're not accepted as as Black British are you?

[focus group 1]

I - I think it's partly that, that you do have to feel but you may feel that, but you're not made to feel that way, .... you try to umm, but you do need to feel that you're making a contribution and that you can actually do whatever it is that you want to do, if you're not made to feel that way then you're always on the outside, on the edge.

that's right

You're not fully accepted.

[focus group 2]
It could be argued that in the somewhat contradictory nature of the quotes above the participants are grappling with an ideological dilemma (Billig et al, 1988) in the form of uncertainty about the definition of Britishness. In focus groups 1 and 4 the participants argue that Black people in Britain are encouraged by the White majority to identify as British through birthplace in a way that the White majority do not use for themselves. In a seeming contrast, the next quote from focus group 1 and that from focus group 2 puts the emphasis on White people not accepting Black people as British.

However, I would argue that what this illustrates is the exact opposite of an ideological dilemma because of the emphasis which the participants put on the absence of choice which they perceive as available to them. Choice is fundamental to the concept of dilemmatic thinking.

Billig et al, note that one of the ways in which dilemmatic thinking is revealed is through the use of the 'on the one hand, on the other hand' semantic formulations. There is no evidence of that in these quotes.

In this case the same information is being interpreted in differing ways but the theme which underlies the different interpretations is the same:

First, the participants see the rules for the definition of inclusion in the category British as being set externally by the White majority.

Second, the rules for Black British people are seen as being different from those for White British people.

Third, the rules are perceived as malleable according to the aims which the White majority seek to achieve in any given instance.

Therefore, what might appear to be evidence of contradictions in the content of the discourse can be seen as consistency in terms of the processes which are used by the participants to discuss and justify that content.

5.5.10 Summary

It is important to consider the basis of the representation of the category Britishness in order to understand the basis for any contestation. It is possible to construct Britishness as a cultural, racial/ethnic or civic category or a subjective emotional category associated with feelings of belonging. These constructions, while not being mutually exclusive, are likely to have different membership implications. While some aspects of mainstream British culture came in for criticism, there was no evidence that Black culture was seen as incompatible with life in the UK, as for
example, has been argued about the belief systems associated with Islam for those of South Asian descent. The emotional element of national identity appeared to be missing from the construction, it is possible that this is associated with problems of acceptance, as it would seem that feeling accepted is a necessarily prior state to feeling that one belongs

The reasons offered by members of the focus groups for the perceived incompatibility between Blackness and Britishness are attributed externally and illustrate what Du Bois described as double consciousness “this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others”. Britishness was constructed based on the absence of the validity of the labels English or British when applied to Black people for the White majority. They reside within the White majority’s construction of Britishness and Englishness as racially inscribed and intimately associated with Whiteness and following from that a lack of acceptance by White British people of Black people as British. It is these two factors which then lead to a lack of feeling of Britishness in Black people rather than anything within Blackness itself which might be considered to be the source of the incompatibility.

5.6 Supercordinate theme Conclusions

There are two common themes in the way in which both Blackness and Britishness were discussed, in both the importance of the inter-categorical context and the resulting external positioning of power are in evidence.

It is White people who define the nature of Britishness and whether Black people are to be included or excluded, and Black people’s sense of both Blackness and Britishness is constructed primarily in response to this. Perhaps more fundamentally the very nature of what it is to be Black is discussed in ways which are external to the group, as a consequence of history, discrimination or other aspects of the inter-group context rather than in terms of the requirements of the group’s moral code or internal values. To quote from “The new Negro” by Alain Locke:

‘Hitherto, it must be admitted that American Negroes have been a race more in name than in fact, or to be exact, more in sentiment than in experience. The chief bond between them has been that of a common condition rather than a common consciousness; a problem in common rather than a life in common.’

The connection between these two main themes is the dominance of the inter-categorical context in the ways in which Blackness is represented and the processes by which Blackness is constructed. This dominance then impacts on how the relationship between Blackness and Britishness is represented and conceptualised. If it is the historical connection with the 'other' which 'makes us
what we are', then this understanding of the racial self informs the relationship with the 'other' in a circular fashion through a pattern of reactive responses.
5.7 Overview of Themes 3 - 5

Theme 3 - The lack of internalisation of the social representation of the group

This theme is an exploration of the degree to which the predominantly negative majority representation of the group has been accepted by members of the group and the consequences for personal esteem.

Theme 4 - The role of the past in constructing the group's present

This examines the way in which the past is constructed in relation to the present. It looks at which historical eras are most commonly used and in which ways. It aims to discover which social memory processes are in operation and the consequences for group identity.

Theme 5 - Cultural heritage issues

This theme is related to the issues of cultural distinctiveness and uniqueness; the question of continuity between past and the content of the group's cultural heritage. It also looks at group cohesiveness and group esteem and efficacy.

5.7.1 Theme 3 - The lack of internalisation of the social representation of the group

There was no evidence from the focus groups that the Black population had internalised the predominantly negative majority representation of their group. This is an important finding because of the Meadian assumptions behind many empirical studies which assume that when a group occupies a subordinate social position and is perceived and represented negatively within society that this is then internalised by individual members of this group and results in group self-hatred (e.g. Lewin 1948) and/or individual low self-esteem. It is also one of the guiding principles behind Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978).

This orientation has contributed to a high volume of research on the self-esteem of racial and ethnic minority groups (e.g. Porter & Washington's review 1979), yet the many studies on self-esteem show no conclusive evidence that minority groups passively accept and internalise the dominant representation of their group and the evidence from the focus groups supports this. Porter & Washington (1979) reviewed literature specifically on Black identity (mainly in the USA) and self-esteem and the relationship between racial and personal esteem. They found that comparisons of self-esteem between Black and white subjects varied depending on which component of self-esteem was being measured, so for example, levels of general self-regard were similar, but Black subjects had lower levels of personal efficacy. Porter & Washington were
unable to determine the most useful approach to the issue because of incomparable methodologies and poor operationalisation of key concepts in the literature which they reviewed. Their attempts at comparison may have been confounded by looking at empirical work on both children and adults within the same frame, not only because of the very different techniques used in studying the two groups but also because high self-esteem in an egocentric pre-schooler is likely to be very different from that in a middle-aged professional.

Eleven of the seventy articles included in Phinney’s review (1990) considered the relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem. The results of these studies were conflicting and did not show a simple causal relationship between the two constructs in either direction. Phinney (1992) found a correlation between high ethnic identity and high self-esteem for visible minorities but not for white ethnic minorities, interestingly this relationship resurfaced for white subjects when they were a racial minority.

Similarly, Cross (1985) reviewed studies of self-esteem correlated with race and found equal levels of self-esteem in more than half of the studies reviewed. The next highest percentage showed Black people’s self-esteem to be higher.

Positive collective self-concept

The most obvious evidence for the lack of an internalised negative self-concept is in the positive ways in which the participants spoke about themselves at both an individual and collective level. There was no evidence of collective or individual low self-esteem which might have resulted from a negatively evaluated majority representation.

M - yes you could have an easy life and be white but ...you know. I don’t know any other life but I should say it’s much more interesting, we have...
D - I’m glad I’m Black
LS - Why’s it interesting?
D - White life’s boring
M - yeah, they don’t have any aspirations
D - dead stock

[focus group 1]

SC – they don’t want us to stay
AC – I think they do want us to stay because there’s silly people like me and you who work all the hours that God sends to make them look good, to keep their turnover high you know so they do want us to stay because they don’t want to work that hard

[focus group 4]
These quotes are illustrations of the lack of negative group self-concept. The first argues that the authors of the negative representation have little to be proud of themselves rather than by drawing on specific positive qualities within ‘Blackness’ for the rebuttal. This further exemplifies the importance of the inter-group context. The second challenges a very specific aspect of the representation – Black people as lazy (this mainstream representation is also discussed in the media analysis) – and suggests that not only is the opposite true, but also that this positive trait is used to exploit Black people. It also shows how the inter-group representation may have an effect on individuals by encouraging a Black person to work hard to prove that they are not lazy or the same as the stereotype.

AC –.... I lived like 3 minutes from my office and so rather than go in late as West Indians we yeah usually do – yeah, I was on Bajan time, I was turning in at 8 o'clock and leave at ten or eleven o'clock at night

[focus group 4]

5.7.2 Discussion

Thus there was no evidence from the focus groups that the negative majority representation of Black people was accepted and there was also no evidence of any negative effect on personal self-esteem. The key issue seemed to be the need to negotiate this representation on an individual basis and the consequences which this had for behaviour. These findings challenge those theoretical perspectives based on the “Looking Glass Self” paradigm which assumes that a socially disadvantaged group necessarily internalises its negative representation. The quotes above show clearly that the subjects of the negative stereotype are well aware of the stereotype and the details of its content but also that there is no direct relationship between the social representation and the personal self-concept. A similar social phenomenon was identified by Finlay & Lyons (2000) with respect to people with learning difficulties. The authors found that the learning disabled label was not a salient category despite an awareness of their own category membership.

If these quotes support any theoretical orientation, it is by providing a macro example of the micro processes associated with the stereotype threat model associated with Claude Steele. Steele et al (1995, 1997) argue that members of particular groups are positively and negatively stereotyped in particular achievement domains. This results in the stereotype threat phenomenon which is referred to as “the discomfort which targets feel when they are at risk of fulfilling a negative stereotype about their group”. This confirmation of the stereotype applies both to the perspective of others (potential stereotypers) and to themselves. Steele et al argue that this threat
undermines academic achievement (in African Americans) by interfering with performance on mental tasks associated with a given domain and over a period of time prompts students to protect their self-esteem by disengaging from the threatened domain. They found a similar pattern for females in the domain of mathematics.

There are three elements to the stereotype threat model:

1 – that negative stereotypes threaten self-esteem. The stereotype is conceptualised as a situational pressure rather than something which is accepted by the target. It is sufficient for the target to be aware that the stereotype exists. It is likely to have its strongest effect on people who are invested or identified in/with the domain which is stereotyped ie the more a person cares about being good at something, the greater will be the distress at stereotypes which allege a lack of ability as a function of group membership.

2 – the fear of poor performance can spoil performance on difficult cognitive tasks by diverting attention or by prompting a self-protective withdrawal of effort (test-anxiety).

3- disidentification which can be said to occur when one defines or redefines the self-concept such that the threatened domain is no longer/not used as a basis of self-evaluation. They emphasise that disengagement is different from devaluation in which people no longer see a domain as important.

Steele’s model clearly focuses on the personal mental processes associated with managing or failing to manage stereotype threat and the vast majority of his empirical investigations and interventions have been with US college students in the academic domain. The focus group evidence gives a glimpse into how stereotype threat may operate in older people in other domains.

The issue of whether or not Black people have internalised their negative mainstream representation is important because of its potential effect on the construction of Blackness. If, as the looking glass self paradigm suggests, the mainstream view is accepted then this would be an important issue to address as part of this research. However, as this appears not to be the case it eliminates one possible content source for the construction of Blackness and supports the research orientation which involves looking at how Black people represent and construct Blackness rather than how the majority representation affects Black people.
5.7.3 Theme 4 - The role of the past

The group's past and inter-categorical relationships from the past were discussed spontaneously as part of the construction of "Blackness" and were also used to explain the incompatibility with being British.

There were three main ways in which the past was represented, on a personal level it was seen as a baseline which allowed favourable comparisons for individual achievement (discontinuity). For the group it was represented as having a strong effect on identity which was both positive and negative. For both individuals and the group, there was also a strong sense of negative continuity between past and present.

One of the reasons for the importance of the past in the construction of 'Blackness' could be the genesis of the group in slavery. Thus for Black people of Caribbean origin, there is limited historical uniqueness available in the more recent past. The pre-slave era is 'shared' with the non-slave descendants of Black Africans and the post-slave era is shared with White British people as part of a past in which Black and White co-exist in an unequal relationship offering limited opportunities for Black people to find positive and distinctive group esteem in the past.

Personal comparison with past

The personal level of analysis produced a more positive perspective with one participant choosing her parents as the comparison group and acknowledging her personal achievements as superior when compared with their lives. The older generation as exemplified by focus group 2 made the same comparison using their own experience as the comparator.

SC – I don't want to sound vain or anything, but when I think about what my family went through and how we lived when my parents were first married things like that and where I've got to and what I've achieved I think I don't think I've done too badly myself. But obviously I still feel frustrated that what I have done I should have been rewarded for or more than I have

[focus group 4]

and

LS - So would you regret coming here?
H - wouldn't say regret, it's good to travel to learn something, but then the treatment after make me more than regret. If I'd been back there, I'd be better off or something because people who live there have their own home have everything and I have nothing here.
LS - Does anybody else feel you know that they made, that if they had their time again that they wouldn't make the decision to come to this country?
FV1 - No
FV3 - No I wouldn't say so, this country done a lot for people
[general agreement]
LS - what sort of things are you thinking of when you say that the country's done a lot?
FV3 - yeah well, most of us in the West Indies, we didn't have a job. You could live but not as good as when you come and work here you know.
LS - so mostly in sort of financial terms, that sort of thing
FV3 - financial, financial
LS - and people feel, that they would agree with that - yeah?
[general agreement]
FV3 - yeah, financially we're better off.

Nostalgia

In the extract below, the memory of racism is seen as a unifying experience amongst different age groups, despite the speaker's attempt to privilege her experience in a particular historical period. Featherstone (2003) argues that 'successive generations have invested in a form of nostalgia in which the past is viewed as the epitome of coherence and order, something which was more simple and emotionally fulfilling, with more direct and integrated relationships.' The quotes below illustrate the perception that social relationships were more straightforward in the past, here in the sense that racism was less covert but also show how nostalgia is also present in the process of remembering negative events as well as positive.

M - you all don't know prejudice, I remember umm
younger members in unison - we do [laughing]
you don't, you don't, I'm going back very far, when Metal Box was at Tower Bridge Road, they used to carry all the Black people in the back of a furniture van, they used to pick them up at a rendezvous point at Brixton and bring them in there and I remember I went for a job there in the morning and you know I was quite well-dressed and the woman the way she spoke to me, I said you think I'm one of those cattles you bring on that van, I am not, so you can take your job, I want my money and I used to do that all the time right

M - Remember I'm a generation from the 50s, 60s 70s and 80s and the 90s, so I know what I'm feeling coming from that to now and things has not changed, they're all underneath the surface right, I remember one day I rang up for a job, when I rang for the job I spoke to the woman on the phone and when she saw my face it was a different story so I couldn't have the job at the front anymore, I had to go at the back, so I told her where to stick it and I never went to the job.

M - but then how many people has that got, we've got that's what I'm saying we've got this masses of experience you know and so then when they expect us to cheer the English football,
the British football team or the English football team, all those experiences is there in our head you know and it's coming forward and we think there's no way I'm going to do that

[focus group 1]

5.7.4 Summary

The focus group interview schedule did not include any direct questions about the past so the importance of the past in explaining other issues was something which came directly from the participants.

The past is represented as having a direct influence on how Blackness is constructed in the present and also on behaviour in both positive and negative ways. The recognition of negative continuity between past and present is suggested as a cause of a lack of British feeling. A distinction is drawn to some extent between a long-term negative continuity and a more recent discontinuity between generations at an individual level, though the negativity of the past is also used as a source of social cohesion.

Wright (1985) in defining everyday historical consciousness points out that "Stories told about the past are judged and shaped by their relevance to the present - they make sense, above all in terms of their endings. Stories need to be plausible rather than accurate and they are used to make sense of the world - to thematise events." This is well illustrated when M (in the final extract from focus group 1) explicitly attributes the impossibility of Black people feeling loyalty to Britain to past experiences of racism. Thus the past is used to perform a different social function depending on whether it is the distant or recent past which is being invoked; whether it is being interpreted from a personal or a collective perspective and depending on which comparative dimensions are being used.

It is also significant that negative aspects of the past are called upon as unifiers and that nostalgia is possible even in the absence of positive content.

I argued in chapter 1 that the distinctive history of African Caribbeans meant that particular attention had to be paid to history and this justified the use of a social memories approach. The importance which the participants spontaneously place on the past for explaining the present supports the need for a separate research question focused on the influence of the past and the need to explore this in more depth.
5.7.5 Theme 5 - Cultural heritage issues

The issue of the Black group as a racial rather than an ethnic group was discussed in the introduction. This section looks at what might be termed the "ethnicity" of the group, i.e., the extent to which group members perceive themselves as having a distinctive, self-contained culture, its origins (including temporal location) and whether and how it is perceived as a source of support.

Discussion of this theme is informed by Social Memory Theory (Lyons 1996) and accordingly particular attention is paid to the identity principles of distinctiveness, continuity, cohesion, esteem and efficacy. It is argued that this perspective is particularly appropriate given the emphasis and importance placed on the past in constructing the group as discussed above. Social memory theory argues that groups are likely to sustain memories and reconstruct them in such a way as to show their continuity - this guides memory when explaining current group identity with consistent constructions of the past, collective self-esteem by claiming success as properly belonging to the group, distinctiveness by remembering and ritualising uniqueness, efficacy through remembering examples of victories (sporting or military) and cohesion by remembering events which emphasise group unity over division.

Social memory theory hypothesises that when a group's identity is threatened by challenges to its values and what it stands for then the continuity and cohesiveness principles will dominate and there will be an emphasis on the past and an entrenchment of identities. When the group's identity is threatened in terms of its recognition of its existence by others, then the distinctiveness principle will dominate because what makes a group distinct is likely to provide the rules of inclusion and exclusion for the group. When there is a need to empower the group, the efficacy principle will dominate. These hypotheses are considered in relation to the focus group evidence.

5.7.6 Sub-theme: Continuity

Social memory theory hypothesises that continuity and cohesion will be important when a group's identity is threatened by challenges to its values and there will be an emphasis on the past and an entrenchment of identities. It is debatable the extent to which it could be claimed that the threat to the UK Black population takes the form of a threat to its values, particularly when the values which are identified as most relevant to the Black population stemmed from the inter-categorical context. Despite this, as discussed above, there was considerable emphasis on the past and an identification of negative continuity between past and present.
The identification of continuity was seen as having limited utility and indeed in having negative consequences. For example, continuity with the more recent past tended to be discussed in terms of family tradition and was considered problematic in the sense that thinking about issues in the same way as in the past was not necessarily suitable for the current environment and participants identified a need for discontinuity with negative behaviours.

M - the only way it'll stop is when you start to learn about your history and you start to have some consciousness about yourself and about where you are in the world and that's when you stop. But then a lot of people, if you tell people about Black history, a lot of people will want

M - stop to know, but a lot of older people will say things like 'well I'm not Black, I'm not African, I'm not' you know and they're the ones. And they're grandparents aren't they, they're the children's

M - that brought us up grandparents, and if your grandparents're saying you know, saying those things what can, the parents don't have much of a chance.

LS - so it's like a toss-up between saying disrespect your grandparents or..?

M - exactly and if you bring too much Black history to your grandparents, they think you're gone 'oh that boy's gone' and then they'll put locks in their hair, it's like you've reached the devil's own

M - and Africans have been wearing locks in their hair for thousands of years

M - they don't want to hear that

[focus group 1]

The processes involved in continuity seem to be somewhat different from those suggested by social memory theory. The focus group evidence (particularly that cited in the section on the past) suggests that the current group identity is explained and constructed consistent with constructions of the past and the content of that past is primarily negative. If, as argued earlier, the values associated with Blackness are strongly associated with the constraints of the inter-categorical context, then threats which challenge values and should, therefore, stimulate an emphasis on continuity with the past are likely to take on a somewhat different flavour.

5.7.7 Perceptions of the dynamics of change

There were mixed views about the degree to which there would be change for Black people in the future, but the overall prognosis was negative. Optimism was expressed on a personal rather
than a group level. Change was always discussed in terms of the Black-White inter-group context rather than in terms of internal group changes or any other perspective.

**Individual optimism mixed with group pessimism.**

**AC** – I'm probably going to contradict everything you're going to discuss here tonight. I'm optimistic for me, my individual basis because I can control what I do, I'm gonna keep fighting, keep pushing and working hard. I fight, but I can't say that I am going to fight for all of the Black community until I see everyone pulling together you know and I don't see that. It's not in the community, or when there's a knock-back and it just fizzles out, so what can you do? You as an individual can't just give up, you've got to just fight for yourself.

[focus group 4]

This distinction was also to be found in terms of perceptions of how Black people were treated:

**G** You must think I'm being really negative but

**LS** No

**P** No

**G** I don't, I don't ever I don't think Black people will ever be treated as equal in this country ever.

**P** No I don't, I don't I do disagree with that

**G** I can't see it

**P** No listen. As a whole - no, but there are a lot of people that do treat you as equal you know.

[focus group 3]

Moghaddam (1998) identified a tendency for minority group members to perceive a higher level of discrimination directed at their group as a whole than at themselves personally. The focus group data provides an example of this applying in terms of a perception of the future as well as the present. However, the caveat to this interpretation is that these speakers were in a better position than the under-achievement statistics (shown in appendix 1) for the Black population might suggest and, therefore, what Moghaddam would describe in terms of "personal-group discrimination discrepancy" is merely an accurate reflection of their socio-economic position relative to other Black people.
Positive views

There were some positive views expressed and in focus group 4, this was allied to a belief that it was up to Black people to effect change.

LS – So people aren’t generally very optimistic about the future?

SJ – I’ve got optimistic tendencies because that’s what keeps me going
And
SJ – But I think that at the same time it’s our job, well not our job, but it’s up to us to change things.

AC – yes we have to carry on fighting, but in the next five years it’s not going to change significantly for us, so that I can go in and file charges and walk out feel that it will be justice.

[focus group 4]

The older people in focus group 2 based their optimism on the basis of comparison with the past. Using the example of the Stephen Lawrence case, they explained how they saw things having changed over the past ten years.

FV - ten years ago, would you believe what happened to that boy they killed, you see

all - Stephen Lawrence

if they had killed him, you would get the publicity that he get now?
I - No that’s what I’m saying, but you still have to stop it,

FV - things are changing
I - It is changing, but what I’m saying is it’s still there, but it’s more outspoken, you’ve got Black press now, you’ve got, it’s not covered up anymore
FV - it's the determination of Stephen mum
FV - and father
they didn’t take it lying down, they wouldn’t get the publicity that they did. Look what they did to your son and my son and we just said there’s nothing we can do.
FV - It was going on, all of a sudden he just went quiet.
FV - well it’s not over yet is it?

[focus group 2]

However the perception of change expressed in this group was allied to a sense of fatalism.

LS - what sort of things are you thinking of?
I - Everything, whether it’s discrimination or, discrimination is not something you can get rid of although how you try to educate people whatever, they still have their beliefs and you know it’s just there. But you just have to learn to live with certain things and live with it as best as possible, I mean I don’t, people discriminated whether it’s sort of racial grounds or other you know, discrimination is
always there, I mean other people get discriminated on whether they're blonde hair or blue eyes whatever, so that will always be there, FV - tall or short
exactly everything, you just have to learn to cope with it, I think that's one of the strategies

[focus group 2]

Negative Views

Others saw little possibility for change in the near future. There was a strong belief in focus group 4 that change, when it did occur, would do so on White terms and timetable. This was exemplified at a collective group level by the Stephen Lawrence enquiry in that issues affecting Black people were only taken seriously when supported by a White "champion". This also illustrates a view that there is no possibility of Black people having any serious degree of power over their own future.

WS – but before that, I have been at public meetings where Paul Condon has been there and he has been told that there is institutional racism in your police force and he refused to accept it and the point is, the point is that what he is effectively saying is then is he'll take it from Macpherson. When a situation is so extreme that no person White or Black can deny the reality and he's still not going to take it from ordinary Black people, but he'll take it from Macpherson. What does Macpherson know about institutional racism? but he's the one he'll take it from and I think that pretty much sums up the British people's attitude towards Black people. You say that they're less blatant than they used to be, but that's how they operate, that's how they operate.

[focus group 4]

References in focus group 1 to what will be accepted by "the White man" suggest that experiences of racism have placed strong limits on positive views of the future and also suggest low beliefs about the current and future efficacy of Black people both as individuals and as a group. There were expressions of disbelief about particular elements of change (eg Black Prime Minister) which support the hypothesis that thinking about the future in this country is problematic. Suggestions for pro-active change by the youngest member of the group (Y) were dismissed out-of-hand. Discussion about the future seemed to become more comfortable when it was placed at such a chronological distance such that no one around the table was likely to be living. This can be interpreted as a way of distancing oneself in at both the individual and group level from any participation or responsibility for the future.

M - I'm thinking 50 years, I am thinking 50 years, I am thinking of my grandchildren, not that generation, I am thinking of my grandchildren children's generation, that's what I'm thinking.
M - yeah, that's what I'm saying
M - that is the timespan you need and you need Africa has to be reborn again, you understand what I'm saying, Africa has to be reborn again so that they have a more united

[focus group 1]
M - But I think sometimes they think, 'oh we'll have that one, she's, we can control her, we won't have this one cos he's too radical, we'll vote for her, we'll have her cos she's not saying anything, or we'll have him cos he's not saying anything.'

M - cos the White man doesn't want anybody radical in his party

Y - but even if yeah, what would be a good idea is to be really quiet and get elected and then start getting radical once you've been elected.

M - they'll soon have you out once it comes

M - they soon have you out

Y - at least you did something you know

[focus group 1]

5.7.8 Summary

It was notable that the Stephen Lawrence case was used as a motif for discussing the issue of change.

The tension between whether the responsibility for effecting change was internal or external to the Black group was an overall theme, and was well illustrated by the unresolved debate in focus group 3:

P  but it's like the situation with Black people going into the forces, the police force as opposed to the, well any force really. A lot of Black people won't go in because they're scared what their friends are gonna say and whatever, so therefore, people go on about the the police force being, this is very basic you know this is not, there's nothing deep in this, people being, the Black, the police force being racist, now if more Black people don't go into the forces then umm it will stay that way, but Black people don't like the brothers and sister as such going into the forces - why? Because they think that they're selling them out. But they've got to get in there G so that everybody will be the same.

G  I agree, I agree Black people should join the police force, but not the way the police force is at the moment.

P  well they're trying I think, I think bit by bit, I mean if we can hopefully a lot more black people go in together as opposed

G  umm I think [laughing], I just feel that the answer isn't to have hundreds and hundreds of Black people joining the police force if they're just going to be the ordinary little officers, bobby on the beat yeah. Black people need to go into the the police force and to be in a position of power, where they can influence change umm you know.
well that's fine but you have to, people have to go in there to try and work themselves, it's like any job

but it's not happening though, they're not letting them, they're not promoting them

Lyons (1996) argues that the construction of the past is used to determine aspirations for the future. In the quotes above it would seem that the recent past is constructed in a variety of ways to constrain perceptions of options for change in the future. This again reflects the perceived strength of the influence of the inter-categorical context as opposed to a sense of collective self. Perceptions of both individual and collective success were discussed in terms of the external constraints of endemic racism despite references to positive changes and examples of personal achievement. In this way, the construction of the category as a product of its inter-categorical relations impacts on the representations of the past to produce an individually rather than collectively oriented representation of the present and a passive and essentially powerless vision of the future.

This superordinate theme and its associated sub-themes illustrate the distinctive processes used in the construction of Blackness in the UK, but they also show how constructions of the past influence not only the way in which the category is perceived, but the practical real-life limits placed on perceptions of the present and the future.

5.7.9 Sub-theme: Distinctiveness

Social Memory Theory holds that the distinctiveness principle should be important when the group's identity is threatened in terms of its recognition of its existence by others. An emphasis on distinctiveness will then be functional because it will provide the rules of inclusion and exclusion for the group. Distinctiveness, for this population has another dimension in that it is allied to the visible distinctiveness of the group (through skin colour which provide the rules of inclusion) and the negative representations of the group in the wider society. Thus the rules for inclusion and exclusion are clear and have been set externally so distinctiveness is unlikely to be threatened in the way in which the theory suggests. This might explain why there was little discussion of the distinctiveness of the group. The quotation below describes an aspect of cultural distinctiveness as an aspiration or intention.

I think we should do more of it. I'm going to do more West Indian cooking and celebrate what we are
SJ — That’s another thing, I’ve got this thing of trying to get more people to remember food that’s cooked because. Who sits down around the Sunday table and has a proper meal? Nobody. You walk down the high street and all the Black people are in McDonalds or Kentucky Fried Chicken. Nobody takes the time to cook and to sit down and eat a meal and then talk about life even on just one day.

[focus group 4]

To the extent that examples of difference or distinctiveness were offered it tended to be in terms of within the category Black rather than to exemplify ways in which Blackness differed from other categories. The intra-group differences of class, race and nationality and their problematic implications are discussed elsewhere.

5.7.10 Sub-theme: Collective esteem

Social memory theory hypothesises that collective esteem will be boosted by claiming positive experiences from the past. Issues relating to group esteem are primarily covered in the section dealing with the past. This is problematic when, as identified in discussion of the continuity principle, the past is seen as having a predominantly negative content. Indeed when focus group 1 were asked to describe good things about Black people the initial response was one of laughing incredulity. The extract from the introduction to focus group 4 illustrates a similar constraint on accessing examples of collective esteem which were not located in the past.

LS — when I first suggested this to S, I actually put down on paper what I had in mind which was that we would actually sit down and discuss the trials, tribulations, and triumphs about being Black in 1999 in the UK and S rang me up and she said “oh well I can talk about the trials and tribulations, but not the triumphs”. Do people not think that they’ve got triumphs to talk about?

[focus group 4]

However, as I left focus group 2, one of the women commented that she felt that the Caribbean community had contributed a lot to the UK over the past 50 years, particularly in terms of transport and services as she put it “there would be no underground without us”. The majority of positive comments were at an individual rather than collective level.
AC – triumphs? Oh yeah umm I'm quite happy with what I do, I'm in a situation now where I don't fear what my next job is going to be. If my boss was to come along tomorrow and say to me 'well AC, sorry we've got to cut back the team and you're the one to go' I know that I've built up a network of people and I make a call I could be in a job in 48 hours or within the same day, so that's something that I've had to work really hard to do myself. But yeah I feel pretty good. I feel comfortable with what I've achieved so far.

[focus group 4]

It is possible that in the absence of a strong positive collective representation of Blackness, individuals are forced to use the personal as the source of positive feedback. Crocker et al (1994) have suggested that this may be a strategy used to cope with stigma through separating collective negative judgements from one's image of oneself. If so, this strategy seems to create its own different set of problems as illustrated by the earlier discussion about how individual success could be a source of disunity.

5.7.11 Sub-theme: Efficacy

Social memory theory hypothesises that where there is a need for a group to be empowered then the efficacy principle will dominate. As explained in the introduction, in terms of social power, status and position, Black people of Caribbean descent would seem to be in need of empowerment in the UK context and we would expect to see references to past efficacy. There was some evidence of this in terms of the heritage of hard work mentioned in focus group 4.

SJ – Well I've been thinking about what you said about our heritage and stuff and I think a lot of it is going right back, depending on how far back you want to go but umm a lot of our heritage from Africa has been working hard and we have a lot of heritage in terms of royalty for want of a better word and realising that, it's like going back before slavery to a time when we had a lot of pride in ourselves when we believed in ourselves and I think a lot of it is to do with like trying to remember that and also remember the process that our families went through in coming to this country. They were quite brave to come here do you know what I mean when they arrived you know they came off the boat from the West Indies or wherever, they were very very tough to make that crossing how many weeks on the ship to come to this other place you know and I think that we need to remember and realise that over time that we can get that strength back again and I think that's what I've tried to do.

[focus group 4]

However, within this group the personal benefits of efficacious action within the UK context were questioned through inter-group comparison in terms of differential benefits for Black and White efficacy whether in terms of external validation or in terms of being able to benefit from social systems.
WS – At the end of the day they work with a system where you have a certain level of talent you put in the level of work, you know and commitment and accomplish certain goals you know you will get promotion, on that basis you can plan, you can make the calculations. If you’re Black you can’t do these things. An organisation that I used to work at, where I’ve still got friends, in the time I’ve know that organisation since ’91 there’s not one Black person ever had promotion, I went in at management level we’re not talking about one or two Black people it’s about a third of the organisation is Black. When you’ve got that situation where you try and get knocked back, try and get knocked back and it isn’t a case of a little bit extra will do it and in the meantime White people whose competence is frankly questionable get promotions or have stayed in their position but have had a special bonus for their accomplishments.

In addition there was a perception that efficacious actions by Black people were only recognised by the wider society in a limited set of domains. This also emphasises the importance of the inter-group context in supporting efficacy through recognition.

SJ – well that’s right, I think a lot of it is to do with what standards you set for yourself and sometimes yeah we do set lower standards, sometimes that’s a good thing and sometimes it’s a bad thing but I know there are a lot of Black people say I want to be a millionaire by the time I’m thirty and other people say that as well and then it’s is that realistic, is that measurable and all the things we talk about at work and then it’s who recognises what’s a triumph. A lot of Black people don’t, I don’t want to be stereotypical but, it’s like if you’re a Black person and you succeed at sports, that’s triumphant, Britain recognises who you are, blah, blah, if you’re a Black person who achieves in something like computers you know (pointing at AC) no-one will know about it

Again, similar to collective esteem there was relatively little mention of group-based efficacy compared with personal efficacy. The prevalence of representations of Black people as victims, both in the focus groups and in the media study combined with a predominantly mainstream negative group representation has both practical and theoretical implications. Gurin et al (1978) identified lower efficacy beliefs in Black Americans when compared with White Americans and attributed this to the obstacles which continued discrimination pose for efficacious behaviour. For the authors a sense of low personal control amongst disadvantaged groups such as Black Americans reflected a correct perception of a harsh environment over which they have little control. For Gurin et al, efficacy beliefs are a direct consequence of the experience of disadvantage and discrimination.

There are a number of theoretical explanations for the relationship between efficacy and chronic experience of disadvantage. The first way in which the group can affect individual efficacy levels is for the group to provide the context for the classic efficacy sources in terms of framing and limiting or promoting opportunities for efficacious experience. This involves a combination of inter-group comparison and ingroup identification. Thus an individual identifies with his/her group and
that group is seen as relatively less efficacious when compared with other groups (intergroup comparison). Ashforth & Mael (1989) make a link between collective efficacy and group identification arguing that the relationship between individual and collective efficacy and the relationship between group performance and individual efficacy will increase as identification with the group increases. Identification fosters commitment to and internalisation of group values and norms; a shared sense of collective efficacy will be higher when identification is high (ingroup identification).

Vicarious experience of efficacy (one of the classic sources of individual efficacy identified by Bandura) would seem to be particularly relevant to historically disadvantaged groups such as ethnic minorities and immigrants. A historical legacy of discrimination results in fewer opportunities for members of particular groups to demonstrate efficacious behaviour and by extension for younger members of those groups to observe efficacious behaviour in individuals with similar characteristics to themselves. This in turn reduces the level of vicarious experience of efficacious behaviour. Bandura (1995) states that in order for vicarious efficacious behaviour to have credibility it is important that it is observed in a wide range of individuals from different social backgrounds in a wide variety of situations. Thus it is not enough for group members to observe efficacious behaviour; they have to perceive that the people behaving in this way are similar enough for them to see emulating it as a possibility. Possible Selves Theory of Markus and Nurius (1986) is relevant here in that it proposes that individuals attempt to attain positively valued (or to avoid negatively valued) possible selves and in the process of constructing these selves they are motivated to devise plans and strategies to achieve or avoid particular outcomes. The range of possible selves available to individuals are located in their own personal experience, their social environment which includes the past. The main role of the past here is in terms of the repetition of particular experiences such as discrimination against members of the group. The simple implication of this is that as this repetition diminishes or if discrimination no longer existed, then all groups would have potentially equal efficacy beliefs, it ignores the way in which the more distant past affects group and personal identity through social memory processes. In addition, the emphasis on group identification suggests that it should be possible for members of a group to switch group identification in pursuit of efficacious role models, eg shift the emphasis from race to class or gender.

The other way in which group membership can influence personal efficacy is in terms of the group as a representational entity which carries more or less efficacy. This representational force is created and sustained by the consequences of group action and also the dynamics of intergroup relationships. A group might wish to represent itself as efficacious either to itself or to other groups but without some material evidence for this identity claim it is unlikely to be validated by others and consequently will have only limited effectiveness in this claim. However, it is equally
possible that groups which have material evidence of efficaciousness in the past may continue to represent their group as efficacious in the present and future on the basis of that acknowledged and recognised past. An example of this would be Britain continuing to base an efficacious national identity based on past its past military success and imperial strength. Power relationships may, therefore, ensure a continuing representation of a group as inefficacious regardless of action.

The processes involved are based on the wider society’s representation of some groups as efficacious and others as not. Members of the less efficacious groups are, therefore, perceived to have lower levels of personal efficacy as a direct consequence of their membership of the inefficacious group. Here it does not matter whether the individual identifies with their group or not. What will happen is that the group’s representation of inefficaciousness will attach itself to the individual in the form of a stereotype. The individual’s own personal efficacy level is relevant but it is likely that over a period of time the limited mastery opportunities which result from the stereotype of inefficaciousness will result in a depressed personal efficacy level.

One of the key features of efficacy is that it is possible to train people to become more efficacious and it is also possible to manipulate efficacy beliefs so that they are lowered. However, stereotypes may encourage a belief that some abilities are fixed and immutable. This is important for groups because particular abilities or characteristics may have been ascribed to a particular group as part of the group representation. This issue may be very relevant to group sources of self-efficacy for social groupings with a genetic component. Genetics are commonly perceived as fixed, stable and unchangeable attributes and genetically-based groups often have social characteristics attached to them e.g. women as good communicators but illogical and Black people as good at sport but academically limited.

The past has a slightly different role to play in the representational explanation by inhibiting the motivational processes for change. Change is only possible when a group or individual believes that they have the power to effect change. A continuing representation of a group as lacking in agency or as the victim of intergroup conflict may attenuate social beliefs in the possibility of the group taking action to effect. Flammer (1995) identified repeated individual failures to exercise control as leading to a sense of helplessness. It could be possible to apply this analysis to the Black Caribbean group in the UK which has experienced a historical lack of control as a result of the social forces of slavery and imperialism. By contrast, representations of one’s group as efficacious in the past give concrete, practical information about how to be efficacious in the present by offering information about what is legitimate and effective for your group. The greater the number and
diversity of representations on offer the more likely it is that individuals will be able to make use of them in forming judgements of their personal efficacy.

It is suggested that the historical representation of Black people as victims of White people over a considerable period of time dating from the slavery era is a mechanism which results in a depressed sense of personal efficacy (if it does) for Black people of Caribbean descent in the UK, compounded by the more recent limitations imposed on opportunities for efficacious action as a result of ongoing racial discrimination. Thus both the representational and group context explanations apply, but because of the ascribed nature of the category there is no associated requirement of in-group identification. It is likely that the effects will be most dramatic in domains for which the group is negatively stereotyped and will be more pronounced in the area of maintaining efficacy beliefs in the face of adversity.

The discussion above of the different ways in which a negative collective past and a current experience of discrimination and disadvantage can influence representations of personal and collective efficacy illustrate the complexity of the relationship and the limits on using the past to empower a disempowered population as proposed by Social Memory Theory.

5.7.12 Summary

This section, in common with others, highlights the absence of a sense of the group as a self-contained unit with its own independent sources of distinctiveness, esteem or continuity and suggests that the 'groupness' of Black people in Britain derives almost exclusively from the relationship between this group and the White majority, both currently and from a past dating back to slavery. It is likely that this unusual heritage may explain why the hypotheses posed by social memory theory are not supported. It suggests that alternative ways of exploring the influence of the past are required.

5.8 Conclusion

The focus group study evidence includes the following key findings.

The effects of inter-group relationships on the construction of Blackness

It is argued that these findings illustrate the dynamics of group construction at work in a racial group. It is particularly important that there is an absence of references to the group as a self-contained cultural element. This would suggest that the main processes being used in the construction of this group may be oppositional and reactive. If this is the case then it has implications for social interventions which are aimed at the group's culture. For example, anti-
racist policies promoting race awareness based on the assumed cultural attributes of racial
groups are likely to be ineffective because in adopting an 'ethnic' model of group they ignore the
inter-group dynamic at work in racial groups. The inter-categorical context was also perceived as
influencing the way in which the future and possible social change was perceived and in
determining the degree to which differing options for identification (eg as British) could be
available.

The lack of internalisation of the social representation of the group

The focus groups show the importance of the past in the construction of the group. The
participants made repeated and spontaneous references to different past eras in the process of
describing and discussing the present. This means that any theory which attempts to explain
social groups without going beyond the immediate context is likely to have limitations when
applied to this group. This issue seems particularly relevant to Self Categorisation Theory (SCT).
One of the key problems with applying SCT to race is evident in it's name - the overriding issue
for SCT is how individuals perceive themselves and categorise themselves and others in relation
to that category. This is not to say that SCT ignores the fact that categories reflect social
structure, but it does assume that individuals internalise the social structure to such a degree that
they then use those categories as part of their self-concept and respond accordingly. Empirical
evidence (e.g. Porter & Washington 1979 & 1993 and Phinney 1990) shows that while members
of minority groups are aware of societies' negative evaluation of their group, they have not
internalised this to the extent that they suffer chronic low self-esteem. SCT argues that particular
social categories are used because they reflect social reality. SCT also emphasises the degree to
which context affects categorisation. The implication is that self-categorisation is potentially infinitely
variable as context shifts and while this may be true of other social group memberships, it seems to
be less true for race. In 1997, the Metropolitan Police stopped using racial minorities in training
sessions for police officers because the officers assumed that the session was in some way related
to race and responded accordingly, these responses invalidated the training. To some extent this is a
reflection of police sensitivity to criticism on racial grounds, but it is also an incidence in social
psychological terms when the group categorisation superseded all other possible categories despite
its inapplicability to the context. There may well be other undocumented instances of category
overriding context.

The role of the past in constructing the group's present

While the two principal aims of the focus group study were to explore the construction and
representation of Blackness and to investigate the factors promoting and inhibiting identification
as British, the data analysis also brought to the fore the third research question of the effect of the
past on Blackness and Black Britishness. The importance of the past to Black people seems also be relevant to the theme of being Black and British. It could be that if White British people draw esteem from past eras and this is important in the construction of a British national or group identity then there is an accompanying unwillingness to include people who do not appear in common representations of those eras. The line in the patriotic anthem 'Rule Britannia' "Britons never never shall be slaves” implicitly rules out as legitimate or authentic those Britons whose ancestors were slaves. This implies that Black people cannot currently share in British history as it is represented and this is likely to be a barrier to any sense of common national feeling between Black and White when it is based on the past.

The study also showed that the distinctive nature of the category Black meant that the hypotheses proposed by Social Memory Theory in which one or more identity principle would dominate when drawing on the past do not seem to apply. The nature of a racial minority is such that distinctiveness and cohesion are largely created externally rather than constructed by the population as a means of defining boundaries. The main exception to this is continuity, the participants identified a clear continuity between the past from the slavery period onwards and the present day. However, that continuity is primarily negative and therefore enhances rather than mitigates any threat to the population.

The problematic relationship between being Black and being British or English

The evidence suggesting that welcoming or even acknowledging any sense of Britishness or Englishness is regarded as problematic may imply that there are barriers to this social group’s ‘incorporation’ into life in this country. It is possible that there is a conflict here between racial and national identity which has its roots in the past as well as the present. It is important to consider to what extent the negative representation of Britishness has on this population and also how and in what ways the past might give rise to a clash of values between Blackness and Britishness. Possible links between the effect which the distinctive way in which Blackness is constructed and Britishness are also important.

This study concluded that content was less important than process and that the processes which were instrumental in the way in which the category was constructed also provided information about the other research questions. The following processes were identified as important:

The oppositional identity processes which work to create a perception of Blackness and Britishness as incompatible; the inter-categorical dialectic construction of Blackness and the way in which the past is used to construct and contest the present; the immunity of the participants to majority representations.
Chapter 6
Entering the temporal causality loop

6.1 Introduction

Following the focus group study, this study set out to explore in greater depth the way on which the past was being used. It also sought to explore possible options for the perception of incompatibility between Blackness and Britishness and in particular to uncover the degree to which there were distinctively Black values.

The focus of the interview and associated sorting task was how Britain and Britishness was represented and how this linked with temporal orientation. Beyond the requirements of the structure of the interview, it was clear that overall the participants used the sorting task to fulfill the function of both describing and explaining the origin and circumstances of what it is to be Black in the UK today. The analysis looks at how the present is articulated and then the way in which the past is mobilised to explain that present.

The data discussed below shows how category membership (British citizens of African Caribbean descent) influences the representation of Britain and Britishness and, in particular, the way in which the past and history influence the processes used for the construction of the representation, and its consequences for a sense of groupness and personal self-definition.

The aim of the value-sort study was twofold:

1 – to uncover representations of Britishness on 2 main dimensions, valence whether positive or negative, and which temporal dimensions they belonged to. Thus it was hypothesised for example, that people could have sorted the adjectives in interrelated ways, for example, all negative descriptions were sorted in the past, with neutral descriptions, in the present and the positive ones reserved for the future

2 – to uncover the representations of the values which the participants associated with Britain and Britishness. This would reveal whether the basis for a perceived incompatibility between Blackness and Britishness was simply that Britain was associated with an unattractive and negative social representation. If this was not the case, then was it the case that there was a clash of values between what was perceived to be typically British and the values that the participants associated with being Black? This was, in turn, aimed at uncovering, by default, the social representations of the values associated with Blackness.
These aims show that this study was following up, from a different perspective, the questions raised in the earlier empirical work. What is the source of the perceived incompatibility between Blackness and Britishness, and what role do values play in the construction of a racial rather than an ethnic or national group?

6.2 Method

The interview consisted of a number of general questions, together with a sorting task thus generating both qualitative and quantitative data. A numerical summary of the sorting task is provided in the tables. The questions were asked to all interviewees and the sorting task was the same for all, with the exception of an optional self-generated sort. Interviews lasted between 35 minutes and 1 hour, 15 minutes and were audio tape-recorded, transcribed and analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith, 1996).

The adjectives for the sorting task (typed on pieces of card) were introduced as having been identified from media pieces and political speeches where they had been used to describe Britain or British people. In reality they were adapted from a description of Britishness by the British Prime Minister with the addition of negative characteristics. The adjectives were: fair, tolerant, aggressive, arrogant, dull, hard-working, lazy, outward-looking, creative, adaptable, dishonest and ignorant. Participants were asked to sort them into 4 plastic pots labelled, true of Britain/British people in the past, true of Britain/British people now, true of Britain/British people in 20 years from now, not true of Britain/British people. Participants were asked to sort the adjectives into the pot they felt was the most appropriate. If necessary they were prompted to base their choices on gut feeling or instinct rather than to spend too much time making intellectual decisions.

The interview schedule is attached at appendix 6. The sorting task formed the main basis of the interview, in addition prior to the sorting task participants were asked:

a) to self-define from a range of category options
b) for an 'off-the-top-of-the-head' description of Britain or British people (this was intended to generate descriptions which were uncontaminated by the sorting task).

After the sorting task, participants were asked to identify one event which had been important in making Britain the way it is now. In addition, participants were offered the opportunity to generate their own descriptions for sorting to cover any areas not dealt with in the structured sort.

Canter et al (1985) recommend sorting tasks for use in interviews on the basis that the procedures used allow the interviewees to express their own view of the issues at hand, in their
own way, whilst still providing information that is structured enough for systematic analysis and reporting. They argue that sorting provides a focus for the interview to guide and structure the material produced without unduly constraining the interviewee. At the same time they recognise that the format allows other related material beyond that generated by the sorting to be noted.

In this case the results of the sort were not interpreted through any numerical analysis, rather it was the comments and discussion which accompanied the explanation of the sort which formed the focus of the analysis. The interview was used to explore both patterns and contradictions in the way in which the sort had been done.

Both the elements to be sorted and the dimensions for the sort were pre-determined, the only exception to this was the option for participants to generate their own elements in a free sort, but even then the dimensions for sorting were constrained. The underlying principle for the sorting was the temporal dimension of representations over time.

6.3 Overview of main findings

The results of individual and overall patterns are presented in the tables at annex 2; they show the wide variety of ways in which the sorting took place together with some general patterns. Discussion of the findings is informed by consideration of the social functions and goals which are being invoked and in terms of the temporal dimensions and temporal comparisons used.

In order to address the research questions, for each form of analysis, particular attention is paid to the meanings attached to group construction and the way in which groups were represented as compatible or incompatible in terms of their values or in other ways.

The analysis produced three superordinate themes: the past, present and future reflecting the dimensions used in the sorting task. Each main theme has a number of sub-themes which explore further the basis of perceived incompatibility between Blackness and Britishness; the nature of the category Black and how these other issues effect the present and future of British life.

6.3.1 Theme 1 – past

This theme explores why Britishness is perceived as problematic, contestations of legitimacy and validity of representations. It places a significant emphasis on the British past as a source of the problematising of Britishness in addition to present-day inequality and discrimination
6.3.2 Theme 2 – present.

The present is represented in a way which is informed by the past. The context is one in which Britishness is unavailable to Blacks. It is here that the complexity of the dialectic between groupness, Blackness and the British context is discussed.

6.3.3 Theme 3 – future.

The data relating to the future introduces a new element to the research. It explores how the presence of minorities has had an impact on British life. This is an illustration of a distinctive form of minority influence which occurs in spite of the resistance of the majority and regardless of feelings of identification in the minorities concerned.
6.4 Theme 1 - The past

6.4.1 Introduction

There are three main sub-themes which comprise the way in which the past was constructed by participants. The first relates to a negative construction which is used as a basis for contesting the validity of the majority representations of the UK's past and present. The second is an account of the way in which the White majority's perceptions is seen to advantage Whites and to disadvantage Blacks. The final sub-theme consists of an analysis of the reciprocal relationship between race as a category membership and the construction of the past.

One of the notable findings was the influence of the past on the way in which participants represented Britishness. The analysis below explains how the past affected representations of modern Britain both in terms of the content of the past and in terms of a predisposition to use the past to explain the present and predict the future. Particular attention is paid to the way in which the past is drawn upon in explanations and justifications of the representations, when referring to the present and the future. This illustrates the role played by history in forming representations of Britain and Britishness and how, for people of African Caribbean heritage, the complications which negative and inter-categorical aspects of that history create for an acceptable representation of the society in which they currently live. The role of the past in the contestation of legitimacy and validity forms the bedrock of how Britishness and Blackness are constructed as incompatible.

6.4.2 Sub-theme 1 – the past was constructed as negative and this negativity was used as the basis for de-legitimising representations of the present and contesting the validity of those representations

During the sorting task, the UK's past was described in a variety of ways – this was not a straightforward case of Brit-bashing, but overall the explanations of the sorts tended to be critical of Britain in both the past and the present. The descriptors which were chosen as true of Britain in the past took three main forms: Descriptions which were seen as positive but absent from modern Britain; Negative descriptions of the past eg arrogant, aggressive and neutral or positive descriptions which were explained in negative terms.

Both the quotes below seem to criticise current UK values as out of step with the participants' personal ethos by emphasising the negative aspects of individualism. The emphasis here is not so much on a strongly positive sense of Britain in the past, but on the deficiencies of modern Britain. The past is, therefore, used as a vehicle for highlighting negative aspects of the present.
SC – hard-working, umm… hard-working, I think people do work hard now but I think people worked hard more together now it’s all about individuals, I suppose I’m thinking about my parent’s generation, they worked very hard for what little they got umm, but umm it was a different kind of working hard I meant physically and umm it was friendlier, people pulled together more I felt.

I – so you feel that it’s not like that so much now and that’s actually a loss?

SC – yes yes yeah

JH - What have I put in true of Britain of the past, let’s have a look at what I’ve put there…… I think umm Britain has been creative in terms of what it’s done for technology in the past. I mean in particular, in particular industries it’s pioneered a lot of things especially in the engineering industry, it’s pioneered quite a lot so that’s why I put creative into this pot and but it’s been umm the last few decades it’s been like on the decline due to the fact that umm I think… I think knowledge is not respected enough I mean in terms of the teaching professions and umm education as a whole it seems that society seems to be more geared about who drives the biggest car and who has the biggest house more than who actually understands what’s going on in the world sort of thing who actually understands how things work so that’s why I think there’s a decline, that’s why I say I think the creative nature of the British people uhh definitely in the past and it’s declining now, that’s what I think.

In the quotes below, the UK’s past is described in negative terms, with links made between the different characteristics working together to produce negative behaviours. The negative descriptions are illustrated using Black-White inter-group examples. Thus the past is represented in a way which emphasises conflict with the White majority.

Aggressive was used by a number of interviewees to characterise the past, in addition another who described aggressive as being “true of Britain now”, hesitated about whether it belonged in the past pot:

KW – true of Britain now. Aggressive, now that was a tricky one because do I put in past or present, but I put it in present because I thought that if I put in past it implies that it’s no longer the case and I believe that Britain’s a very aggressive place.

CT – umm dishonest well umm yeah, dishonest in that the way they exploited slaves I guess in the past umm I sometimes wonder if yeah, I wonder if it’s dishonest I mean I think some of it’s dishonesty as well as the culture at the time and I think it goes hand in hand with aggressiveness as well in their exploitation of umm other parts of the world was actually done through umm ignorance, dishonesty and the belief about themselves that they’re superior basically and that gave them the right to be aggressive

RD – true of Britain in the past, umm I have 3 things that were true of Britain, this is where the arrogance comes into view and ignorance and dishonesty. As you can see they are all kind of like
negative because of the negative, negative impressions of Britain in the past.

arr-o-gant, umm the thing that goes with that is the fact that umm I remember, not I remember, it's not as if I was there (laughing) with the, when America wants to split off from the British or when people want to split from the British, they're not exactly saying 'here you are I'm giving you my your independence', it's all, most of the times which I can remember from the history, which is very poor for me, is the fact that it's normally done with a fight and somehow I think that's the best word that I've seen out of the list of words that fits with that, which is basically arrogant.

The description of arrogance in the present below links explicitly it to the past:

SC - Arrogant, once again cretins yes, umm arrogance again my way is better and I'm not going to learn anything because the way I do it is best umm and once again it's about we can all change, we can all do better.

I – but there's a sense that there's no need for change because

SC – yeah, it's fine as it is, let's go back to the old colonial ways yes.

A different approach emphasised the negative consequences of neutral or positive descriptions, they tended to be described as negative either for the British, or for others involved. For KW, negative consequences for the British would have, in turn, a negative impact on UK ethnic minorities.

SH – ok, start with true of Britain in the past. And I've chosen outward-looking umm because obviously they were because umm you know there weren't enough resources or you know the land wasn't pleasant enough or whatever, whatever reasons or excuses there were when they went out around the world and started exploring and umm taking what they needed, so I'd say that was pretty outward-looking.

KW – right. True of Britain in the past, I've got hard-working and traditional, umm Britain survived on its traditions up until I'd say about 50 years ago and over the past 50 years its traditions have been very rapidly eroded and now there isn't really very much which is traditionally British anymore.

I – what would you describe as traditional British?

KW – now?

I - in the past, the things that you're thinking of that have gone away?

KW – their food, eels and whelks that they used to have, that they used to sell in their little stalls, umm shop-keeper mentality - gone, blue-collar work - gone and all of those were traditional of Britain from about the seventeenth century onwards.
I – what do you feel has eroded those traditional values and ways of life?

KW – the service industries, influence from America and Asia umm and the influx of diverse cultures.

I – and do you feel that those changes are for the better or for the worse?

KW – worse

I – why do you feel that

KW – because people who are indigenously British are not happy about what’s happened. They can see a direct relationship between immigration and the way that British society has changed and sooner or later they’re going to rebel against it, whether it be through exclusion or violence or war or whatever it may be, they’re not going to put up with it forever. Because we’re entering a state of severe recession and something’s going to have to give.

I – so in a sense, what you’re saying is the way the majority of the population would see those changes having progressed is going to actually end up with a bad situation particularly for people who are not part of that majority in the future, is that reasonable?

KW – yes

I – do you yourself think that those changes are good or bad?

KW – mmm, slightly split on that one but I don’t think they’re very good because I think everybody loses. The people who have emigrated from their own countries lose their own cultures and identities in order to try and assimilate with the host country and the host country loses its own identity both physically and culturally and then will turn around and blame the immigrants so I don’t think either party wins and I don’t believe that assimilation is something which can really happen on a 100% basis which is what would be needed in order for it to work.
with that really adequately rather than. I think he hasn't got his priorities right in the fact he's dealing with other things and not, I've seen that to do with lots of people in the past, you know with Margaret Thatcher, lots of things that she's hidden from us I don't think that was fair in that way to hide that from us, so I think the case, an example of the reason why I would say that was fair, that's why I would say it's not true of Britain now, not true of Britain in the past obviously with the fact that a lot of things that have happened in the past, a lot of history in the past that I don't seem to say that the British has acted fair in that and that if I see Britain acting fair in the future I think it will be a big miracle.

**ED** - I think I am mmnnmmmm to an extent umm because I do think, it is possible to to if if if you know, it depends what your agenda is, what what the groups of peoples are what their agenda is and if if it is just I guess to exploit and to look at it in terms of that and to have policies that do actually exploit, whatever that policy may be, whether it be education or the police or whatever it is, anything that causes harm or discomfort to another group of people if if that's not recognised then it won't be changed and therefore it will not be fair, but if it's recognised to do something about it, then you can address this issue of whether Britain is fair or not but it requires hard work to do that and I don't, I don't think that Britain has proven itself to be fair in the past or is currently proving itself to be fair and the things ... and if the past and the present is the stepping stones to the future, then the future universally is not one that is is going to be particularly fair unless the other one comes into play all these good points come into play to

.....

**I** - and still and has been in the past, and what form do you feel that aggression takes?

**KW** - it's aggressive in its defence of itself and its aggressive in its attitude towards other nations in the sense that it's traditionally an invader state, a conqueror so that in itself is aggressive which has bred an aggressive population because that is the mentality which British people have grown up with which is that they are the emperors to rule over the rest of the world and again aggressive in their defence of themselves.

There was a strong sense of negativity associated with the past-based sorting, there was a prevalence of negative characteristics such as dishonest, arrogant and aggressive sorted as true of the UK in the past. Participants were more critical of the UK in the past than they were of the UK in the present and those criticisms were focused and specific. They lay the basis for the contestation of the role of the past which is discussed below. The past has been effectively reconstructed and is then used as the basis for an implicit rebuttal to the majority's representation. This historical reconstruction is done by reframing the past in terms of an inter-categorical perspective.

the past is used by the Black minority as the basis for de-legitimisation and contesting the validity of the present.

There was a perception that the empire and colonialism had provided the UK with a disproportionate (relative to its physical size) degree of international power and influence in the past. The nature of the
imperial and colonial relationship, something directly relevant to Black people, was described as exploitative and dishonest and as a result the UK's past power is seen as illegitimate and unwarranted. The discussion in study 2 looked at the effect which the representation of a group as inefficacious could have on opportunities for efficacious behaviour by its members. The interviewees here are clearly representing the UK as an efficacious international player, but they incorporate an additional factor into the representation—that of legitimacy. This shows how important it is when considering representations of collective efficacy to look at the source of those representations and the degree to which the basis of the representation has sufficient legitimacy for it to be endorsed. A representation of efficacy associated with 'objective' support for the claim is a necessary but not sufficient condition for its acceptance by all.

I – ok and then we've talked a bit about the past, is there any particular event from the past that you think has been important is shaping modern Britain?

KW – the existence of the British empire, without the British empire, Britain would not have been able to umm amass so many riches from so many different countries in order to put it in the area of hierarchy that it is at the moment, without the existence of the empire, Britain wouldn't be any greater than umm a small island in the pacific

I – and do you think that, you've identified empire as being an important influence on modern Britain do you think it's been a good influence or a bad one?

KW – for the British it's been a very good one, for those who were colonised it's been a bad one.

DS - ... Outward-looking, I think a lot of Britain is basically up its own arse unfortunately, you know it sees itself as this great and it's kept this myth going until it believes it itself that it's you now still up there in the world, you know Britain and America running off and blowing up you know Afghanistan it's like wow I didn't realise Britain was so big and it's well actually no it's very small but they seem to latch on to the right people at the right time you know our American cousins and stuff so... umm that in itself I don't really think it does much about the big picture, you know I don't think it really does push a global economy, I don't think it looks out really helping the world in the way that it could, maybe because it's so small it can't, but maybe it's just not a priority, you know they'd rather look to making sure that Britain's fantastic in 5, 10, 15, 100 years time as opposed to looking at Britain as being a very small part of the world and trying to help the world to be fantastic for people making sure that everyone gets fed, so no not very outward-looking. Lazy umm, I don't think that's true of Britain, I think they're umm. You know they've fought their wars, they've done their industry and for then to be in a power position they are in the world with being such a small island, I think they wouldn't have got that from being lazy

KW – dishonest, umm dishonest in the sense that again through umm colonialism and empire-building was built on dishonesty in the sense that deals were made, deals were struck with other nations and they were then, what's the word is it rescinded?

I – mmhmm
Contesting the past to de-legitimise the present

The international arena illustrates geographically how representations of the past impact on the way in which the UK is represented at an international level (both in the past and the present) and the perceptions of legitimacy attached to that representation. The participants tended to anchor much of their description of the UK as an international player in the past, there was, therefore, an interesting link between geographical considerations and temporal orientation. This past-based anchoring of international issues had implications for both the present and the future and for considerations of change and progress.

It is interesting that there is no attempt in any of these quotes to contest the UK’s current influential position in world affairs, this would have been particularly problematic as at the time of many of the interviews, the British Prime Minister was engaged in post-September 11 shuttle diplomacy. However, in a sophisticated construction, it is emphasised that the UK’s current international position is not based on a realistic or accurate assessment of the UK’s situation, but rather on its ability to trade on its past power, that position is, therefore, illegitimate. Given that participants also described the UK’s past in terms which challenged its legitimacy eg “dishonest” it suggests a fundamental rejection of the basis of the UK’s place in the modern international hierarchy. There is no sense of these interviewees, as British citizens, ignoring history in order to ‘buy into’ any reflected esteem stemming from the UK’s international position, though they suggest that the White majority uses the past as a source of collective esteem.

A theme emerged of an historical dichotomy between appearance and reality which was often related to racial issues. This theme was particularly prevalent in the explanations which accompanied the sorting of the word dishonest. Participants were at pains to emphasise that they were not concerned about individual interpersonal dishonesty, indeed they were clear that members of the UK majority, as individuals, were no more or less dishonest than members of any other group. What they identified was an ideological and systemic dishonesty or hypocrisy which had historical roots and which was often targetted at the maintenance of a racial power balance which advantaged the majority over minorities in an illegitimate way. In terms of contesting the representation of the present, one of the points made by a number of participants was the degree to which most British people perceived themselves to be and represented themselves as fair and
tolerant. The participants felt that this was self-deluding, particularly in the equal opportunities and race relations sphere and that the self-delusion served a socio-political goal because it ensured both that these issues were not taken seriously and that change was perceived as unnecessary.

Contestation of past

CT – umm dishonest well umm yeah, dishonest in that the way they exploited slaves I guess in the past umm I sometimes wonder if yeah, I wonder if it’s dishonest I mean I think some of it’s dishonesty as well as the culture at the time and I think it goes hand in hand with aggressiveness as well in their exploitation of umm other parts of the world was actually done through umm ignorance, dishonesty and the belief about themselves that they’re superior basically and that gave them the right to be aggressive

I – so you mentioned dishonesty in terms of particularly relating to slave, slavery are you thinking in terms of approach to buying slaves or just the whole ideology?

CT – the whole ideology I think yeah, I suppose that’s how I look at it, I mean if you’re going to say well do I think that white people or English people yeah are dishonest, I’d probably say well it’s hard to say really, not really I think that everybody has that....

Contestation of past and present

ED – ....yeah umm ... arrogance.... I see it played out in policies that you know there are certain things that, certain attitudes umm that unless you are this way then therefore you, you need to become like us in order to be accepted and this sort of attitude that we know best umm policies.... Disenfranchiesments...stemming from this pious position that organisations ......constantly play out you know umm and it goes back, this feeds back into the creativity one where often in order to overcome that we need to be creative in order to work around this arrogance, this historical arrogance, institutional arrogance umm individual arrogance umm and I’m not really putting any isms there because there can be any any ism umm so yea yeah and this one this blank one, (laughing) dishonest, dishonest well dishonesty is all in the the is the rage right now, transport secretary dishonest (laughing), Tony Blair dishonest (laughing), dishonesty umm, dishonest (exhales)....dishonest (exhales) when I, when I looked at that it was again it came down to, what came up for me was umm the native American saying speak with forked tongue, say one thing and do something else and again it feeds back into the policies and so forth umm umm umm

I – is that dishonesty taking the form of hypocrisy or...

ED – yee yee yeah umm ... (exhales) .... mmm I’m hesitant now because I’m not quite sure how how to put into words this this concept dishonest, if somebody lied to me then I’d say you’re being dishonest, now am I saying that I’ve come across people who lied to me or am I say that people are being hypocritical or am I saying all of those thing (very quiet) what am I saying with this one dishonest, it just feels dishonest, I don’t know if there’s such a thing, it just not being told everything, I know umm I know historically that the people have been lied to and I’m very much in tune and read up around things like umm intelligence tests and so forth and that’s been this group is umm inferior to that group and you know Black people are at the bottom of the pile and then you have the Caucasians and the Asians and just a few percentiles between them but we’re way off scale umm and then out of that you have certain attitudes, out of this dishonest, this dishonest use of statistics or using statistics to create whatever it is that you want to create and you have policies developed from that, dishonest policies developed from that, you you have people who are affected by that and I think that fuels me because that’s something that I’m
particularly interested in umm and so that's where the dishonesty and this sort of stuff came to mind when I was thinking about dishonest, not necessarily about your next door neighbour being dishonest, Mr & Mrs so and so not liking you although that can be dishonest, it's not what I was thinking.

Contestation of present

DS - .... Hard-working, umm I've always felt that Britain is hard-working, you know it works hard to keep this myth of who it is, it works hard to make umm keep the balance between Black people feeling umm that they are umm being held down but at the same time that there are opportunities for them and they find the balance very difficult, you know very well to the degree that you will get some Black people who feel that this is a great country to live in and has a lot of opportunity, and some who think it's all shit, but they seem to work hard at just making sure it doesn't go too far otherwise you end up with big riots and whatever else we put in our heads and it's just enough to I - so in a sense the hard work is sort of mis...placed?

DS - it is and it's not, it is misplaced because more of a it's trying to just keep it, just keep things ticking over but at the same time by doing that it is same again changing people's behaviours, changes people's views and slowly their beliefs and values change as well, you know, as long as you are .. it's like, it's almost like you umm purposely put a Black person in a position of power to demonstrate to people, yes there is a Black person here and it really is just a ... how can I put it umm, a puppet or a symbol or whatever, it's not real, it's just to try and have some sort of subterfuge, umm this is where we are and by doing umm so you'll have younger Black people who will not realise that is subterfuge, they will see that and will therefore aspire for that and there's two sides to that, when they move forward and discover they can't get it then suddenly they feel the let down, the hurt, the racism and everything else then you'll have the others who will see it, won't realise they can't have it and keep on pushing for it and then will get it, ..... Dishonest, true of Britain now, yes it is umm mainly the things I said before is that they say we believe in equality, we believe in fairness, we believe in this and that when it suits them yes they do because they want the votes of the minorities and the companies, they want you to be motivated and work hard so they will say a lot of these things, but when it comes right down to it, nine times out of ten they will try and find a way to sweep it under the carpet or ignore it or you know umm get around it or keep it hidden.

It was notable that the participants drew on the past to explain aspects of the present and to establish dimensions of continuity. Throughout there is a sense of the past being an important tool to help explain what it means to be Black in the UK today and to understand the reasons for the representations of Britishness which are being articulated. This illustrates the importance of the temporal dimension by showing that it is not enough to look at where the group is now, it is equally important to understand the route taken to reach that point. For example, it is not simply the case that the participants felt that the UK's preeminent international position was illegitimate (something which could change). What is important is the past-based, and therefore, unchangeable, nature of the perceived illegitimacy. A present-based illegitimacy might have different implications.
6.4.3 Sub-theme 2 - The past is perceived as constructed positively by the White majority in
such a way as to promote collective self-esteem in the present and to act as a barrier to an
inclusive future (ie it is oppositional).

While the contestation discussed in sub-theme 1 took the form of an implied rebuttal of the
majority view of history, in sub-theme 2, that argument with the White majority becomes explicit.
The interviewees see British history as negative or neutral at best but they are aware that this
negative view is not shared by White people, some of whom would prefer a resurrection of a past
in which the Black population was absent; this is seen as more than harmless nostalgia, rather it
is a view of the past which has potentially serious negative consequences for ethnic minorities.
This theme offers another perspective to the oppositional nature of Black-White relations. Here it
is not the oppositional content of the past which is the issue, rather it is a function of the present-
day oppositional relationship focused on how the UK's past should be represented. This battle for
'truth' is a fairly basic one concerning whether the UK's past was good or bad.

RD – true of Britain in the past, umm I have 3 things that were true of Britain, this is where the
arrogance comes into view and ignorance and dishonesty. As you can see they are all kind of like
negative because of the negative, negative impressions of Britain in the past. I have a dear friend
of mine, well he’s not so dear, but he’s a friend anyway and he definitely thinks that umm Britain
was definitely better in the past, I’m not saying that I’m taking up his attitude, but I’m saying that’s
just an example of a lot of people I know who don’t really look on the past of Britain as being
great and looking forward. I didn’t say that, well Britain used to be good for nice things and it’s a
case of Britain used to be good for bad things, does that make sense to you?

JH – in terms of aggression uhh I think uhh, Britain is definitely more aggressive in colonisation
really and uhh putting across their point of view I mean they did it in Africa, in India, a lot of places
so that’s why I think, I think they embraced a lot of people with aggression yeah? Really and
that’s why I put that in that pot there. It’s really difficult this is actually having to explain (laughing)

DS – yeah, and I think as soon as push comes to shove again umm people with the English part,
the heritage would want to return to the 1920s, you know see the world where you know it was
balance where there were less Black people, less mixing of cultures and you know racial groups I
have to say that’s the thing I get for English as opposed to be British, but they are in the minority.

CT – I think modern, umm I think they’re quite they’re quite a modern country I think they do
because you always hear them trying to sort of umm, they’re still sort of striving in some way to
be, this is the dichotomy I think where the imperialistic past is still, it’s still having to come to terms
with that and that they have to be more a multi-cultural society and be much more reflexive about
how things are, out in their talk about war for example and about for example and about the best
in the world and but I think that this sort of history that they’ve had, I think it’s very hard to sort of
get away from and I think it comes these words that they use umm, it’s very sort of ....I suppose
it’s a reminder of what they had I guess in a way so I think that’s quite hard to get rid of and I think
and I sort of wonder how much of that inherent belief in themselves I think is part of what they're still trying to do as well, not like France for example which might have a different umm way of trying to be modern umm, you know while for us I think, for the British I think it's much more about something else which is in the past perhaps.

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**CA** – true of Britain in the past

.....Aggressive, aggressive I suppose comes more from not only the wars, but also the tradition of the past where umm England had more of the Great attached to the Britain than it thinks it has now, but basically it hasn’t because the world’s caught up with it and passed it a long time ago.

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**DS** – oh yeah, English is well more of that third group of British that I was saying about bigoted, racist umm those who are steeped in British history, the conquerors, no still see Britain is a superpower rather than as a small island surrounded by water which it is yes and as such would like to keep that and they can’t see how they can keep that whilst allowing change and change is integration and accepting that we are becoming more and more of a you know a mixed you know world. I think a lot of people feel, yes we’ll have a mixed world but not a mixed Britain I think they quite like the idea of just yes we’ll have Black people there or whatever but English people are on top. English people should be like running the big companies, earning the big money, should still be pulling all the strings and everybody else is not English.

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negative use of the past by white majority

Regardless of the source (and its legitimacy) of the UK’s current international power, the participants felt that the ends to which the power was used tended to be negative or self-interested and identified a continuity between past and present in this which was aimed at maintaining a racial status quo which favoured White over Black.

**RD** – ... So outward-looking, I think because the fact with Tony Blair going out places and things like that, they’re definitely outward-looking, but not in the case of outward-looking as in we want to share our love with everybody else (funny voice), it’s a case of let’s see how we can save the world and claim it as Britain’s.

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**DS** - ... umm that in itself I don’t really think it does much about the big picture, you know I don’t think it really does push a global economy, I don’t think it looks out really helping the world in the way that it could, maybe because it’s so small it can’t, but maybe it’s just not a priority, you know they’d rather look to making sure that Britain’s fantastic in 5, 10, 15, 100 years time as opposed to looking at Britain as being a very small part of the world and trying to help the world to be fantastic for people making sure that everyone gets fed, so no not very outward-looking.
MM – I’ll do not true of Britain first, it’s not lazy. Britons all how can I put it, they’re very active on the world scene, Britain’s very active on the world scene so I wouldn’t say they were lazy, they do get about quite a lot with the armed forces in that sense and export and so they’re not lazy. And uhh, not true of Britain I put fair’s not true of Britain because when I look at how they treat the colonies that they had and the Commonwealth at the moment they are a bit one-sided. Zimbabwe for instance, they’ve not been entirely fair they look out for what happens to the Whites not necessarily for what happens to the country ok.

The majority representation of the past acts as a barrier to the future

The majority representation of the past was perceived to be aimed at maintaining a positive majority self-image and, perhaps more importantly, using that self-image to avoid any perception of the need for change. This analysis looks at the degree to which the Black participants implicitly or explicitly contest the majority representation of the UK’s past and present. Rowe et al (2002) distinguish between vernacular and official narratives of history and public memory. They utilise Bodnar’s (1992) distinctions “Vernacular expressions convey what social reality feels like rather than what it should be like. It’s very existence threatens the sacred and timeless nature of official expression” (Bodnar, 1992 – pp14-15).

The past was clearly identified by the participants as a barrier to successful Black-White relations when looking to the future. They felt that in order for the UK to move on and to make the multicultural society more than a physical reality, the racism of the past had to be confronted by the White majority, the use of the terms ‘force’ and ‘kicking and screaming’ suggest that this is not seen as a process which the White majority have willingly embraced.

In the international domain, the UK is seen as benefiting from being able to trade on its more powerful past, but the same past-orientation is seen as a barrier in moving towards a different sort of domestic future. This hoped-for future was one which was characterised as being more authentically inclusive of Black people, but it was clear that the White majority’s current attachment to their preferred representation of the past was seen as a major obstacle to this social change. In footballing terms, at least, the benefits of letting go of the past are described as an incentive for England fans, if not for the UK’s other constituent countries.

CT – yeah, yeah I think modern full stop, but I think that their modernity has a lot to do with their umm with the past and that struggle I think to sort of umm to you know find the modernity, but I don’t think that they can because I think it’s part of them, do you know what I mean, so I don’t know which way to put it I guess.
CA – the future, I’ve only put one in this and I feel I am backing up what I say because that is outward-looking. Umm now Britain’s future is not to be insular and uhh it will have to adopt the euro, like it or not to grow and it will have to have outward-looking people and it will have to have an outward look presentation to get the rest of the country to view Europe, the world as an opportunity, it needs to draw a line under the past for it to start actually thinking about the future and as per usual right football comes into this particular analogy in terms of the England team and up to the point where they selected their latest umm manager, a foreign manager, umm they in my view were living in this past of we won the world cup in 1966 and umm because they go to 2 semi-finals in consecutive world cups I think umm one world cup and one European championship, they’ve thought that the country’s football was great when there were still fundamental flaws with it because they were still tied to that past. Somebody had the outward-look, the forethought to say that now that Kevin Keegan has gone, what English manager can we get to take us to whatever level we need to get to, there isn’t one, there isn’t any, so it’s a pretty brave step to say that we’re going to really break with the past and not only not get in someone from the British Isles to that takes on board Scotland etcetera but we’re actually going to go abroad and do it and cos of that, I’m not saying, because things have worked out you can say yeah that was a great move but even if this wasn’t a great move it actually drew a line under that past and now you can actually start looking to the future in the same respect once sort of the traditions of the country like you know we survived the blitz and we were great and all that sort of thing, once you confine that to the history books, then you can move on because it’s that history that is holding, holding you back and stopping you from being outward-looking. So I just think that in 20 years time, because you’ve got more modernisers coming through, the war babies will have died or gone and died in the past somewhere, you’ll have more modern thinkers


And lastly arrogant and this stems from the point I made earlier about umm whether the country could back up what it said about being great and the world sort of catching them up and moving on and there is this arrogance in this country still that wherever they go umm that people know who they are which they usually do but people even in their own country should still speak English (laughing) and that’s just, that’s not only arrogant, that’s disrespectful to the country they’re visiting and there’s still this idea of umm not quite your package holiday sort of thing but still sort of pockets of middle England all over the place. But again this is one of the things that you know the people who know have gone beyond that sort of arrogance and are willing to discover different cultures and all that sort of thing, I wouldn’t say in saying all of these type of things it’s as had as America who are very insular but there is still this arrogance, but the arrogance is based on a past which is just that, a past and there are still certain aspects of the culture that needs to modernise, but as I’ve said before it’s because of necessity it’s had to modernise, but it’s going to actually modernise while keeping hold of those traditions in a kicking and screaming sort of way, so the arrogance is really attached to sort of like history and where the country thinks it is but in reality it’s much different.

CT – Likely to be true of Britain in 20 years from now. Probably dull in 20 years. Yeah, I’m hoping that they’ll be outward-looking in 20 years from now, because umm I actually think that this Stephen Lawrence thing, this is how I feel, that it’s taken them this long to actually recognise that somebody Black could be killed because of race you know and all of that this idea that they’re not institutionally racist, I mean it’s such a shock you know when they actually argue about this fact you know and that’s saying something so in a way umm they are adaptable and they are adapting because I think they’ve been forced to adapt I think and forced to come round to the idea that they do have a past you know what I mean and they do have a history and part of the history is actually institutionalised which makes it hard to actually see what the issue is that they are racist and I think umm in well at least institutionally anyway where I’ve been aware of it, I think because of the Stephen Lawrence thing which I think is a big sort of umm sort of point I think in terms of our relationship with each other I think that it’s making things a little bit easier, so I think in 20 years’ time it will be much more, I mean I actually think it’s a multi-cultural society in some respects on a physical plane in the sense that I think there’s lots of different groups but I think to
sort of get much more deeper understanding of what it means to be multi-cultural I think that this outward-looking aspect much more so than inclusive, you know what I mean, that's my hope anyway, I hope it will get better.

6.4.4 Discussion

The starting point for this sub-theme was a recognition of the different value attached to the past, with the perception that it was primarily positive for White people and negative or neutral for Black people. This is then developed in the way in which the past is seen to serve two main purposes for the White majority: it acts as a source of collective esteem, and is used to maintain a racial status quo which favours White over Black. The participants argue that the White attachment to its past serves as a barrier to progress in the future which has consequences for both Black and White. The past also has functionality from a Black perspective, it is used by the Black participants to form the basis of a delegitimisation and contestation of the validity of modern representations of Britain and British people.

In terms of the perceptions of the purpose which the past serves for the White majority, this takes two main forms. Starting from a position of the perception of the past being seen by the White majority as predominantly positive, it is used at a macro level as a source of collective self-esteem and to justify decisions. At a more personal level, this representation serves as a barrier to a more inclusive future. The identification of the past as a barrier to change and progress is particularly relevant to this group because the aspect of the past which Black participants identify the White majority as most loathe to give up is the imperial past. While using the imperial past as the basis for an international identity claim to secure disproportionate international status and power for the UK has obvious attractions for the White majority, it is also a version of the past in which Black people are positioned as fundamentally subordinate and as such creates a barrier to a sense of Britishness for Black people through the temporal anchoring of this international identity claim.

As the analysis and quotes above show, the past is invoked to inform criticism of the UK; to contest the legitimacy and validity of majority UK representations of the past; to illustrate and explain the ongoing oppositional relationship between Black and White, and to explain the basis of the perception of the White majority’s resistance to change. The common thread is the intercategorical imperative.

Most social memory approaches hold that the nature of the group in the present informs the way in which the past is perceived and will influence who and what is regarded as important. In this case, it is clear that the relevant ‘other’ in the present which is informing the reading of the past is
the UK White majority and in particular the relationship between Black and White, while this is not in itself a startling revelation, what is interesting is the different levels on which this reading takes place. The participants effectively disassociate themselves from any involvement in the UK’s past, other than as the objects of aggression (slavery, empire, colonialism and neo-colonialism) and in the process also detach themselves from the resulting constructions of UK esteem which create the content of the current positive national identity. This reinforces the representation of incompatibility between Blackness and Britishness discussed elsewhere. The use of the past to delegitimise the UK’s power and esteem claims and representations also illustrates the distinctive nature of the category Black.

One of the key objectives of this study was to establish whether the basis of the incompatibility between Blackness and Britishness was based on a clash of values. The analysis of the use of the past shows that for a group which defines itself primarily in inter-categorical terms, its interaction with the values of the primary outgroup and its perception of the source of those values is of preeminent importance in its own self-definition.

In debating why the word postcolonial is used in the first rather than the third world Radhakrishnan (2003) debates the social goal behind the post-prefix. He argues that the use of the ‘post’ prefix works for those in the first world to eliminate guilt and shame by providing a sense of having moved on and transcended the colonial past, whereas neo-colonial accepts a temporal division, but insists on an acknowledgment of the continuing legacy of the colonial past. In as far as the debate begs the question of whether Whites have a post-colonial worldview whereas Blacks, diasporic and others, have neo-colonial worldviews. It would seem that the participants here illustrate the consequences of their neo-colonial worldview and their awareness of the post-colonial worldview of the UK White majority.

6.4.5 Sub-theme 3 – constructions of the past not only inform representations of Britain and Britishness, they also inform constructions of Blackness

At the end of the sorting task, participants were asked to choose an era or event which had been critical in shaping modern Britain and to explain why and how they felt it had been important. They were also asked to state whether they felt that the effect had been positive or negative. The rationale behind this question was twofold. In part, it was intended to check whether there was any commonality in representations of the Britain of the past and the present, it was also an opportunity for participants to mention race-specific issues such as slavery, empire and colonialism from the past – the events which resulted, directly or indirectly in their personal presence in the UK - and to discuss race-specific events from the present, thus following Lyons Social Memory Theory (1996), the participants were offered the opportunity directly to use the past to make sense of the present.
Middleton (2002) has argued that we organise lived experience in terms of what we establish as the durable features of living across transitions. Such transitions are punctualized in terms of what is established as the historical and personal significance of events, periods and generations. This suggests that the examination of pivotal events, which might be considered to be examples of such punctuations, is appropriate and that they have some significance. What is clear is that, for this population, race was the most important organising theme for interpreting historical content. The past is viewed through the lens of race both in terms of the content which is perceived as being relevant and important but also in terms of informing how the past is interpreted more generally.

Not all participants were able or prepared to answer the question and some gave more than one event so there is not a direct 1-1 correlation between participants and responses. Of the sample who provided information on a pivotal event in British history, there were three main categories:

a) race-specific events/eras with racial consequences.

For example:

CT – yeah, it was I mean it actually shows how the relationship between white and black people has changed. I mean it was so overtly racist and at it has changed the amount of Black people who were killed it was so explicit and up until the death of Stephen Lawrence, I think it has been a watershed because I think it was, I think that white society’s consciousness has been raised umm and I think that has a lot to do with just time that the white kids these days because they mix more and interact more and are less parochial I think, because I know when you go further out in the country people are more parochial, they just don’t integrate, they just don’t have any understanding of the other and so people in mixed marriages and so on are not, it’s much more of a normal thing now at least in some parts of London and some parts of England so I think because of that it’s forcing people to challenge the old way of looking at things as well so I think yeah I think the death of Stephen Lawrence I think was quite a big umm social event I think.

b) race neutral or generic events from which racial consequences or implications are drawn, for example:

I – ok, and thinking about sort of Britain now in the early part of the 21st century, if you had to pick either a time period or a particular event from the past that’s been sort of absolutely you know pivotal in making Britain what it is now, which would you pick?

ED - …industrial revolution

I –mm hmm why would you pick that one?

ED - …the period leading up to it is when the institutions came into being, banks, insurance, the slave trade, institutions have developed forging a sort of a can-do mentality, umm we rule the world type attitude and it laid it laid the foundations for the institutions that are still running and still umm still running the show now, so yeah that would be the sort of thing, that would be the era.
c) non racially-oriented events with no race-specific consequences.

I – ok, and umm you talked a bit about things that have gone on in the past, if you had to pick from history or even more recent events one either an event or a period of time that you feel has been critical in making Britain the country it is now, which would you choose?

SH - ..umm the industrial revolution because although all of the you know many other periods could you know deal with things that evoke more emotion, umm the very fact that we got division of labour, 9 to 5 working days umm and all the toasters in our kitchen all this sort of stuff all sprang from there and that’s what people deal with on a daily basis, so however mundane it is, that’s probably it.

Black people see the past through a racial schema and the current intergroup context informs how that past is interpreted. The time line (annex 1) shows that many of the events identified as pivotal are those related to Black people or race-relations. Brockmeier (2001) suggests that remembering happens in line with social frames which emphasise different aspects of shared reality and that different category memberships (in this case race) have an effect on these social frames. Events such as empire, post-war mass immigration, racially motivated murders and the Notting Hill Carnival were all chosen. Events which do not necessarily have any direct racial connotations were also interpreted from a racial perspective. It is interesting that not all events relating to Black people were confined to the UK context suggesting a trans-national view of Blackness as identified in the media analysis. The way in which the pivotal events were interpreted is informed by the relationship with the White majority. The choice of a pivotal event involved considering how events benefited or disadvantaged different groups in society and were perceived differentially by different groups, for example:

KW – for the British it's been a very good one, for those who were colonised it's been a bad one.

A number of the events identified are regarded as pivotal because of their positive effect on mainstream/majority Britain. The way in which the choice of such an event is discussed illustrates the ongoing salience of the inter-group relationship and the resulting need to grapple with its consequences, whether positive or negative, at any given moment:

CT – yeah, it was I mean it actually shows how the relationship between white and black people has changed, I mean it was so overtly racist and now it has changed and the amount of Black people who were killed it was so explicit and up until the death of Stephen Lawrence, I think it has been a watershed because I think it was, I think that white society’s consciousness has been raised umm and I think that has a lot to do with just time that the white kids these days because they mix more and interact more and are less parochial In think, because I know when you go
further out in the country people are more parochial, they just don't integrate, they just don't have any understanding of the other and so people in mixed marriages and so on are not, it's much more of a normal thing now at least in some parts of London and some parts of England so I think because of that it's forcing people to challenge the old way of looking at things as well so I think yeah I think the death of Stephen Lawrence I think was quite a big umm social event I think.

I – and ok, so you mentioned that that sort of post-war immigration was very important in changing Britain, do you feel that it changed Britain for the better or the worse?

SC – some of it was changed for the better because it was umm some British people then weren't so ignorant about obviously I can only talk about the Caribbean, because they thought that everyone lived in trees and it was a jungle, so it did help you know letting people know what it is like and umm I think it could happen again if people were open to change as well.

Within the category of race specific responses, one interviewee took a somewhat different approach to answering the question and identified action by Black people in Britain rather than the effects of the actions of the majority on the Black population, the description is one of an oppositional relationship existing in a state of perpetual tension with Black people having a degree of power in maintaining the status quo. Parallels are drawn with Black-White relationships elsewhere in the world suggesting a trans-national anchoring of the oppositional inter-group relationship.

I – I know you've sort of resisted talking about the past but if you had to pick umm some sort of event or era from Britain's past that you would say has been critical in shaping modern Britain would you be able to pick one?

DS – ooh umm Windrush? Umm there have been certain times in the past where umm tragedy has struck elsewhere in the world and you've had a big influx of refugees umm second world war, umm ... ummm riots, big ones in Brixton, Tottenham

I – Toxteth as well in Liverpool

DS – all these have perhaps made people realise that they need to work a little bit harder to end the subterfuge, show a bit more tolerance or whatever umm it does appear though that whenever things get shaken up, they go ok let's try a bit harder and they give a bit more and everything settles down and it's always just on the verge of going off and the keeeep you there because it's like...it's almost like umm we define the level of wrongness that we will allow to take place or unfairness that we'll allow to take place and as soon as it tips over that we'll burn your shoos and loot the houses (laughing) you know and it's a matter of like balancing that line umm

I – so it's almost a process of negotiation that's ongoing?

DS – continually yeah umm ... and it gets complicated because they give you wonderful things like umm you know stick a certain amount of you in good jobs with good money, umm very carefully choose, I suppose it's almost like umm, if you were going to have a war then you would choose your lieutenants, your sergeants, your generals and whatever else within the Black
community, it's almost like by hook or by crook umm Britain will recruit these people beforehand and put them into comfortable positions. The same thing they do, did in Africa, to the chiefs, they gave them loads of money, gave them their brand-new BMWs and whatever else and they do the same thing in England you know so the ones who are more likely to inspire others and bring them together to actually have a you know a concerted effort for change are swallowed up in the materialistic

The racial view of the past reflects and constructs the present. Clearly the pivotal event question was framed in such a way as to encourage participants to consider the links between the event that they identified and the present, but it showed how even the more distant past was seen as connected with the present. Importantly it also shows how the illegitimacy associated with that past is seen as continuing to have positive benefits for Britain in the present and this affects the degree to which those benefits can be perceived as legitimate by Black people in the UK. Thus the current world power and economic status of the UK is not characterised as neutral or inevitable, but rather as stemming from negative interactions with non-Whites in the past. Thus identity is determining representation in such a way as to ensure that the present is anchored in the inter-group past.

I – ok, and thinking about sort of Britain now in the early part of the 21st century, if you had to pick either a time period or a particular event from the past that's been sort of absolutely you know pivotal in making Britain what it is now, which would you pick?

ED - …industrial revolution

I – mm hmm why would you pick that one?

ED - …the period leading up to it is when the institutions came into being, banks, insurance, the slave trade, institutions have developed forging a sort of a can-do mentality, umm we rule the world type attitude and it laid it laid the foundations for the institutions that are still running and still umm still running the show now, so yeah that would be the sort of thing, that would be the era.

I – ok and then we've talked a bit about the past, is there any particular even from the past that you think has been important is shaping modern Britain?

KW – the existence of the British empire, without the British empire, Britain would not have been able to umm amass so many riches from so many different countries in order to put it in the area of hierarchy that it is at the moment, without the existence of the empire, Britain wouldn't be any greater than umm a small island in the pacific

The past is seen as personal. The role of race is apparent in the choice of content for the representation and the way in which it is related to the individual on a personal level as well as to the group. Participants tended to choose events or eras which were relatively recent in terms of the broad sweep of history, with more than 50% citing an event from the twentieth century, and
they described them in ways which showed perceptions of a personal connection. While the quotes above show the consequences of the past on the present at a macro level, the past was also conceptualised in personal terms and the self was clearly located within a more recent Black chronology.

\[ R - \quad \text{... I think.... Umm....oh I don't know.... Big event.... ...ummm.....I think there was a thing that that sticks in my mind, two things I think, there was a thing umm they was trying to stop that big event against racism in Southall many many many years ago and I think it was Blair something yeah got killed wasn't it because that was a big event because I think that really changed, that really really changed things umm and that showed because Southall's such a very small area and over this way is all you know I mean people sort of say this is country over here because there's so much green whatever and I think that changed thing loads, that changed things for me because I didn't realise that there was so many unblack people, I say unblack people because I don't know their nationality or whatever they wasn't of black skin and I was there and it really kind of showed me like oh my god, that really showed me that other people do care that they had white faces if you like umm and I think another thing that's, another big event that's changed things and let other people see other people is probably Carnival, I know it sounds trivial but I know people that just don't mix with Black people but they love the carnival thing and that's their time, when I say they don't mix with Black people they don't intentionally not to mix with Black people they either live in areas that there aren't a lot of Black people or they just don't come face to face with, but I think that's an event when lots of people, I know people that I've met and said oh you know I've never eaten anything you know until I've gone to carnival and now carnival isn't just about you know Caribbean now you know you've got as many Indian stalls there with Indian food, Chinese and everything so I think when I'm just thinking event that's what I think
\]

\[ V - \quad \text{Black rights I think}
\]

\[ I - \quad \text{uhh huu and when would you, what sort of time period would you call that?}
\]

\[ V - \quad \text{umm the 60s, Martin Luther King and Malcolm X and all that}
\]

\[ I - \quad \text{so the sort of effect of that American change on on? And what sort of changes do you feel it made?}
\]

\[ V - \quad \text{well, in like at school the history work that we did do was like where like the Black people had to sit at the back of the bus and wasn't given the right to go into places where White people were or anywhere and I think that was completely wrong because they was all human just skin colour that's different that's it, so I think I don't even know how I would, how I would even respond if it was like that now, but probably be no difference if it hadn't changed but thank God for that}
\]

\[ I - \quad \text{so in a sense you feel like you're personally benefiting from that time period?}
\]

\[ V - \quad \text{yeah I think every every Black person would}
\]

There is an interesting contrast here. At the macro level the consequences of the past are perceived as mainly negative for Black people, the quotes above show that when the more recent past is connected with the self in the present it is done from a more positive perspective. Thus
Black as a group is associated with victimhood compared with individuals focusing on progress to when describing their own personal situation. This echoes the findings of the focus group study in which a similar dichotomy between a negative collective past and a progressive personal past is evident.

6.4.6 Discussion

The data on the pivotal events is mixed and somewhat patchy, but it does provide an opportunity to focus on specific events from the past chosen by the participants rather than on the more abstract discussions relating to the descriptions used in the sorting task. The question was challenging for most participants, but particularly for those with lower educational attainment as it does require some historical knowledge.

This part of the study revealed a distinctive perspective on the past both in terms of the content selected and also in how that content was interpreted; the choice of trans-national Black events echoes the way in which Blackness was constructed globally both by the Black print media and also in the focus group study. The analysis has illustrated the importance of race in the pivotal events where the participants were given a free choice. However, it is equally relevant that while race is used as an organising principle for viewing and interpreting the past it does so in a way in which supports the distinctive nature of the Black category. Events from the past are not cited to illustrate the key values of Blackness or to describe the nature of the category, rather they are used to illustrate the effect of the inter-categorical context within which the category has evolved, including its oppositional element. While it is not possible to determine a causal relationship from the data, the way in which the question was posed suggests that the answers stemmed from their assessment of the present situation and this informed their view of the past. It is not possible to assume that this was the case for the entire study, but the answers to this question were not radically different in content or tone from those for the rest of the study suggesting that the present also informed their responses to the past element of the sorting task. The pivotal event data and analysis also crystallise a number of the themes raised during the sorting task.
Annex 1

Time Line

William the Conqueror  Industrial Revolution [x3]  Empire  The Victorians  Post WW2 non-White immigration / Windrush [3]
60s Black Civil Rights  World Cup victory  Murder of Blair Peach  Thatcherism [x2]  80s 'race' riots  Murder of Stephen Lawrence
carnival
6.5 Theme 2 – The present

The past-based sub-themes set the historical context for exploration of the present. In particular they have established the principle that Britishness is subject to problematisation. The ‘present’ theme builds on the modern consequences of this representation of the past for the participants in terms of distance from the category British and the antagonistic and oppositional relationship between Blackness and Britishness.

6.5.1 Sub-theme 1: the distancing discourse

The present: “Who are ‘we’”?"

When discussing the present, the participants were articulating their current perceived relationship with the White majority, Britain and Britishness, this is illustrated through an analysis of speech patterns and, in particular, through the choice of pronouns. This shows how the participants position themselves outside the category ‘British’ and how they maintain a verbal distance from Britain and Britishness. During the analysis attention was paid to how the participants described different groups in terms of their relationships to themselves to see to what extent they used speech patterns such as “we”, or “they” to indicate to what extent, they affiliated themselves verbally with particular groups under discussion.

Most participants tended to use the “we” form most often when talking about themselves as Black people. When referring to British people, or the British nation they tended to use the “they” form suggesting that they perceived the category to be external to and not one which they felt part of. The exception to this pattern occurred when Black people spoke of Britain and British people within the international or trans-national context, on these occasions when making comparisons between Britain and other nations the “we” form was sometimes used. The use of the first person plural for international matters may indicate the lack of other categories with which to affiliate when drawing distinctions between other nations, however it still contrasts with the deixic form identified by Billig (1995) in which he identified the use of we/us in the international context as being an attempt to equate national concerns with those of the international community and therefore as a discursive strategy with an hegemonic aim.

ED – ..... Creativity, creative...creative, the opposite to dull I guess some of which I talked about, the opportunities that are there umm and how creative we need to be, we as in Black people, need to be to get some things done (laughing) it takes a bit of creative thoughts to get things done umm so that’s where that came through. Creativity, I just saw something in the papers the other day on fashion and all that kind of stuff and it’s funny that that popped into my head. Umm I think the creativity are the opportunities and subsume all that I’ve said under that, opportunities. Arrogance, arrogance the umm everyone speaks English... we can go out across the world and
Um we go out across the world and expect everyone to speak, I heard myself saying we as well (laughing). I wondered if that’s what you were smiling at, the arrogance umm, umm

CT – I think modern, umm I think they’re quite they’re quite a modern country I think they do because you always hear them trying to sort of umm, they’re still sort of striving in some way to be, this is the dichotomy I think where the imperialistic past is still, it’s still having to come to terms with that and that they have to be more a multi-cultural society and be much more reflexive about how things are, but I think that this sort of history that they’ve had, I think it’s very hard to sort of get away from and I think it comes out in their talk about war for example and about for example and about the best in the world and these words that they use umm, it’s very sort of ….I suppose it’s a reminder of what they had I guess in a way so I think that’s quite hard to get rid of and I think and I sort of wonder how much of that inherent belief in themselves I think is part of what they’re still trying to do as well, not like France for example which might have a different umm way of trying to be modern umm, you know while for us I think, for the British I think it’s much more about something else which is in the past perhaps

In the following quote from a Black male we can see a pronounced use of the third person formulation which tapers off when the sub group and behaviour being described becomes more acceptable, however it never reaches the point of the speaker using the first person plural to identify or ally himself with the majority young people he is talking about.

MM – yeah they don’t, they don’t look beyond skin colour sometimes, some people to the older generation and they’re ignorant of how but well I’m educated but if a lot of the older White people who look at me will think that I’m just I don’t know a mugger or a thief or a drug dealer you know or a stoner, but then I still use the word tolerant as well because some of the younger generation are you know understand and accept the differences in culture and people ok. Arrogant, now it seems to be that looking at it, there’s two different types of people there’s the older generation who’s a bit more arrogant and the younger generation that’s not quite so. So the older generation’s arrogant in their beliefs. I was on the train yesterday and this old lady just walked right towards me and just expected me to get out of the way and I was like ‘slow down, slow down’ and she still didn’t look at me, talk to me just tried to get past me, that’s that arrogance whereas a younger person would just take their time and would see me if you know what I mean.

Throughout the interview process the interviewer deliberately spoke about Britain, British people and Black people rather than using any personal pronouns. Some of the participants initially echoed this clumsy formulation and used it in their answers prior to a more naturalistic use of pronouns. One participant became aware of the fact that he was using the “they” form and corrected himself during his speech before reverting to use of “they” later in the interview. This suggests that he was aware that he was representing a group of which he was technically a member in such a way as to deny that membership and he showed concern that this might be seen as inappropriate or negatively perceived by the interviewer.
6.5.2 Discussion

In so far as use of pronouns indicates an underlying attitude or identification, it seems clear that the speech patterns of the participants show that they see the category British as external rather than internal from a domestic perspective.

Billig argues (1996) that the media and politicians routinely use the deixis of words such as we, us, the, they, here and there as part of the process of "flagging" nationality and to reinforce banal nationalism. The ultimate purpose of banal nationalism, for Billig, is to maintain the population in a state of latent readiness which can then be activated into "hot" nationalism as and when the nation requires so that the population is prepared for the physical sacrifice and disruption required by war or other upheaval. Billig argues that the nation is reproduced daily through selective and collective remembering and forgetting and that there is power in that which is taken for granted. This analysis of the way in which Black people talk about the nation in normal talk builds on the Banal Nationalism analysis of the anchoring in the Black print media in study 1 and suggests that in the interview context the participants showed themselves, through their choice of words, to be 'immune' or at least resistant to this flagging of the UK. The choice of pronouns effectively distances the Black speaker from Britain and Britishness and reinforces the sense of detachment from the national category.

Sub-theme 2: Explaining and blaming in self-definition

As the analysis above shows, the British category was constructed through speech patterns in such a way as to maintain its distance and externality. Britishness is also involved in the process of the co-construction of Blackness in a way which is antagonistic and oppositional. The antagonistic relationship informs the representation of both Blackness and Britishness and is perceived as having constraining implications for self-definition and identification.

When asked to choose a category for self-definition, participants drew on their own personal pasts to explain their options and choices and also to allocate responsibility for it. The participants base their self-definition firmly within the context created by the White majority and use it to explain that self-definition. Britishness and Englishness were perceived as having been
constructed by the White majority as racially based, this construction, therefore, limited the possibility for any other racial group to define as British.

I – ok, so you prefer the British designation rather than English, what does that actually mean to you?

KW – It means that I don’t see myself as ethnically English, however I am born British

I – what do you mean by ethnically English

KW - because I’m a different colour from the majority of the population, I’m seen as being different, so I’ve always considered myself as different and I’m always viewed as different, so I don’t consider myself English.

DS - ....whole gamut, younger I always said English uhh because I felt English uhh but older British and not being accepted as British by necessity and then about a year ago I went through this whole thing where I am an English, West Indian African kind of trying to combine myself (laughing) and then I realised it’s pointless all these applications and it’s a tick box to tell you who you are, I generally just miss them out and talk to the people when I actually get to the interview. They can tell my make-up, parent’s culture, my country’s where I was born and bred so therefore for me to define being English, I can’t because of my West Indian background, British yes, born here, raised here but once again lots of West Indian influences.

SC – umm, I don’t, I don’t think people perceive me to be British, they look at me as a foreigner.

CT – yeah, yeah I think modern full stop, but I think that their modernity has a lot to do with their umm with the past and that struggle I think to sort of umm to you know find the modernity, but I don’t think that they can because I think it’s part of them, do you know what I mean, so I don’t know which way to put it I guess. I suppose it’s like me being you know British, African Caribbean whatever despite the fact that I classify myself as African Caribbean I have a lot of Britishness in me you know but I can’t forget that, but because I’m black as well and black has a lot of things attached to it as well so it’s not possible to just say British and because I sort of see Britishness as an aspect of it as being white.

The perceived importance of race in the definition of Britishness also had consequences for the way in which Blackness was constructed. The racial nature of the inter-group context gives a pre-eminence to consideration of race making both Blackness and Whiteness salient. The salience of Blackness and the dominance attached to it by the White majority is in turn re-appropriated and used as the basis for a race-based identity.

R – yeah because I do find it quite annoying, because like both my children are really very fair, very fair and umm I mean they obviously know that I always sort of tell them that they’re Black.
British and everything and to the point where I've got another friend who her children are mixed race, she’s English and she gets quite upset she says well I tell my children, I said but you can’t tell them that they’re English because they are Black English and you know we like sort of got in this debate about it and I was saying well obviously for me I would just, I would feel a fool saying anything else because I think I’d, apart from the fact that I’d be laughed at and I do think it is although people say but you shouldn’t sort of like place yourself on colour I think that’s a load of crap because that’s what everybody else does, that’s what’s done on forms and everything it’ll be what’s the police IC1 or IC2 so so when they’re saying that then you know that everything goes before you first you are, I see myself as being I would be Black, female, R, date of birth blah blah blah, but my colour’s coming foremost they’re not gonna, that comes before anything and everything and I know that because because obviously I’ve experienced it they don’t say oh her name’s RW and she’s English, it’s RW IC, I don’t even know which way I don’t know if the IC is English or whatever, but that’s that’s what everybody does umm do I get angry? I don’t feel emotional over it or I will stand my ground, I am Black foremost and then the British comes after because that’s how

What is important here is the way in which responsibility is distributed. Black people represent themselves as self-defining in racial terms, not as a result of their own choice, but as a result of the situational constraints imposed by the categories constructed by the majority. It is this context which makes that self-definition problematic.

The analysis supports the findings of the focus group study with the tendency to attribute both the source and responsibility for a lack of Britishness externally. It also illustrates the effect which the inter-categorical context has on the degree to which particular options are considered to be available as genuine choices. As in the focus group data, there are examples of individuals who started out using the English or British label as children, possibly to distinguish themselves from the immigrant generation, and then as part of the maturation process recognised that external influences meant that this was not a real option whether they wanted it or not. The quoting of the racial and national categories used in official documentation in both studies emphasises the degree to which the constraints are seen as institutionalised by the British authorities so that choice of label is not simply one of individual personal preference.

6.5.4 Self-definition: Black, British, Black British, English, African Caribbean or something else?

At the start of the interview participants were asked to provide a self-definition label. They were asked whether they would call themselves British, English or something else, none opted for the English label and indeed the English label was actively rejected by some participants. British or Black British were the only forms of Britishness used and they required explanation. The interview schedule included a supplementary question asking participants to state how being Black related to their feelings of Britishness. This question was not usually required because the participants tended to spontaneously include reference to their race in their self-descriptions. This suggests not only that race is an important element of self-description (though unnecessary in a face-to-
face context) but also that the connection between race and nationality required some explanation or elaboration whether positive or negative.

I – ok, and would you describe yourself as British, English or something else?

ED – (laughs), not English, British umm African Caribbean male umm hmmm there’s a mixture

I – mm hmm and what does that mean to you, what's behind that?

ED – what does that mean to me (clears throat) encaps, encapsulates my ... historical identity umm gosh this is a whole new debate, this will take up the whole of your tape (laughing)

The lack of an easy or obvious self-definition, does not necessarily reflect a lack of self-knowledge in the participants, indeed, it was evident that a number of them had given the issue of category labels a great deal of thought and had recognised that the various barriers in play created problems both for labels but also for a sense of national belonging.

I – you do and would you describe yourself as British, English or something else?

DS – mm hmmm ummm, depends where I am, how I'm feeling, I think I've gone through the whole gamut, younger I always said English uhh because I felt English uhh but older British and not being accepted as British by necessity and then about a year ago I went through this whole thing where I am an English, West Indian African kind of trying to combine myself (laughing) and then I realised it's pointless all these applications and it's a tick box to tell you who you are, I generally just miss them out and talk to the people when I actually get to the interview. They can tell my make-up, parent's culture, my country's where I was born and bred so therefore for me to define being English, I can't because of my West Indian background, British yes, born here, raised here but once again lots of West Indian influences.

I – so you don't have a neat little title that you'd use?

DS – unfortunately not, I think that because of the concept of Black British, once again even that could mean people who've been born elsewhere and come here, they've got a British passport and they're Black well it's like I'm more complex than that, I'm much more. I'm much more mixed up than that.

CA – umm I would say if we're breaking this down to its core that I'm probably a person with no home at all umm you need to get this sort of sense of belonging generally to wherever your born but because of the inequalities in the system and the system is modelled for certain types of class people and not for someone of my class, ethnic background unless I'm bringing something to the table which is usually in this country at least sports and entertainment although it getting, it is better than what it was there is an inequality to the system so if there's an inequality to the system you always hark for your parental home but because there are stereotypes and stereotypes which have never been challenged umm if I was to go back home, my reception there is likely to be worse than it is here because you're seen as being soiled by the country you were born in, so in the end I'm a person with no home but technically I'm Black British.
The complications described are represented as reflection of the lack of acceptable available options. A range of options were established by the interview question in that the alternatives offered consisted of national categories, “British, English, European or something else”.

However, participants did not passively accept the options offered reflecting a perception that the labels currently on offer needed to be qualified, revised or explained. This may suggest that the category itself is still in the process of being constructed and negotiated and indeed a number of participants mentioned how the labels which they used for self-definition had changed over the course of their lifetime.

**R** - I don’t know, *I think a sign of the times really because I think before I just used to say I think well if I go right back when I think when people used to say like school* times well where are you from, I used to say well I’m English, that was it and as I’ve got older my concept’s completely changed and now I just see myself as Black British because I do think it’s all about the colour of your skin and everything I don’t think I’d feel a fool standing up. *Ok, like for example a lot of things you get from school like when my kids come home with all the different umm categories you can now sign off in thing, you used to just have, it was always Black, English, Chinese, Indian that’s all it was I mean nowadays it’s Black English, Black this, Black that, I’m quite shocked in the amount of things it does even in my own little category ie the Black which used to be very small now that’s Black mixed, Black Caribbean, Black English, Black Chinese, Black other, so so for me now it is about your colour and then what are you so umm I suppose in the last 10 years I’ve created this other thing where I do say Black British.

Those who opted for the ‘something else’ option either drew on racial or ethnic categories or amalgamated an ethnic/racial label with a national one. It is interesting that in JH’s quote, Black Britishness is defined in terms of difference, and two forms of distinctiveness are identified. The Blackness is seen as different from Caribbean Blackness and the Britishness is set apart as different from White Britishness:

**JH** - ...*British, Black British I’d probably

**I** – and umm what does that description mean for you if anything?

**JH** - ..... *It means that I was born here so essentially uhh who I am is my, a part of who I am is my is where I’ve come from and what my environment was, that’s what I, that’s what I think and so my environment is a British environment, I can’t call myself a West Indian even though my parents are, yeah so even though part of my, part of my upbringing was influenced by my parents who were West Indian, the fact that my sss, my immediate society is is a British society so that’s why I could term myself as British but I am, there is a difference between me and my err fellow colleagues is because I think there is a big difference, the fact, the fact that there is a colour difference that brings into play like cultural difference as well in terms of traditions, backgrounds beliefs uhh quite a lot of differences there yeah.

**I** – so you’d see that as quite a distinctive umm form of Britishness if you like?

**JH***-I think it is yeah definitely, definitely
I – ok, right that’s fine, umm and umm and would you describe yourself as British, English or something else?

V – umm…British but on like application forms and that I do put Black Caribbean

……

I – right, so if you had a choice between Black British and African Caribbean which would you choose?

V – African Caribbean

The range of available options was itself influenced by perceptions of what others would allow. In the case of the White majority this reflected an aspect of the power relationship, but it was also relevant to the views of those resident in the Caribbean, though the Caribbean context elicited a different response.

MM – umm, Black British I think it’s because some English people insist on Britishness, yeah that’s the best way to describe it I think.

I – so you feel the need to bring in the Blackness to emphasise the distinctive quality?

MM – no I feel the need to bring in the Britishness

I – to emphasise that

MM – to emphasise where I was born

I – right, so the Blackness is central and the Britishness is secondary?

R –……., but then when I’m abroad, like when I, when I do go to the West Indies and everything I it’s really weird because then everything I’m saying it sounds quite hypocritical because when I’m there, I always say well you know I’m Jamaican and then they tell me yeah but you’re foreign because you’re from England but I don’t dither about that, when I’m there I am Jamaican but I don’t do that here, here I am Black British whereas I have as much right to say here I’m English but I don’t I don’t say that.

6.5.5 Discussion

There was no consensus among participants on how to self-define, such agreement as there was centered on the issue of how not to define and the perception of the White majority as the main source of the barriers to finding an acceptable definition. Thus the issues raised by the analysis of self-definition illustrate many of the larger issues associated with the category itself. The oppositional way in which the category is constructed is constrained by the power dynamics of the intergroup context, by the evolution of the intergroup relationship over time and the resulting
mixing of racial and national labels as part of the active construction of new categories, some of which take hybrid forms. Reicher and Hopkins (1996) offer a useful perspective on the way in which the role of the other is used in self-definition. "As defining the self implies defining oneself in relation to others it follows that the adoption of a particular category necessarily involves a commitment to a particular model of social relations... just as particular self-categorisations define what action is possible so one’s experience of what is possible may support and sustain the development and maintenance of particular self-categorisations" (emphasis added).

It could be argued that the group context of the focus group study might have inhibited some individuals who may have wanted to identify as British or English. However, in the more intimate setting of an individual interview and having been offered British and English as self-definition options there is still a clear reluctance to accept these labels as appropriate personal descriptions. It is also evident that the power of the inter-categorical context has an impact on alternative options for self-definition which may in turn limit the possibilities for group entativity. As Flores (2003) states: “But the search for a name, more than an act of classification, is actually a process of historical imagination and a struggle over social meaning at diverse levels of interpretation.”

6.5.6 Sub-theme 3: The construction of Blackness in the context of Britishness

The focus of the interview was the representation of Britain and British people, rather than an explicit consideration of Blackness, however, Blackness was raised by the participants (mainly in connection with Britishness) and it was apparent that the temporal and geographical position of these respondents as first or second generation Black British people born in the UK raised questions about their Blackness as well as their Britishness. The context within which national identity was negotiated also influenced the negotiation and construction of racial identity in both positive and negative ways.

While Blackness was never described in negative terms by the participants, it was clear that the distinctive form of Blackness described was a product of their experiences as a UK racial minority and this was different from the Blackness available in, for example, the Caribbean. The source of this Blackness seems to be the UK context which sets the parameters for the construction of Blackness and influences both the processes involved and the specific form of Blackness which is its outcome. The racial element of the construction of Britishness creates an inbuilt duality or dialectic. As discussed in relation to the construction of Britishness, the participants felt that at least part of the reason why they were reluctant to self-define as British and to a greater extent English was that these categories had a White racial composition defined by the majority which precluded their admission.
This definition of Britishness and Englishness not only determined the rules of admission at national level but also created the context in which other categories are constructed within the Black population and negotiated between the Black minority and White majority. The discussion below focuses on how this context influences the processes associated with the construction of Blackness and the group entativity of the category Black.

Racial construction of Britishness and Englishness

CT – .... I suppose it’s like me being you know British, African Caribbean whatever despite the fact that I classify myself as African Caribbean I have a lot of Britishness in me you know but I can’t forget that, but because I’m black as well and black has a lot of things attached to it as well so it’s not possible to just say British and because I sort of see Britishness as an aspect of it as being white

I – and therefore that’s unavailable to you?

CT – yeah mm hmm I think it always will be

I – ok, so you prefer the British designation rather than English, what does that actually mean to you?

KW – It means that I don’t see myself as ethnically English, however I am born British

I – what do you mean by ethnically English

KW – because I’m a different colour from the majority of the population. I’m seen as being different, so I’ve always considered myself as different and I’m always viewed as different, so I don’t consider myself English.

R – I don’t know, I think a sign of the times really because I think before I just used to say I think well if I go right back when I think when people used to say like school times well where are you from, I used to say well I’m English, that was it and as I’ve got older my concept’s completely changed and now I just see myself as Black British because I do think it’s all about the colour of your skin and everything I don’t think I’d feel a fool standing up

6.5.7 Key processes

The racial nature of the inter-categorical context gives a pre-eminence to consideration of race making both Blackness and Whiteness salient and the salience of Blackness and the dominance attached to it by the White majority is in turn re-appropriated and used as the basis for a race-based identity.

R – yeah because I do find it quite annoying, because like both my children are really very fair, very fair and umm I mean they obviously know that I always sort of tell them that they’re Black British and everything and to the point where I’ve got another friend who her children are mixed
race, she’s English and she gets quite upset she says well I tell my children, I said but you can’t
tell them that they’re English because they are Black English and you know we like sort of got in
this debate about it and I was saying well obviously for me I would just, I would feel a fool saying
anything else because I think I’d, apart from the fact that I’d be laughed at and I do think it is
although people say but you shouldn’t sort of like place yourself on colour I think that’s a load of
crap because that’s what everybody else does, that’s what’s done on forms and everything it’ll be
what’s the police IC1 or IC2 so so when they’re saying that then you know that everything goes
before you first you are, I see myself as being I would be Black, female, Rhea, date of birth blah
blah blah, but my colour’s coming foremost they’re not gonna, that comes before anything and
everything and I know that because because obviously I’ve experienced it they don’t say oh her
name’s RW and she’s English, it’s RW IC, I don’t even know which way I don’t know if the IC is
English or whatever, but that’s that’s what everybody does umm do I get angry? I don’t feel
emotional over it or I will stand my ground, I am Black foremost and then the British comes after
because that’s how

The key process identified is that of inter-categorical comparison which influences the way in
which Blackness is then constructed. The cultural distinctiveness associated with being raised as
a Black person in a predominantly White environment is emphasised and it is this distinctive
product which is described set against the cultural experience of those born in the Caribbean or
the UK White majority.

The second quotation illustrates how this participant recognises the process in his own history
and within the Black population and subsequently rejects comparison as a basis for self-definition
and self-determination. This powerful and positive statement of this distinctive form of Blackness
acknowledges the intergroup comparative context within which it was born both immediate and
historical and recognises its geographical specificity.

JH - ...British, Black British I’d probably

I – and umm what does that description mean for you if anything?

JH - .... It means that I was born here so essentially uhh who I am is my, a part of who I am is my
is where I’ve come from and what my environment was, that’s what I, that’s what I think and so
my environment is a British environment, I can’t call myself a West Indian even though my
parents are, yeah so even though part of my, part of my upbringing was influenced by my parents
who were West Indian, the fact that my sss, my immediate society is is a British society so that’s
why I could term myself as British but I am, there is a difference between me and my err fellow
colleagues is because I think there is a big difference, the fact, the fact that there is a colour
difference that brings into play like cultural difference as well in terms of a traditions, backgrounds
beliefs uhh quite a lot of differences there yeah.

ED – ok, umm it goes back quite some way, when I was young, growing up often I’d hear in the
Black community you need to be twice as better, you need to be better than the White man and
so forth and so on so that was resonating for quite some time and as I grew older I said well if I’m
looking at someone else then I’m not really watching myself kind of idea came so therefore time
came to find out more about myself so that I can draw strength from me as opposed to looking
and making comparisons to someone else umm and out of that long, going back a few years as I
say um and out of that came a true understanding as to who and what I am which is that I am not,
I am more than what I was told, if I was just, if I was English then I would subscribe to the history of and I don't, now if I was Jamaican then I came into being in 1492 or whenever it was when Columbus stumbled across that little island umm but both of those here and there are significant in my development so I encompass all of that but I'm beyond that I go right back to the dawn of time. I take on board all of that umm Egypt, the first human beings were Black and so I draw strength from all of that and that's what fuels be, that, the Caribbean and here fuels me and fires me.

I - so you think that's quite a positive

ED - I see that as very positive

I - right and something that gives you strength

ED - yeah and I draw my strength from that....the acknowledgment of those who have suffered and died so that I could sit here in this room with you today, so that we could have this conversation today, I draw strength from those who have martyred themselves basically so that I can do what I'm doing umm and also that I draw strength from the fact that I am blessed that I am Black fundamentally you know umm it's not perceived as being a negative thing, it's not perceived as being as something that I'm anti anyone else, but it's taking strength from who and what I am umm so yeah.

The form of Blackness is negotiated within the Black population with reference to the White majority context. The inter-categorical nature of the context in which Blackness is constructed is identified below as having an impact on how Blackness is defined by Black people to provide a set of behaviours and norms in which anything outside certain parameters is considered to be a betrayal of the race. It shows how Blackness is defined to some extent as 'not white" so that because mainstream society is, by numerical definition, White the endorsement of mainstream UK norms, values and behaviours is deemed to be both an endorsement of Whiteness and therefore a rejection of Blackness.

MM - yeah yeah (laughing), I think that's quite endearing actually, but yeah so it's only my perspective, my perspective of myself as a Black man has slightly changed yeah

I - so do you feel that Black people in the South are perhaps not open to different sorts of Blackness in a sense?

MM - yes

I - I mean you can't be Black and Northern?

MM - yeah I think they, people in the South, they have their turns of phrase, their manners of speaking and cars which they wish to drive and there is a hierarchy there yeah, umm once you, if you go out say and study, have a different accent, use longer words, they might get a bit nervous of you and think that you're trying to join, you know and call you coconut, not that I've ever been called that, but you know think you're trying to join the White middle classes and they might be either threatened by it or I don't know probably think that you're not genuine, not genuine Black but it doesn't actually bother me very much.
This Blackness is derived from the exclusionary nature of the construction of Britishness, one participant who had lived both in London and the North West was quite clear that the relative proportions of Black and White in the local population influenced both White perceptions of Black threat and the form of Blackness which resulted:

I – and how do you feel that, you know a lot of the things that you’ve said, do you feel that time that you spent in a different sort of Britain if you like has affected the way that you see it?

MM – the time I spent in Preston has affected the way I see the whole country?

I – yeah or Britishness if you like

MM – I think it’s had more effect on how I saw Black people in some respects, because I come back. I met a guy on the train yesterday and he was all patois, he was probably born here, but he was all full of patois and he really got on my nerves actually, ...., but my whole view of Britain hasn’t particularly changed except for how people up north, I was surprised to find that they were less racist than the people in London, than the White people in London.

I – what form did that take, I mean how did you feel that they were less racist?

MM – ...... but in Preston people you walk past them and they all say good morning or hello you know and there’s no problem with, they don’t look at you as, maybe they look at you as different, but they don’t see you as a threat you know and it’s just much more friendly.

I – do you have a feel for why that should be?

MM – do I wonder why that is?

I – mmm hmm

MM – I think it’s because there’s not many Black people there, so they’re not seen as a threat, once you get, I always laugh with my mates that if there’s 3 of us we shouldn’t stand still, you know 3 Black people can’t stand still, 2 of us is fine, 3 or 4 they think it’s a riot, so yeah I think it’s because there’s less perception of a threat whereas umm down here in London there’s a lot more people might find threatening yeah

6.5.8 Discussion

The sub-themes discussed within the organising theme of ‘the present’ provide an explanation of the current position of Black people in the UK. The refusal to identify as British is explicit in choice of category label and implicit in the boundaries which are encapsulated in the way in which personal pronouns are chosen and used.

The sub-themes reflect the links between the process and content associated with the perceived incompatibility between Blackness and Britishness. Britishness is perceived as unavailable because it has been constructed in racial terms by the White majority.
This construction informs and constrains the context within which Blackness and Britishness interact with each other. The processes identified are marked by the external attributions also found in study 2, and absence of conflict of values and relatively little emphasis on discrimination and injustice as potential sources of social exclusion.

6.6 Theme 3 – the future

The sub-themes identified and discussed relating to the present show how Black people perceive their current historical connection with Britishness in terms of a lack of both identification and a sense of belongingness. Constructions of the past and present are then used as a basis for a particular representation of a possible future. The participants identify roles for themselves which influence the development of British society, but this is not constructed in terms of political organisation and participation and crucially is not conditional on a sense of Britishness, either collective or personal.

6.6.1 Sub-theme - The way in which the participants construct Britishness is seen as having implications for future action and activity.

The third aspect of the temporal dimension is the future, and here the analysis focuses on the way in which the past is used to facilitate or to constrain representations of possible futures. Participants used their distinctive historical perspective to interpret the effect which the presence of ethnic minorities in the UK has had on mainstream society. This theme has two main functions, it identifies continuity in the roles of catalyst and resistance and also delimits the role and boundaries of the group in UK society.

As discussed above, the past was seen as a barrier to the UK making the changes needed to adapt for the future, both domestically and internationally leading to a sense that change tended only to occur when forced or occurred as a form of self-preservation, this trend was identified for both the present and the future.

I – oh right ok, that's great and the last one looking towards the future, things that are likely to be true in 20 years or so from now.

RD - they have to be adaptable and they have to be tolerant, the only reason why they have to so that is as I said before it's a case of self-preservation but also there's and example with that umm the Euro, umm I think it's cool that I have this on tape, at least then you have this prophecy on tape. They have to bring in the Euros in England some time, it will happen, not because they want to but because they'll have no choice so they have to be tolerant, I mean adaptable to that, adaptable to the fact that they're not the same as they used to be which is the reason why they'll have to join into this European market and tolerant because they have to be tolerant.
likely to be true of Britain and British people 20 years from now... outward-looking cos I think they'll have to I took outward-looking to mean umm more outward-looking uhh to... umm what am I trying to say, outward-looking to have more of a .... To see things more in other people's umm umm eyes and realise that it is cosmopolitan everything is changed and I think eventually which is what I was just saying there I think eventually I do think because of, because I think that the up and coming generations will have hopefully erased most of the ignorance purely because of the multi-racial mixing and everything that's going on, that's why I think that.

Ethnic minorities were identified as being a force for change in the UK and as a catalyst for progress, but participants were aware that this process was met with resistance by the majority and that this resistance could rebound on ethnic minorities at both a personal and a group level.

CT – yeah, absolutely yeah, it just depends on the definition, if it means that I tolerate you just because it's ok or deep inside I just have to cope with you when it's not so I don't think it is. Fair mm.... well I suppose in the really explicit sense, no not fair because I think that they've had to be pulled in to be fair, this idea of equal opportunities, the idea of coming to grips and studying institutionalised racism, I think it's not easy for them to think and to be fair because they think that its that society is dominant and that it's the norm umm and everything else has to subscribe to all of that so it isn't easy for them to actually think of themselves as belonging to other groups or anything like that so it isn't fair, I think that they're having to be pulled in to being fair. I always think as well that they have this idea that they are quite fair, they have this very British thing of fairness and so on, but not really I think underneath it's umm a sense that they're superior, better than and because of that it isn't fair.

so in a way umm they are adaptable and they are adapting because I think they've been forced to adapt I think and forced to come round to the idea that they do have a past you know what I mean and they do have a history and part of the history is actually institutionalised which makes it hard to actually see what the issue is that they are racist and I think umm in well at least institutionally anyway where I've been aware of it,

KW – because people who are indigenously British are not happy about what's happened. They can see a direct relationship between immigration and the way that British society has changed and sooner or later they're going to rebel against it, whether it be through exclusion or violence or war or whatever it may be, they're not going to put up with it forever. Because we're entering a state of severe recession and something's going to have to give.

I – so in a sense, what you're saying is the way the majority of the population would see those changes having progressed is going to actually end up with a bad situation particularly for people who are not part of that majority in the future, is that reasonable?

DS – ...... Likely to be true of Britain in 20 years from now, got aggressive, creative and adaptable umm as much as they try and resist Britain is a microcosm, right word, Britain reflects the way the world is going, it's umm resisting change which is where you get the aggression from and that change is about becoming much more multi-cultural and actually accepting the values and......
6.6.2 Discussion

The perception that change has to be forced on the UK from outside or occurs only through necessity suggests that the participants are not optimistic about the possibility of change coming spontaneously from the efforts and inclinations of the White majority. Black people and other minorities are perceived as having a catalytic role in stimulating change on the majority and this role is also identified as having primarily negative consequences in terms of inter-relationships with the White majority. This role of Black people having a political effect by virtue of their presence in the UK was also identified by the participants in focus group 1:

P - ....exactly and maybe that's what, that's the difference we make, because we don't accept and maybe that's the difference we're making here and maybe that's what's going to happen that will wake them up, because they, they've always just accepted and if you give them a pittance, a little bit they're, they're, as the British governments have always done all the time, when their people are discontented they give them a few pence and they feel alright, maybe we're making the difference, we're making them more aware, cos when I first came to this, well I was a child, I don't remember much but I don't remember, they never discussed politics and discussed what the government was doing as they do now, but politics has always been something that Black people have always been, you know if you come to the Caribbean, politics is close to everybody's heart and they're always discussing it, endlessly, no matter how small the island.

[focus group 1]

The other consequence of this role is that it positions racial and ethnic minorities as remaining external to a sense of Britishness until the tension between legitimacy, past, present and future is reconciled. Thus the way in which the Black participants perceive the representation of the UK internationally and its associated temporal orientation has implications for perceptions of inclusion, exclusion and change which reinforce the incompatibility between Blackness and Britishness as currently represented.

Moscovici (1980), Mugny (1991) and others have hypothesised and conducted minimal group experiments to investigate how and under what circumstances minorities can influence majorities and create social change. The data presented here provides a small insight into how members of a minority group themselves see their role in social influence and change.

6.7 Conclusion

This analysis illustrates systematically how the past informs not only discussion of historical issues but also the way in which both the present and the future were perceived and the effect which these had on identity options. It illustrates how a representation of the past as both negative and illegitimate impacts on all areas of the relationship with the White majority.
The main finding of this study was that a clash of values was not a fundamental barrier to a sense of Britishness, rather the situation was more complex. In discussing Britain and Britishness, the participants have attempted to articulate their experience of being Black in the UK, and in particular, to explain how they perceive the past to have informed and impacted on that experience. The past was fundamental to what is perceived to be important, how it is interpreted and the consequences of the modern context which it has created. The sorting task also illustrates the critical perspective which the participants identify for themselves stemming both from their sense of themselves as outsiders with a degree of influence and their vision of a future role.

Perhaps most importantly, the study shows that while perceptions of present-day social exclusion, disadvantage and discrimination are important in acting as barriers to a sense of Britishness, the representations of Britain by the White majority, the conflictual and oppositional Black-White history and the uses to which the past is put by the White majority also all have a role to play in constructing an incompatibility between Blackness and Britishness.

The study also found that there was a reciprocal but antagonistic relationship between the construction of Blackness and Britishness. Blackness is a product of British history. Blackness as a category is a product of a continuity of negative common experiences with Britishness. Britishness is represented as White (by both Black and White) and therefore Britishness as a representation is inimical to/exclusive of Blackness. This means that while Blackness may be reconstructed as a source of groupness, Britishness can not and the negative common experience of Blackness has its roots in historical and current Britishness.

In addition to the main research questions which were initially under investigation, the study showed indirectly how the British context impacted on groupness and Blackness and prospects for the future.

While the findings of this study show that the past is important in the way in which people construct categories and interpret the present, it also showed that any attempt to understand the relationship between two category memberships needs to look at the degree to which they are equivalent categories before going on to look at the other factors which may influence the relationship between the two. There is little point in looking at differences in values and beliefs (cf Chrysochoou 1996), if both categories are not primarily constructed around a self-contained set of values and beliefs.
Within the reciprocal relationship proposed by the integrated paradigm, Breakwell argues that representations also have an effect on the construction of identities. The analysis above illustrates how, in the case of UK citizens of African Caribbean heritage, the social representations of Britishness (both those held by the participants and those propagated by the majority) impact on options for self-definition and provide a representational context which constrains the construction of other categories and roles. The pre-eminent role given by participants to the past in the construction of these representations is relevant in terms of how the present is explained and also in terms of perceptions of representational options for the future.

The impact which representations of Britishness have on this population is complex covering both representations of Britain/Britishness held by the participants and the participants' perceptions of the majority's representations of Britishness. The representation of Britishness held by the White majority as being racially based limits options for identifying with or self-defining as British. It was not a sense of Britain, Britishness and British people as something negative which was the principle hurdle for a lack of a self-definition as British. Rather it was the perceived representations of Britishness by the majority population which formed the barrier. The past was also a barrier to any form of identification with Britishness in that “buying into” Britishness was perceived to some extent to involve an acceptance of the British past as represented by the majority. The past was perceived as an obstacle to a sense of Britishness, though it was not always particular historical events which posed the problem, it was the perception of the past being represented by the White majority in ways which excluded Black people.

The definition of Blackness was co-constructed in the context of representations of Britishness (both past and present) and as a result the definition of self as Black took place within the constraints of identity options offered by the UK context and the barriers to identification at the national level and the barriers to Caribbean identification posed by 'Black Britishness'. The impact of the British context on Blackness was felt in terms of content (limiting the available options for identification, self-definition) but also in terms of the process of constructing Blackness. The context within which national identity was negotiated also influenced the negotiation and construction of racial identity in both positive and negative ways.

The analysis above shows that representations of Britishness act as a barrier to Black people self-identifying as British. The way in which these representations also constrain the content and processes associated with the construction of Blackness has also been explored. The data below shows one role which the Black participants have identified for ethnic minorities in their representation of Britishness of both the present and the future, though strongly anchored in the past. Though as Breakwell points out (p193) “while social representations play a part in defining
social identities (both their content and their evaluation) through defining group identities and boundaries, social identities in turn, through influencing exposure, acceptance and use of social representations, can shape their development. It does not take much imagination to see how a new idea might be stifled and never become a shared representation if group dynamics restricted its exposure, acceptance, and use." This representation of the role played by ethnic minorities in the wider British society is not aspirational, rather it is something that seems to be acknowledged as a catalytic force while at the same time recognising the negative consequences.

Having argued throughout this thesis that the Black population is distinctive, this was put to the test by checking the degree to which the results of the sorting task were peculiar and specific to Black participants by running the same interview with White participants which forms the basis of the next study.

"He who controls the present controls the past, he who controls the past controls the future"

[George Orwell quoted in ST's interview]
## Annex 2 – results of sorting task

Composite sort – number of times an adjective was placed in a pot

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Chapter 7
The past is a different country

7.1 Introduction

The focus of the interview and associated sorting task was how Britain and Britishness was represented by a small non-representative sample of White people and how this linked with temporal orientation. The analysis looks at how the present is articulated and then the way in which the past is mobilised in relationship to the present.

The aim of the value-sort study was twofold:

1 – to uncover White representations of Britishness on 2 main dimensions, valence whether positive or negative, and which temporal dimensions they belonged to. Thus it was hypothesised for example, that people could have sorted the adjectives in interrelated ways, for example, all negative descriptions were sorted in the past, with neutral descriptions, in the present and the positive ones reserved for the future

2 – to uncover the representations of the values which the participants associated with Britain and Britishness.

The process followed exactly the same formula as that used for the Black sample and was designed to be used with any racial group. The aim of this second phase of the study was to ensure that the main findings were not a product of the method used and also to see if there were different patterns and what form those differences took. In this instance, the Black group is taken as the normative baseline and the results of the White sub-group are interpreted against that baseline.

7.2 Method

The method used was identical to that described in the previous chapter for the Black sample, with the exception of the question on how being Black affected the sense of Britishness.

7.3 Sample

The sample consists of five middle class, White British participants aged 25-50, three were male and two were female. The participants had been partially matched for the socio-demographic of age, education and occupation variables against five of the Black participants. There was no matching for gender. The participants were recruited through a snowball method based in
personal contacts. This meant that the participants were not well-known to the interviewer, it was hoped that this would enable them to speak relatively freely as they were unlikely to encounter her again in the future.

7.4 Findings

The results of individuals' sorting and overall sorting patterns are presented in the tables at annex 1; they show the variety of ways in which the sorting took place together with some general patterns.

The aim of the study was to discover representations of Britain and Britishness along different temporal dimensions. As discussed earlier the Black participants' representation of Britain and Britishness is multi-faceted and, while it acknowledges a number of positive elements to Britishness, is overwhelmingly critical with a strongly negative tone. Similarly the White participants recognise both positive and negative aspects of Britishness; however they do this from a position of unproblematic British identification and they manage the negative elements in ways which protect both collective and personal self-esteem.

While the interview schedule was designed to be race-neutral, it is possible that being asked to talk about concepts such as fairness and tolerance by a Black interviewer may have been perceived as a potential threat to collective and personal esteem in the form of 'past based guilt by association' (for example, none of the participants sorted tolerant or fair as true of the past) which could have resulted in a self-justificatory imperative which might not have been present with a White British interviewer. However, theorists such as Condor (1996) have identified a negative discourse about the past and indeed the present in White English people when interviewed by White interviewers, so it is likely that the protective motive applies to the past regardless of who asks the question.

The data was analysed using IPA and the following superordinate and sub-themes were identified:

7.5 Superordinate theme: Self-protection through distance

The participants do not give an unqualifiedly positive representation of Britain/Britishness but the way in which they describe and discuss negative aspects of the representations work to effectively insulate themselves collectively and individually as White British people from the acknowledged negativity of some aspects of Britishness.
This insulation or protection was achieved using two main techniques: the first (sub-themes 1 and 2) was one of a temporal distinction between past and present allied to an emphasis on progress; the second (sub-themes 3 and 4) consisted of two forms of external attribution.

7.5.1 Overview of Sub-themes 1-4

Sub-theme 1
Negative characteristics are confined to the past rather than being associated with the present or the future.

Sub-theme 2
Progress is emphasised as a theme which focuses on improvements which have taken place and effectively draws a distinction between the negative past and the positive present and projected future.

Sub-theme 3
Negative behaviour is attributed to 'others' which serves to protect the participants from responsibility for that behaviour.

Sub-theme 4
When describing negative attributes or behaviour, participants tend to use 'they' rather than 'we' as a linguistic way of enforcing the separation between the positive 'us' and negative 'them'.

Clearly, this analysis is not directed at providing answers to the three research questions of this thesis. What the study is intended to do is to check the degree to which the results from the Black participants were distinctive.
7.5.2 Self-description/categorisation

The superordinate theme is described in terms of self-protection, it is therefore important to establish that the participants regarded themselves as part of the collective self under discussion and, potentially therefore, in need of protection. When the participants were asked to self-define none of them felt any need to qualify their self-description, or found their self-description to be particularly problematic or complicated. Indeed if they found anything problematic, it was the question rather than their answer illustrating the degree to which this was a taken-for-granted area of their lives and providing a clear contrast with the way in which for the Black participants self-definition was anything but unproblematic:

- and would you describe yourself as British, English or something else?

KF - British

- and what does British mean to you when you would use that as a self-description?

KF - sorry don’t understand

- would you describe yourself as British, English or something else?

DPR - ...British

- and what does that mean to you?

DPR - it’s a nationality

- and is it anything more than that?

DPR - not really, well I suppose it must be but I’m not quite sure it’s easy to define

- can you think about it a little bit?

DPR - ok, umm place I grew up, umm but mostly national identity rather than something specific

- what do you mean by national identity precisely?

DPR - like passport, where you come from umm I suppose in terms of thinking about the country I live in umm I was brought up most of my life in England and I spent some time, my parents are basically Welsh umm so British fits better than English

- right so it’s a technical description but it also encompasses two sides of your heritage?
I – and would you describe yourself as British, English or something else?

BJ – I normally think of myself as British

I – mm hmm and what does that description mean to you, is it a

BJ – umm, I guess when I think of Britain, umm I’m thinking of coming from this one island which is includes Scotland, Wales and England I would at times define myself as English.

I – are there particular times when it shifts?

BJ – not that I’m really aware of, I suppose World Cup sort of, (laughing) not that I’m mad about football but umm on the whole I would mainly British.

AG – ... umm if I was asked, I would probably say, I would probably say I was British

I – mm hmm and when you say that, what does it actually mean, is it...

AG – when I say it, it doesn’t really mean anything, it’s just a sort of label really

I – a technical description?

AG – yeah umm, I don’t I don’t think I necessarily have any strong deep-rooted feeling of being British, I don’t really, possibly that’s possibly I do intrinsically or subconsciously but I don’t really, it’s not something I think about very much I have to sav

The key feature here is that none of these people had a problem identifying themselves as British or English. For the White participants, national self-identification and description was unproblematic. None of them mentioned their race or their physical appearance suggesting that their race was irrelevant to their nationality, whereas most of the Black sample did so, even though I was sitting opposite them and could see the colour of their skin. The only area of debate revolved around the issue of whether British or English was the most appropriate label.

One of the participants emphasises the importance of his Welshness in his self-definition as British, the duality of his personal heritage is encompassed for this participant in the choice of the British label over the English and others recognise the inclusivity attached to British as a label. However, this is seen as a personal choice there is no sense as with the Black participants of English or indeed British as a label which is denied them by powerful others.

In the analysis of responses to the question about pivotal events, these participants tended not to identify pivotal events relating to sectional interests of their own sub-groups eg class, gender,
sexual orientation despite making references to these affiliations elsewhere in the interviews, for example:

BJ – about diversity, oh I mean good you know as a gay man I mean I you know I I would say, I mean diversity has made life much more much more interesting I think umm but I go I like to go to different countries because they’re different I like looking at differences...

They, therefore, did not use the lens of group membership (other than national) to view the past. As the literature on sub-groups discussed in chapter one (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1994, Phillips 1996, Larsen et al 1992) shows sub-group membership did not affect their sense of Britishness.

So it can be reasonably established that the participants saw themselves as British and whereas none of the Black participants felt any sense of pride in their Britishness for example:

G – yeah, yeah bad experience 25-30 years ago sort of ting it was pretty nasty, so I don’t really feel proud to be British you know, I’m not I’m not sort of degrading or whatever you understand, that’s my true feelings

I – no no no that’s what I want to hear

G – not the proudest person to be British at all

However, one White participant acknowledged that he currently felt a sense of pride even though he recognised that it might be temporary. In following up comments made earlier in the interview when given the opportunity in the free sort to choose an adjective which he felt described Britain and British people he chose proud:

AG – .... Hmmm (exhale) ....possibly proud

I – mm hmm and which one would that have gone in?

AG – now that’s interesting you see because 6 weeks ago you’d have said no and now you’d say yes... umm I mean that last 6 weeks have been very bizarre in a way in the sense that I haven’t really experienced anything like that ever, there’s been nothing sort of massively tangible, but there’s just been this sort of ... you suddenly you watch the news and it’s not filled with sort of political gripe it’s a bit sort of you know I’m not a monarchist at all, I’d get rid of them but I think you know there’s sort of something quite nice about watching the news and lots of people out in the mall it’s quite quiet, it’s sort of quite warming and then the same thing with the World Cup and you’ve got it now with Wimbledon, and it’s just there’s sort of an element of it’s all quite trite to say but I think there is, there’s been a bit of a reflection over the past 6 weeks as to sort of as to what Britain is and I think people seem to realise that it’s not quite as bad as we have made out if you (sneezes) excuse me

I – bless you
AG - (sneezes) excuse me yeah well you know what I'm saying so possibly proud but I can't think of anything else

I – but, and proud would be a good sort of proud?

AG – yes, yes, yes

Thus, in contrast to the Black participants, this group had no problem in defining themselves as British and in seeing that as a relatively positive self-description. Their self-definitions referred to technical and geographical influences rather than the constraints of powerful others identified by the Black sample. This sets the context for how they then go on to interpret the sorting task and subsequent questions discussed in the analysis of the sub-themes.

7.5.3 Sub-theme 1 - Negative characteristics are confined to the past rather than being associated with the present or the future.

The way in which the White participants spoke about the past is important to consider. What is interesting here is that when the White participants were asked the same questions and to perform the same sorting task as the Black participants, their take on the past and its acknowledged negativity was different and appeared to have a different motivation. Whereas Black participants identified continuity between the negativity of the past; identified the past as the source of illegitimate power and status in the present day and refused to buy into the past as source of collective esteem, the White participants approached the past differently. It is clear that the White participants were willing to acknowledge the negativity of Britain's imperial past, but at the same time they effectively draw a line separating that behaviour and the present day. For example, in sorting the adjective 'arrogant' all but one sorted it as true in the past or not true at all. Thus, while the past may not be represented as a source of pride, at the same time it is not considered to be a source of shame even in the quote which refers to a member of the speaker's own family.

KF – yeah a negative movement. Outward-looking, obviously we were in the very far past because we did all umm that imperialism, this colonism and that, I don't know so much if, I have no experience of that, but I think a bit of that is out with my experience but I possibly industry may well do it but not in my world we don't and arrogant we were dreadful, I had a great-uncle who was a colonialist and he was just horrendous and was very arrogant, but I think we are less arrogant now, I think we've had it, a lot of us have had it knocked out of us a bit.

BJ – umm…… no I don't, I don't think so, I suppose lots of, buildings came into mind, I suppose Victorian times umm I'm not really very good on the sort of history of architecture and so on but and the early part of this century I think as well as well umm you know there are creative, there is
creativity, but I don’t see that as a characterising Britain, you don’t get the sort of brave projects as say France would do I think. Dishonest I think in the past, I put that in the past mainly because in a way that sort of reflects our sort of umm imperial past, now I suspect it wasn’t dishonest at the time, I mean I’m sure at the time everybody felt this was, that everybody had something to learn from us and we were going to be there and there’s something rather I think ultimately rather dishonest umm to the countries we colonised and so on umm almost as if we did it for them when actually it was us, you know self-interest always drives governments and countries in the end and umm I think, I think now there’s more, there are more, there’s more willingness to as it were correct the sort of views of history, perhaps I think that my history books that I learned at school I think were essentially dishonest and now I think now there’s much more openness to reflecting on on the real real history, so that’s why I put dishonest in in the past

I - you mentioned that you thought that there had been a degree of arrogance in the past and you sort of associated it with imperialism and so on, what do you think made the shift so that there’s less arrogance now?

AG – umm

I – if anything

AG – I think people are a bit more realistic now and I think when you, I think when you do [emphasised] own a third of the world you’re probably quite right to be arrogant because you’re in a pretty powerful position and I think I don’t you know in the modern day where you don’t own a third of the world you can’t really afford to be arrogant because if you are, you’re just being stupid and naïve and umm

Following on from this premise that arrogance was a perfectly reasonable response to a set of particular historical and geographical circumstances, it could equally be argued that arrogance in other powerful nations at other times should be equally understandable. However, the same participant did not apply this argument to America suggesting that when it is used in relationship to the UK’s past it is performing a function which is more than a factual historical description:

AG – ….. I don’t think we’re intrinsically arrogant umm in the way that I would say again going back to America, a lot of Americans are quite arrogant about their country in the sense that they find it very difficult to appreciate why anybody would want to live anywhere else and I think that sort of, their complete disbelief after September 11th that anybody could dislike them umm and the way in which they reacted to that probably does show that they are quite arrogant and I don’t mean that in an unpleasant way, it’s just a sort of you know their attitude to the world almost is quite arrogant even if them as people are perfectly pleasant and very very nice and not in any way arrogant or could be very very humble, I just think it’s with respect to their American ness they’re quite arrogant because they’re indoctrinated with it from day one really I mean when I was at school in America for a year we used to have to sort of recite some sort of God Bless America chant every morning which sort of smacks of I don’t know type of brain-washing umm so I think that’s the sort of arrogance I’m thinking about, I don’t think Britain is arrogant in that way hence the fact that I didn’t put it in there.
Thus while it was inevitable that the British in the past had been arrogant because of their position as the world’s most powerful nation, it was as a result of childhood indoctrination that the world’s current most powerful nation was arrogant.

Placing negative characteristics in the dustbin of British history ensures that the participants are not required to explain them or justify them. They are reified as historical ‘facts’. For example the contrast drawn between British imperial arrogance in the past and American imperial arrogance in the present is striking. The speaker argues that because the arrogance stemmed from Britain’s past global power it is not to be considered arrogance at all, in so far as arrogance is usually defined as aggressive or presumptuous pride, rather it is a fact which needs no qualification.

However, the key point in all the quotes is that the arrogance has gone, along with the empire. Whereas the Black participants argue that the imperial past is a basis for present power and the arrogance which continues with it, there is no sense of that continuity in this sample. There is no sense of collective negative continuity and therefore no collective guilt to be expiated or atoned for. Within this representation of the past, because Britain has learned from the negativity of the past and has now moved on there would be no need for any official apology for the misdeeds of the past as with President Clinton’s 1998 apology for slavery in America.

7.5.4 Sub-theme 2 - Progress is emphasised as a theme which focuses on improvements which have taken place and effectively draws a distinction between the negative past and the positive present and projected future.

The progress theme was another way in which the past was utilised as a dividing line. The negativity associated with Britishness was firmly placed in the past and was described in terms of being qualitatively different – for these participants the past really was another country and the present was an improvement as a result of progress and modernity. For the Black participants there was nothing inevitable about positive developments in the future, indeed majority Britain was described as being pulled “kicking and screaming” into a more modern and inclusive future. However, the White participants identified progress as a natural development from the past to the present and envisaged this trend continuing into the future.

CH – err I think it’s happened in the last couple of years I think and I think we’ve one of the things criticised Britain about in the past was about you know this sort of stupid imper you know empire bit going on and err you know we couldn’t hang up, we couldn’t get rid of that sort of perspective about our emoire and as a consequence everybody else started industrialising and Germany started leaping ahead and doing all the things that that needed to do which we should have done a long time ago and we’ve always had that kind of fairly stuck in the past kind of feeling and I feel like now things are really moving on and I suppose it’s a little bit, I’m not particularly enamoured with Tony Blair but I do think that the government’s got that kind of agenda, it’s about delivery, it’s about about being adaptable, it’s about being flexible and I just feel like you know that certainly comes through in what I’m doing and that’s my perspective on things.
**DPR** – I mean I was perhaps doesn’t feel like an event but the sort of late 60s 70s umm feel of change in society is probably something that I see as quite important, maybe that’s associated with err what I said earlier about perhaps what I feel is a lessening in class, broadening in tolerance in some ways umm in limited ways actually but umm and perhaps I mean you know associated with that of the breakdowns in terms of umm roles of the traditional family, increasing acceptance of umm not needing to get married, not needing to have the 2 children I think it’s quite an important change in society

**CH** – you know and I think that umm you know if that happened in the private sector I don’t think a lot of people would cope with that, I think we are very adaptable, particularly in this professional group, constantly having to change, constantly having to sort of look at the political agenda and make sure we’re addressing it, changes in politics end up with changes in the health service as well and I think that’s that’s changed quite a lot in terms of my my profession umm .... just leave that for a moment (quietly) umm and I also think we’ve become more creative as well, we’re much more creative about finding solutions to difficult problems, I think creative in terms of the talent in in the country you know in terms of the various different err the chefs the you know, music the artists you know I think we’re giving a much more creative image than we ever have before you know.

**CH** – yeah I think it has a more positive perspective about about Britain about Britain being creative err you know this stuff, you know stuff about the Tate Modern and all that looks really good you know, we’ve just had the Baltic Mill even opened in Newcastle and you know that would have been unheard of in Newcastle sort of you know 20 years ago and to have had it so crowded out with all these people who want to go and have a look you know umm so umm... yeah I think it’s changed quite a lot I think we’re much more creative about the building side of things as well, the way we’re using sort of deprived areas to really build those up, the North East in Gateshead, they’re even doing something with the riverside up there which is just you know it’s one of the most deprived areas in the country and it’s you know even there they’re trying to generate some sort of income regeneration there and try and encourage people to live back there again and I think it’s just using what we’ve got and being much more creative about it I suppose

**DPR** – next pot’s likely to be true of British, Britain people 20 years from now and I’ve put creative and adaptable in it

I – mm hmm

**DPR** – umm although I think at least partly, part of that was because there was an empty pot and I thought I need to put something in it but actually they’re they’re the two headings which umm which probably best fitted in the likely to more true 20 years from now than they are now umm

**DPR** – creativity, umm I suppose I see creativity as a positive attribute which I hope will get better umm I think it’s more likely to be, I think it’s more likely to be more creative because that’s the way that the economy’s going and people are perhaps being more creative about their lives certainly there seems to be umm a change in the way that people set up things like family units that is certainly more creative than it was in the past umm hopefully some of that will be a more positive choice.
If the past was the repository of negativity and the present required a degree of social creativity by the participants to ensure that collective and individual esteem was not endangered, the future was associated with positive qualities in a way which worked to emphasise the break with the past and to focus on the positive trends of the present. It could be perceived as problematic to describe the UK as a fair place to a member of a group recognised as having a continuing experience of discrimination but the quote below emphasises intention over outcome as a way of maintaining her positive image of present day Britain and pre-empting any perceived challenge.

CH – I’ll do these first because these are being particularly positive about Britain erm, I found this one quite difficult I have to say because I think I think it’s a trying to be fair, but I don’t always think that it is I think that umm I think that a lot of groups in society get a really unfair deal, I guess what I mean by that is that we’re attempting to be you know the groups that I’m talking about I feel are recognised and I feel that we’re trying to do something about it uhh positive stuff I think there’s people generally trying to do positive stuff about it but I still think it’s probably haven’t got there yet

An overview of the way in which the more positive descriptions were sorted shows how progress was perceived. All of the White participants sorted the adjective ‘adaptable’ which was considered to be positive as true of either the present of the future and all but one sorted fair as true of either the present or the future. Similarly, three or more sorted hard-working, fair, tolerant and creative as true of either the present or the future. There was some debate about the degree to which hard-working was considered virtuous or not with a number criticising the long hours working culture in the UK, but all the other descriptions were considered to be positive and in terms of providing a representation of a present and future Britain which would essentially be a good place to live. Adaptability tended to be associated with the pragmatic need to learn from the past and to have moved on and to facilitate creativity. In contrast when discussing adaptability, creativity and tolerance, the Black participants tended to link those qualities to the presence of ethnic minorities in the UK and to a the sense of the White majority being forced into displaying those qualities.

In debating why the word postcolonial is used in the first rather than the third world Radhakrishnan (2003) debates the social goal behind the post-prefix. He argues that the use of the ‘post’ prefix works for those in the first world to eliminate guilt and shame by providing a sense of having moved on and transcended the colonial past. The progress discourse used by these participants seems to achieve a similar function in that negativity is assigned to the past and the positive qualities are associated with the present and the future to construct a broadly positive representation of modern Britain.
7.5.5 Sub-theme 3 - Negative behaviour is attributed to 'others' which serves to protect the participants from responsibility for that behaviour.

While the overall tone used in these interviews was positive, negative aspects of Britain and Britishness were acknowledged. Where negative qualities were identified in the present, they tended to be associated with sub-groups rather than the nation as a whole and particularly with sub-groups who were different from the speaker. This acknowledgement of negative qualities ensures that the participants cannot be accused of blind patriotism or naivety but at the same time works to disassociate themselves from those qualities.

There is evidence of this distancing and self-protection strategy at work in the following quote where the positive collective representation is disassociated from individual negative behaviour, in this case in the form of aggression:

**BJ** – (laughing) there’s something very, something very hypocritical about about umm about our our country I think at times. Aggressive, I don’t think we’re aggressive, I think individuals are aggressive, I don’t think we’re aggressive, umm as a nation, if you take football violence and all the rest of it and but I don’t think as a nation, as a country we’re aggressive umm it’s not a word I would use to describe them anyway.

Another participant associates aggression with the presence of visible minorities in the UK. It is not clear which race riot he is referring to, however he opts not to use the example of poll tax riots when discussing aggression but rather riots which relate to a group which is visibly different from himself:

**AG** – pile, I think also you’ve got to look at sort of umm what else do I mean by aggressive in the you’ve got all sorts of race riots and all that kind of stuff that’s quite aggressive umm ...

Attributing a lack of agency to ‘people like us’ also achieved the same effect. When peers behaved in ways which were acknowledged to be less than perfect this was attributed to a lack of opportunity to behave otherwise rather than to a conscious choice or predisposition. In the quote below the speaker defines an absence of racism in her local area in terms of its predominantly white composition. She assumes that people are not racist because the absence of other racial groups means that there is no opportunity for them to display either racism or tolerance. Whether or not this is a reasonable assumption, there is no suggestion that it should be tested by, for example broadening her children’s social boundaries.

**KF** – yes I think tolerance is a good thing umm … because you see I just don’t have any experience of anything particularly… you know…. … for example we don’t live in a particularly multi-cultural area so nobody gets the option to be, you know I get the impression that
people aren't going around being frantically racist in Farnham but you know there again they wouldn't get the chance you know the people I talk to don't..small word again, you see I live in a very small thing. Ignorant yes that's a problem, I think that's what I'm getting at (laughing.....

I – so when you say that people are ignorant and don't really know what's going on elsewhere, do you have any feel for why that should be, I mean is it because people don't want to know or because they don't have the opportunity to find out or

KF – yeah, I think that the latter really because especially you see the way I live at the moment which is worrying me a bit about this is that fact that I just live in this, we don't get the chance I mean Antonio and Lucinda [her children] don't get the chance to mix with people of different social classes or different you know life experiences, everybody they meet will have exactly the life experiences as they have really down to the bottom line .....  

Thus negative qualities or the absence of positive qualities in the present is explained away or justified by attributing particular sorts of behaviour to other types of British people, football hooligans or racial minorities or to situational constraints such as location. With both strategies the effect is to reinforce a representation of White Britain and White British people as broadly positive or at the very least well-intentioned compared with the Black participants' perception of hypocrisy amongst the White majority.

In addition to providing evidence to support a predominantly positive representation of modern Britain the external attribution also served to limit any potential personal responsibility for change by allowing the individuals concerned to maintain their reflected esteem. This reflects the assumption among the Black participants that the White majority was reluctant to embrace change and the personal consequences of social changes.

7.5.6 Sub-theme 4 - When describing negative attributes or behaviour, participants tend to use 'they' rather than 'we' as a linguistic way of enforcing the separation between the positive 'us' and negative 'them'.

As with the Black sample, attention was paid to how the participants used personal pronouns. For the white participants, the first person plural was used frequently to discuss Britain/Britons along all temporal dimensions – past, present and future. It was also interestingly used to describe ownership of both positive and negative descriptions thus the sense of ownership transcended content.

CH – this is my fear that might be true of Britain in 20 years time is that all of this kind of moves into arrogance and that you know with all the things that are quite positive at the moment err...moves into complacency and arrogance in the future because we then achieve some sort of improvement in all of the aspects that we, that are important to all of us like health and transport and those sort of things but actually we become complacent, we become arrogant about what we've done and we don't keep looking to the future, we don't keep moving on and you know that that concerns me I suppose, I think that's a a potential a sort of victim of our own success in a way
But there was also evidence of differentiation between we the nation from they the individuals or individual bad behaviour within the nation as a discursive strategy:

KF - ...No I think we do adapt, I think as a nation we have adapted to our situations gradually haven’t we and we have learned and come forwards so I think we will be, so hopefully we can continue on that way.

The following quote illustrates a shift between we and them depending on the sub-group and behaviour being described as the speaker flips between we and they within the British group depending on what he’s talking about and provides an interesting example of the abandonment of the first person plural to differentiate between groups within the national context.

BJ ... we’ll go and look at different countries and look at different cultures wherever it is in the world and I mean you know Brits sort of invading Caribbean islands and so on and actually umm soaking up the sun, soaking up whatever’s created for them, a lot of what people actually like is what has been created for them that reminds them in some (laughing) ways of home, but in a foreign country umm and going back home and then will actually will tend to I mean this is characterising you know I don’t have a good example of it but sort of slag the country off at the next moment or individuals from that country umm in this sort of French, the Anglo English-French sort of umm ...verbal war you know frogs and all the rest of it...

Interestingly one participant attempted to include the Black interviewer in her past based use of the first person plural.

CH — yeah because we kind of always had whether right or wrong, we’ve always had quite a fruity err past haven’t we, we’ve got a fruity history in so I can’t say that we’ve been dull in any shape or form, but you know I’m interested in politics and things like that so I probably would say that (laughs) umm (taps card) umm don’t like that...
In general the White sample was happy to use the first person plural when talking about Britain, the few exceptions occurred when talking about negative characteristics or behaviours. However, in the same way that the Black participants avoided the use of the first person plural when talking about Britain as a means of maintaining distance, the White sample also avoided the identifying 'we' when there was a need to distance themselves from a problematic sub-group or behaviour. This is particularly clear in 'BJ's description of a particular sort of holiday maker from whom he clearly feels the need to distance himself. Thus the use of personal pronouns functions as a distancing mechanism, for both the Black and White samples but the target of the distance is different and the motivation of the distancing strategy differs.

In terms of the interview dynamic, the use of "we" as a tool of inclusivity was interesting. In 'CH's quote, she attempts to include the Black interviewer in a sense of a shared past while at the same time admitting that it was not perfect. The power of the past is neutralised by the colloquial description 'fruity' which carries considerably less strength that the adjectives offered for the sorting task. Whether conscious and intentional or not, this conversational technique can be interpreted as serving a social purpose, if she can persuade the Black interviewer to agree to the relatively innocuous description of the British past as 'fruity' then any potential past-based conflict is diffused and a sense of us all being in this together as fellow 'raceless' Britons for the present and future is established.
7.6 Conclusion

This overview of the small group of White participants shows that there are significant differences from the way in which the Black participants dealt with the sorting task and responded to the interview questions which suggests that the methodology has some validity.

The initial difference between the two groups was in their self-definition, all chose to define as English or British with the only debate being as to whether English or British was more appropriate. Their self-definition was reflected in the use of personal pronouns to talk about Britain and British people.

The White sample followed a sorting pattern which deemed negative characteristics to be untrue of Britain or allocated them to the past. Positive characteristics tended to be considered to be true of the present or the future, so continuity where it appeared was in terms of a continuation of positivity from the present to the future. The result was a relatively positive representation of Britain and Britishness. The Black sample identified areas of negative continuity between past and present and future which contributed towards a critical construction of Britain and Britishness.

The sorting pattern not only enabled the White participants to construct a positive representation of Britain and Britishness, it also enabled them to differentiate temporally between positive and negative qualities with negative qualities tending to be considered past or other based and positive ones present and future. This facilitated a distancing effect and supports the classic social memory approaches which argue that people construct the past in such a way as to promote self-esteem in the present.

From a starting point of a relatively unproblematic identification as British and with Britishness the participants are able to manage the challenge of the acknowledged negative content of aspects of Britishness, particularly the past, in ways which protect their national identity. This shows the reciprocal connection between identification and representation and suggests that negative content does not necessarily result in a problematic national identity.

In so far as the interview context, whether construed as the questions themselves or the combination of a Black interviewer asking those questions, may have constituted a potential threat to collective esteem and integrity, they were able to manage this threat in ways which allowed them to maintain a positive, but realistic representation of Britain and their own sense of Britishness.

The key conclusion, is the importance of the way in which the past is managed by these participants. For the Black participants, the past contributes to a sense of incompatibility between
Blackness and Britishness which has an enduring effect. In so far as the content of the British past poses any challenge to the White participants' sense of national identity, it is dealt with by creating a clear break between past and present and focusing on positive continuity between present and future. Whereas the results for the Black sample illustrated how representation and self-definition operated in constraining ways, for the White sample the integrated paradigm shows representation and self-definition supporting each other in a complementary rather than an antagonistic relationship.

“It is perhaps only the nicely adjusted who can afford to dismiss their antecedents. Those passionately interested in their roots are usually either the historically oppressed or the oppressors, both needing to prove a point.”

Spiderweb – Penelope Lively (1998)
Annex 1 – results of sorting task

Composite sort – number of times an adjective was placed in a pot

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Chapter 8
Conclusions and future research

8.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a brief overview of the main findings of the empirical research and reviews the extent to which it provides answers to the three research questions. The empirical work is also discussed in relation to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1981) and Self-Categorisation Theory (Turner et al, 1987), the Integrated Paradigm (Breakwell, 1993) and Social Memory Theory (Lyons, 1996). Each of the studies addresses the research questions and theories to a different degree. I only refer to the data from the White participants where it sheds light on the main findings. Finally I have attempted to apply the findings from this thesis to a real-life situation. The chapter concludes with suggestions for areas in which the research presented here could be developed in the future.

8.2 Empirical studies – key findings

8.2.1 Media analysis

The empirical study of the Black press in the UK followed a number of different methodologies. This study found that the coverage was trans-national, but the majority of the space was allocated to UK news and features. Within the international coverage, priority was given to countries with an African diaspora or countries with majority Black populations (mainly Africa and the Caribbean). Despite the space allocated to UK affairs and the use of the UK as a framework for interpreting international issues, Blackness was not defined as British. Rather Blackness was constructed as a response to an inter-racial context in the UK and elsewhere. Blackness was also associated with a victim representation.

8.2.2 Focus groups

This study aimed to explore the way in which Blackness was represented. The verbatim transcripts of the focus groups were analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. This analysis produced two superordinate themes and three minor themes. The themes were:

a) Blackness constructed as a racial category rather than an ethnic group. This theme showed how constructions of Blackness were constrained by the inter-racial context. Oppositional process predominated. There was also evidence of a preference for external attributions to explain negative aspects of Blackness.

b) Blackness and Britishness were constructed as incompatible. This theme showed that Britishness was perceived as constructed by the majority population as equivalent to White
and, therefore, unavailable to non-Whites. The result was that any sense of Britishness felt by
the participants was limited to a technical civic construction.

c) Absence of internalisation of negative group representation. The findings of this theme
challenge those theoretical approaches which assume that members of a negatively
evaluated group internalise that evaluation into their self-image and suffer from low self-
esteem. Participants were aware that Blackness was negatively regarded but contested the
representation and its effect on their self-concept.

d) The importance of the past in constructing the present. This theme showed how the past was
drawn on to explain the present both in terms of the Black category and at an individual level.

e) Cultural heritage issues. This theme looks at the ethnicity of the Black category and tests the
hypotheses of Social Memory Theory against the findings of the focus group evidence.

8.2.3 Value sort interviews

This study focussed on the way in which Black people of African Caribbean heritage represented
Britain and Britishness at different temporal points (past, present and future) together with value
judgements. The study consisted of an interview based on a sorting task. The same study was
also done with a small sample of White Britons to rule out a methodological effect on the results.

The data from the Black respondents was analysed along the temporal dimensions of past,
present and future.

a) The past was constructed as source of illegitimacy in Britishness.

b) The construction of Britishness in the present supported the findings of the focus groups
that Britishness was perceived as unavailable to Black people.

c) Participants saw the future primarily in terms of a continuation of the present. They
emphasised the way in which British life had changed and would continue to change as a
direct consequence of the non-White presence.

In general, participants were reluctant to define themselves as British and saw their Blackness as
fundamental to their sense of alienation from Britishness.

The data from the White participants was analysed in terms of the concept of threat. This was a
recognition that the race of the interviewer may have prompted a defensive response in
participants. In contrast to the Black participants, the White interviewees tended to have a more
positive representation of Britain and Britishness. They assigned negative characteristics to the
British past and emphasised positive changes over time using a discourse of progress. They also
made external attributions for negative qualities or behaviours either through linguistic form or by associating negative behaviours with people unlike themselves.

8.3 Discussion of findings for Research questions:

Research Question 1: How is Blackness constructed by those of African Caribbean descent and heritage in the UK?

The research discussed here has shown, in a variety of ways, that the category Black is constructed in reaction to and in opposition to a past-based reading of the inter-categorical context.

Overall the category was not constructed in terms of specific attributes and values associated with Blackness. Where particular values were invoked as being prototypically Black, they had their origin in responses to or readings of the wider Black-White relationship. I detail below how the three main empirical studies illustrate this:

Study 1

The analysis of the print media was initially approached in the way it would be for a conventional social group. The analysis attempted to look at issues such as category boundaries which determined the construction of in and out-groups, geographical identifications, the temporal dimension and the role of social memories in constructing the cultural representation of the group. The fact that the analysis was not able to produce conclusive answers to many of these issues helped to crystallise and confirm the need to investigate how the category Black was in fact constructed.

The most notable findings from this study was the absence of constructions of Blackness in behavioural or cultural terms. When Blackness was defined it was in terms of reaction or response to the inter-categorical context. In addition the analysis of the use of the first person plural suggests that Blackness was not represented as a focus for collective identification. Thematically, Blackness was constructed in the Black media as trans-national, Christian and as a victim of all pervasive ongoing discrimination.
Study 2

The main aim of the second study was to look at how Black people constructed Blackness and the findings relating to the importance of the inter-categorical context and the emphasis on the processes of opposition and reaction were important answers to this research question.

The perceived incompatibilities of the present were constructed by participants through calling upon specifically oppositional readings of the past. This process illustrated how history had a preeminent role in category construction over and above issues such as cultural values.

The focus group study showed that Blackness was constructed in a positive way by the participants. They were aware of but had not internalised the negative majority representation of the category and did not appear to have the negative consequences such as low self-esteem which would be predicted by the 'looking glass self' paradigm.

The way in which Blackness was constructed was heavily influenced by the inter-categorical context as illustrated by the way in which Blackness was constructed as being incompatible with Britishness and Englishness as currently defined. The past was used to establish both personal and collective negative continuity between past and present.

Study 3

In the value-sort interviews Blackness was again constructed as positive but heavily influenced by the inter-categorical context. The way in which the majority population were perceived to have constructed Britishness and Englishness as incompatible with Blackness shaped and constrained the ways in which Blackness could be defined and constructed. The influence of the past and the relationship with the White majority over a number of years also helped frame how Blackness was perceived.

This study also showed how participants perceived a socio-political role for Black people and other visible minorities in the future.

Discussion

Both the media analysis and the focus group study explicitly explored the 'ethnicity' of the category Black and found it to be either absent or to be constructed in line with oppositional and reactive processes rather than historical content, values and behaviours. While it is clearly problematic to theorise and base conclusions on absence, I have argued that it shows that racial
groups are different from ethnic and national groups and this in turn challenges the underlying assumptions about the social psychological function of groups.

The evidence from the media analysis did not support the hypotheses proposed by Social Memory Theory or Social Identity Theory. Rather, the analysis found that the population exhibited a distinctive sense of groupness which included an absence of collective self-categorisation. This meant that the first premise of most social psychological theories which is that a group should define itself as such was absent. As a result, there was also no evidence of representations of current or future possible collective selves.

Social Memory Theory (Lyons 1996) hypothesises that when a group feels its esteem to be threatened, its members will construct the past and the present in a way which emphasises past victories. Lyons suggests that these victories may be sporting or military. The media analysis provides an interesting present-centred illumination of a variant of this process. The news and features sections of the Black press tended to present Blackness in terms of victim status with little evidence of victories. This was in contrast to the sports pages and, in particular, the majority of the photographs of Black sportspeople. In this context, Black people were represented not only as victorious, but as victorious despite starting from a position of disadvantage. The detailed analysis of the sports photos also showed an oppositional representation of Black and White in the use of photographs of football matches in which Black players were shown in tackles with White players from the opposing team. When the oppositional element is allied to the sporting victories and the emphasis on overcoming disadvantage, this would suggest not only collective esteem but a sense of collective efficacy while at the same time maintaining the racially constructed categories.

As discussed elsewhere, the participants recognised that skin colour was used by the majority population as evidence of groupness; this meant that there was a relatively limited need to maintain collective distinctiveness. Distinctiveness was implicit and explicit in a racially ordered hierarchy and was, therefore, mainly determined by the White population. As Lyons (1996) predicts, considerations of collective distinctiveness are mainly relevant in situations in which group boundaries are fuzzy and permeable. Race as a form of externally imposed distinctiveness also creates a form of collective cohesion.

The value-sort study showed how Blackness was co-constructed in the context of representations of Britishness both past and present. As a result, the definition of self as Black took place within the constraints of identity options offered by the UK context. The impact of the British context on Blackness was felt in terms of content (limiting the available options for identification, self-
definition) but also in terms of the process of constructing Blackness. Dove's study showed how, for racial groups, physical characteristics such as skin colour were important elements of self-definition. Similarly, Hutnik (1984) contrasts the use of nationality for self-definition by ethnic groups compared with racial groups' use of skin colour. These findings were reflected in the focus groups which mentioned the importance of physical experience in any context to the way in which Black people were effectively forced to define in racial terms.

Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1981) looks at the options available to individuals when they belong to a negatively evaluated social group. Preferences for individualistic or collective social change options was not something which this research set out to investigate. However, the evidence from the focus groups in particular suggest that these respondents have opted for individualistic rather than collective strategies to deal with their membership of a negatively evaluated category. The emphasis on individualistic strategies meant that there was limited evidence of collective efficacy.

In line with the findings of Finlay and Lyons' (2000) study of people with learning disabilities, there was no evidence that Black people of African Caribbean heritage had internalised the negative elements of the way in which they were perceived by the majority population. They acknowledge and are able to articulate the content of the negative representation but do not suffer the predicted low self-esteem which should result from its internalisation. As with the young Black men reported on by Alexander (1996), the participants show evidence of personal negotiations and strategies which they employ in daily life to manage the negativity associated with the majority representation of Blackness.

In her description of the integrated paradigm, Breakwell argues that representations have an effect on the construction of identities. The representational context within which national identity was negotiated also influenced the negotiation and construction of racial identity in both positive and negative ways. The value sort data also showed one role which the Black participants have identified for ethnic minorities in their representation of Britishness of both the present and the future, though strongly anchored in the past. Though as Breakwell points out (1993, p193) "while social representations play a part in defining social identities (both their content and their evaluation) through defining group identities and boundaries, social identities in turn, through influencing exposure, acceptance and use of social representations, can shape their development. It does not take much imagination to see how a new idea might be stifled and never become a shared representation if group dynamics restricted its exposure, acceptance, and use."

This representation of the role played by ethnic minorities in the wider British society is not aspirational, rather it is something that seems to be acknowledged as a catalytic force while at the same time recognising the negative consequences.
In socio-political terms, the data addressing this research question would seem to suggest that there are pitfalls in treating all groups as though they were similar and performed similar social psychological functions. It is possible that the inconclusive findings of the many studies which have looked at the effect of being a member of a negatively evaluated category on self-esteem stem from an inappropriate perception of the relationship between group and individual in the case of race. Social policies and interventions based on academic work which assumes that race operates in the same way as other social classifications are likely to have mixed results. For example, anti-racist policies promoting race awareness based on the assumed cultural attributes of racial groups are likely to be ineffective because in adopting an 'ethnic' model of group they ignore the inter-group dynamic at work in racial groups.

In the literature review I mentioned the work of Hebdige and others who had explored the different social categories within Blackness. While it has not been the intention of this thesis to look at sub-sets within Blackness, I recognise that I am open to the criticism of treating the category Black as homogenous and undifferentiated; a possible area for future research might be to look at the issues explored in this thesis from the perspective of different sub-groups. While I found no evidence of this in my research, it is possible that smaller social groupings provide the social psychological functions not available from the category Black.

Research question 2: What is the basis of the perceived incompatibility between being Black and British?

The way in which the White majority in Britain has historically constructed Britishness and Englishness as racially based categories has resulted in a perception that these memberships are unavailable to the Black population. This combined with a predisposition to look at modern day Britain from a perspective of historical race-based disadvantage results in an historically sullied definition of Britishness which could only be embraced by Black people following some form of collective amnesia.

Study 1

This inscribed reader and anchoring analysis showed the Black media to be embedded within the UK context. However, beyond this finding, this issue was not addressed as a key research aim in the media analysis; rather it was a product of the media analysis.
Study 2

The issue of Blackness and Britishness as identified in the media analysis formed one of a number of issues for the focus groups to address when discussing their construction of Blackness. The primary reason which the focus group participants identified for their reluctance to classify themselves as British was the way in which Britishness and Englishness were perceived to have been defined by the White majority. Allied to this were personal and collective representations of past and present injustice and discrimination which mitigated against a sense of belonging.

Study 3

The primary aim of study three was to establish whether the past was a more important source of incompatibility between Blackness and Britishness than value inconsistency. It showed how the past provided a context in which Blackness was constructed as oppositional and reactive and how the past impacted on all the levels of the relationship between Black and White. In these terms the incompatibility between Blackness and Britishness was a specific example of that wider ongoing relationship.

Incompatible values were not found to be the source of the incompatibility between being both Black and British. Rather this study echoed the focus group findings in identifying the racial element of the White representation of Britishness. The past was also seen as a barrier to any sense of Britishness, particularly when the imperial period was perceived as an illegitimate source of pride and esteem for the White majority.

Discussion

Within the reciprocal relationship proposed by the integrated paradigm, Breakwell argues that representations have an effect on the construction of identities. The analysis above illustrates how, in the case of UK citizens of African Caribbean heritage, the social representations of Britishness (both those held by the participants and those propagated by the majority) impact on options for self-definition and provide a representational context which constrains the construction of other categories and roles. The pre-eminent role which the participants give to the past in the construction of these representations is relevant in terms of how the present is explained and also in terms of perceptions of representational options for the future.

Self Categorisation Theory (Tner et al, 1987) suggests that in particular contexts (reflecting the social structure) certain identities will become salient and influence behaviour. The research here,
particularly the findings of the value sort interview, shows how for the UK African Caribbean population this mechanism works in a distinctive way. In response to direct and indirect questions about Britishness, the participants raised the issue of their Blackness. Here it would seem that in a situation where it might be expected that the context would make national identity salient, the identity which came to the fore was the racial categorisation. This supports the findings of Reicher’s (1986) research on the preeminence of race over class in the first phase of post-war non-White immigration. These findings suggest that, for this population, race remains a preeminent categorisation even in a situation in which the focus is on nationality.

The literature review discussed the difference between the relationship which sub-groups have with the national identity (eg Larsen, 1992) and the recognition that some ‘sub-groups’ had identities which were incompatible with the national identity. The findings of the focus groups and value sorting interviews studies suggest that research in this area may have tended to ignore the initial phase required for national identification. Many of the participants in this research were reluctant to define or label themselves as British; this does not seem to have been the case in research on sub-groups. This suggests that research in this area needs to establish the existence of a prima facie self-definition in respect of the category under investigation before going on to look at degree of identification. This would then establish whether it was appropriate to explore race and ethnicity as sub-groups of nationality.

The impact which representations of Britishness have on this population is complex, covering both representations of Britain/Britishness held by the participants and the participants' perceptions of the majority’s representations of Britishness. The perception of the representation of Britishness held by the White majority as being racially based limits options for identifying with or self-defining as British. It was not a sense of Britain, Britishness and British people as something negative which was the principle hurdle for a lack of a self-definition as British. Rather it was the perceived representations of Britishness by the majority population which formed the barrier. The influence of the majority population on whether Black people were regarded as British echoes the findings of Jayaweera’s qualitative study (1993) which focused on the issues of class and gender. Her respondents raised the importance of the majority population’s views on their ability to self-define in particular ways. The past was also a barrier to any form of identification with Britishness in that “buying into” Britishness was perceived to some extent to involve an acceptance of the British past as represented by the majority. The past was perceived as an obstacle to a sense of Britishness, though it was not always particular historical events which posed the problem, it was also the perception of the past being represented by the White majority in ways which excluded Black people.
Research question 3: How do constructions of the past influence the construction of Blackness and the perceived incompatibility between being Black and British?

The findings of the empirical studies show how the research question about the past effectively subsumes the other two issues. It shows the impossibility of answering these research questions in any meaningful way without a consideration of the past. It also illustrates how considerations of the processes which people use to make sense of their circumstances can be as important as the content. In this case it was the emphasis on opposition and reaction which dominated and obscured questions of values in terms of how the inter-categorical context was constructed.

Study 1

The temporal orientation of the Black print media was firmly based in the present. There was no attempt to draw on the past to explain the present. In addition there was no representation of aspirations or future possible collective selves. Representations of the past were linked to representations of Black people as victims.

Study 2

The focus group study also showed that the distinctive nature of the category Black meant that the hypotheses proposed by Social Memory Theory in which one or more identity principle would dominate when drawing on the past do not seem to apply. The nature of a racial minority is such that distinctiveness and cohesion are largely created externally rather than constructed by the population as a means of defining boundaries. The main exception to this is continuity, the participants identified a clear personal and collective continuity between the past from the slavery period onwards and the present day. However, that continuity is primarily negative and therefore enhances rather than mitigates any threat to the population.

Study 3

In this study the past became a location for playing out the ongoing relationship between Black and White. The findings (together with the data from the White participants) illustrates that Black and White see the past and its effect on the present differently and that the nature of the past has had an effect on how Blackness and Britishness are constructed.

The way in which the past was perceived meant that Black people are positioned very much as outsiders with an outside perspective on the nature of the British past and the relationship which the White majority have with it.
Both this study and the focus groups showed that Britishness and Englishness were perceived as being inextricably associated with Whiteness. It could, therefore, be argued that if the White majority made a determined effort to forge a new non-racial representation of Britishness then there would no longer be any incompatibility between race and nation. However, the way in which race was used as an explanatory framework by the Black participants for interpreting the past together with the perception that the past was being used by the White majority in a way which perpetuated racial inequalities both domestically and internationally shows that this would not be sufficient. In this case and for this population, it is not enough to tackle the undoubted problems of the present without also addressing the issues of the past.

**Discussion**

Having argued that the Black people in my studies appeared to have a pre-disposition to perceive continuity between past and present through a racially-informed view of the world, an obvious target for further research would be younger Black people. The majority of my participants were over 21 and had personal experience of a world of obvious and blatant racism. The experiences of those growing up after the most recent riots and in a climate of explicit equal opportunities’ policies in education and ‘political correctness’ in interpersonal contact might give rise to different perspectives on both the past and the present.

The evidence from the studies here suggests that the operationalisation of Breakwell’s integrated paradigm would benefit from a consideration of the past. The effect of the past on the way in which the participants constructed Blackness, Britishness and the connection between the two shows that it is important to look at the origins of the representations which are held to impact on identity construction and negotiation as well as the representations in their current form.

Schuman and Scott (1989), in their study of generational imprinting, noted that the imprinting process worked differently for social changes compared with specific historical events. Their study (in the USA) noted that the imprinting for feminism and civil rights tended to be limited to the target populations. The findings of the value sorting interview support this. Participants were asked to name an ‘event’ which had made modern Britain what it was. Social changes were mentioned by the Black respondents, indeed, one young participant mentioned the US civil rights movement. These findings also suggest that for populations who have experienced the consequences of social changes the imprinting ‘effect’ goes beyond those who have lived through the time period concerned. This is contrasted with the responses of the White participants who tended to mention events rather than trends. Trends which were mentioned (eg decline of nuclear family, lessening of class hierarchy) tended to reflect the personal experiences of the respondents.
Williamson (1988) acknowledges the importance of the relative international status of a country to its national identity. The findings of the value sort interview take this further and suggest that the international dimension of a country's past is also relevant to how it is perceived. The very different ways in which the White and Black participants constructed the UK past (in particular the imperial/colonial element) emphasises the need to look at national identity from an international as well as a domestic perspective in both the past and the present.

Abell et al (in press) looked at the differences in the way in which residents of Scotland and England used the island metaphor in their constructions of nationality and national barriers. This contrasts with the way in which the Black respondents used references to the UK's island status in both the focus groups and the value sorting interview. Abell's respondents all recognise the UK's island status, they then go on to construct it in different ways to meet different national and political aims. For the Black respondents in this research, the emphasis was on the size of the island and the perceived contrast between physical size and its past economic and political power.

Social Identity Theory looks at the degree to which individuals regard the barriers between groups to be both permeable and legitimate. The findings of the value sorting interview add a new dimension to perceptions of legitimacy. The Black participants looked at the British past and labelled it illegitimate because of the prevailing ideology of racism which underpinned slavery and imperialism. However, they also perceive the sense of illegitimacy as continuing into the present. This past-based reading of the current social structure renders it illegitimate for this population. By contrast, for the White respondents, legitimacy has been restored by the sense that the negative elements of the past have been overcome and, therefore, have minimal impact on present day Britain.

The empirical research discussed in the literature review on social memories had a number of studies which looked at the role of environmental or physical cues in the formation of social memories. The UK African Caribbean population has very few physical reminders of its past in the environment and relatively few commemorative events (the Notting Hill Carnival would be the main exception to this). However, this absence of physical reinforcement does not seem to hinder the ability to construct strong representations of a collective past which spans a considerable period of time and a wide international remit. Geographically, the past is discussed in terms of Africa, the Caribbean, Europe, USA and the UK. Temporally, the past is conceptualised from pre-slavery terms onwards. Social Memories Theory (Lyons, 1996) points to the importance of continuity in the construction of collective memory. The long timespan used by the participants in referring to the past of Black people can be considered evidence of continuity; what is interesting
is that much of the past which is discussed is negative but this does not prevent it from being remembered. The perceived value of continuity in a negative past might be usefully researched in the future.

The literature review discussed the issues of racism and anti-racism in the social sciences. It is clear from the participants that they perceive there to have been a decline in crude racism over the course of their lifetimes (though they were not asked directly to comment on this). However, it is also clear that social memory of racism from the past (whether experienced personally or not) remains a potent force and forms part of the barrier to identifying as British. It is important for those looking at race, racism and anti-racism to be aware that it is inadequate to look at racism only from the perspective of the present.

8.4 Future research and social implications

Social psychological research accepts that groups form and construct themselves in an inter-group context and much of social psychology looks at the implications of that inter-group dynamic for individuals, the classic example being the self-esteem motive of Social Identity Theory. However, as Reicher (1986) has pointed out social psychology tends to take social groups for granted; they are assumed to exist and to have meanings for their members.

Throughout this theses, I have not attempted to contest the fact that the category 'Black' exists and has meaning for Black people. However, what this research has tried to show is that the principles and processes governing the way in which the category is constructed by Black people are determined by an historical inter-group context. It is for this reason that opposition and reaction assume a precedence in the construction of the category which then have important implications for the content of the category and its compatibilities. A false impression of an infinitely malleable and context-determined group 'identity' is possible unless the role of the past is recognised. What it is to be Black is not simply a reaction to the context set by the White majority at any given time, because that context is being interpreted historically as well as in the light of current concerns.

In December 2003, the UK Black poet Benjamin Zephaniah refused an OBE from the Queen because of his perception of the honour's links with colonialism and slavery.

Upon receipt of the letter informing him of the Award, Mr. Benjamin Zephaniah wrote:

"Me? I thought, OBE me? Up yours, I thought. I get angry when I hear that word "empire"; it reminds me of slavery, it reminds of thousands of years of brutality, it reminds me of how my foremothers were raped and my forefathers brutalised. It is because of this concept of empire that my British education led me to believe that the history of black people started with slavery and
that we were born slaves, and should therefore be grateful that we were given freedom by our
caring white masters ...” http://www.blackbritain.co.uk/news/news.asp?id=562&c=uk

What is significant here is that the explanation he gives for his refusal was not one of any of a
number of possibilities: a clash between his Rastafarian religious values and the acceptance of a
secular honour; or an anti-monarchist personal or political moral code. His stated reasons
focused on the historical construction of the honours system. For Zephaniah, in order to be
recognised as having contributed to modern British society, he is required to participate in an
historically tainted, and therefore illegitimate, process which would involve buying into a version of
history which is incompatible with his Blackness.

I have quoted Zephaniah’s refusal of an honour as an example in order to illustrate the complex
interactions between Blackness, Britishness and history. I would hope that this thesis also goes
some way to providing a theoretically grounded explanation of Zephaniah’s decision and also the
misunderstandings which informs the mainstream press’s criticism of his choice. For those
members of the White majority who subscribe to the progress discourse discussed in study 4, the
historical orientation of Zephaniah’s decision is likely to be both incomprehensible and
unnecessarily intransigent. The two distinct uses of the past lead to a fundamental mutual
misunderstanding. If Black people cannot share in British history as it is currently represented
and this is likely to be a barrier to any sense of common national feeling when it is based on the
past.

Clearly the research presented here does not offer much cause for optimism for those who
consider that a trend for more Black people to define themselves as British (in other than a
technical sense) would be a positive development. Throughout this thesis I have resisted making
value judgements about the merits of Black British identification. The thesis has attempted to
explore it as an issue rather than as a problem or as a desirable outcome.

8.5 Future research

In addition to some of the ways in which the research questions addressed in this research could
be extended as discussed above, I would argue generally that an awareness of the role of the
past should inform future research relating to Black people in Britain and would be likely to
increase its explanatory power.

More specific areas of further research would be to determine the extent to which the historical
construction of Blackness and Britishness are part of widespread beliefs and to explore whether
an historically informed construction of Blackness and Britishness has an effect on the behaviour of individuals.

Other possible areas are:

a) To what extent does it matter that the sense of groupness is externally imposed? Does it have an effect on social support possibilities?

b) If the collective is represented as chronically ineffectacious does this result in lower efficacy levels for members of the collective?

c) Do other category memberships impact on constructions of Blackness eg religious beliefs or gender?

d) What would it take for the past to be perceived differently? How is the Black element of Black British heritage reconciled with the inequality within the British past, how can the descendent of a slave reconcile his/her heritage with that of the descendants of slave-owners?

e) What effect does mixed parentage have on constructions of Blackness, Britishness and the influence of the past?

f) The role of the past on perceptions of the future and possibilities for social change would also seem to be an area which could be developed in future research.
References

Abell J, Condor S, Stevenson C (in press) 'We are an island': geographical imagery and dilemmas of British identity in Scotland and England.


Owusu-Bempeh K & Howitt D, (1999) Even their soul is defective. The Psychologist 12 3 126-130


List of appendices

Appendix 1 - Socio-demographic information
Appendix 2 - Sample copy of Black newspaper (Caribbean Times)
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Appendix 6 - Value sort interview schedule and sorting task matrix
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Appendix 9 - Transcript of value-sort interview with Black participant
Appendix 10 - Transcript of value-sort interview with Black participant
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Appendix 1 - 3.17 Male unemployment rates\(^1\): by ethnic group and level of highest qualification, 1999-00\(^2\)

**United Kingdom**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Above GCE A level or equivalent</th>
<th>At or below GCE A level or equivalent</th>
<th>No qualification</th>
<th>All men aged 16 to 64</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani/Bangladeshi</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ethnic groups</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Unemployment based on the ILO definition as a percentage of all economically active for men aged 16 to 64.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics
### Appendix 1 - 4.13 Managerial responsibility of employees: by gender and ethnic group, Spring 2000

**Great Britain**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Pakistani/</th>
<th>Bangladeshi</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>All employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foremen and supervisors</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not managers, foremen, or supervisors</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All employees</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>12.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>(=100%)(millions)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Females</td>
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<td>Foremen and supervisors</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not managers, foremen, or supervisors</td>
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<td>75</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All employees</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>11.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>(=100%)(millions)</td>
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<td></td>
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</table>

*Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics*
Appendix 1 - 3.21 Highest qualification held¹: by gender and ethnic group, 1999-00²

Great Britain

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<tr>
<th>Degree or equivalent</th>
<th>Higher education³</th>
<th>GCE A-level or equivalent</th>
<th>GCSE grades A* to C or equivalent</th>
<th>Other qualification</th>
<th>No qualifications</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian/Pakistani/</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other groups⁴</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>24</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Indian/Pakistani/</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other groups⁴</td>
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<td>All</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

¹ Males aged 16 to 64, females aged 16 to 59.
² Combined quarters: Spring 1999 to Winter 1999-00.
³ Below degree level.
⁴ Includes those who did not state their ethnic group.

Source: Department for Education and Employment from the Labour Force Survey
### Appendix 1 Table 4.21

**Unemployment rates**: by ethnic group and age, 2000-01

**United Kingdom**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>16-24</th>
<th>25-34</th>
<th>35-44</th>
<th>45-59/64</th>
<th>All aged</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>32</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani/Bangladeshi</td>
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<td>14</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other groups(^4)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All ethnic groups(^5)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Unemployment based on the ILO definition as a percentage of all economically active. See Appendix, Part 4: ILO definition.
3 Males up to the age of 64, females up to the age of 59.
4 Includes those of mixed origin.
5 Includes those who did not state their ethnic group.

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics
Appendix 3 - Media Analysis keywords

Global Blackness
Racism/enduring and ongoing racism
Negative legacy of colonial history
Colonial rape
Black-White problems = global & universal
All-pervasive nature of anti-Black racism
Blackness as subservient
Black excluded on racial grounds
Black people as passive pawns
Black people in need of help from White
Black sporting success rooted in poverty and adversity
Sporting Blackness = good sportsmanship/fair play
Blackness as morally superior
Blackness as sporting success
Whiteness as unreliable
Africa as Black
Hierarchy of international Blackness
Blackness as global and united
Blackness as global and inter-dependent
Link between the Blackness of the Diaspora and African
Black people doomed to failure in White world
Adversity
Unsupported in adversity
Inter-group/inter-group competition
Intra-group
Temporal
Ongoing/Never ending
Battle/Battle between police and Black people/Battle on many fronts
Anti-gay
Unity
Rightness is punished/penalised for good behaviour
Conflict within Blackness
Blackness in different behavioural forms
Victim/victimhood/innocent victims/Black nations as victims
Racism unpunished
Physical Danger/risk of physical from racially-motivated violence
Vulnerability/vulnerability against authority
Community as euphemism/synonym for Black population
Global discrimination
Violence
Solidarity
Absence of safety
Physical racism
Intra-racial rivalry/conflict
Blackness as Christian
Blackness & Islam as mutually incompatible
Blackness as inter-dependent
Struggle for equality
Lack of loyalty between Blacks
Physical Blackness/Blackness as racially essentialised
Alliance between Blackness and New Labour/Black people benefiting from Labour reforms
Authentic Blackness & intra-racial relationships as mutually incompatible/inter-racial relationships as controversial
World's poorest countries are Black
Inter-African conflict
Black equality & success under siege
Global link between Blackness in US and UK
Black media used to provide Black perspective/slant on mainstream issue/story
Struggle
Battle
Success
These keywords were then grouped to produce *themes:
Appendix 4 – Media analysis themes

**International anchoring**
- Global Blackness
- Africa as Black
- Hierarchy of international Blackness
- Blackness as global and united
- Blackness as global and inter-dependent
- Link between the Blackness of the Diaspora and African
- World’s poorest countries are Black
- Inter-African conflict
- Global link between Blackness in US and UK

**Religion**
- Blackness as Christian
- Blackness & Islam as mutually incompatible

**Racism**
- Racism/enduring and ongoing racism
- All-pervasive nature of anti-Black racism
- Racism unpunished
- Global discrimination
- Physical racism
- Black excluded on racial grounds
- Black people doomed to failure in White world

**Sport**
- Black sporting success rooted in poverty and adversity
- Sporting Blackness = good sportsmanship/fair play
- Blackness as sporting success

**Temporal dimension**
- Negative legacy of colonial history/Colonial rape
### Temporal
Ongoing/Never ending

### Inter-group (negative)
Inter-group/inter-group competition
Black-White problems = global & universal
Whiteness as unreliable
Black people in need of help from White
Blackness as morally superior
Blackness as subservient to White
Black people as passive pawns

### Victim/vulnerable
Victim/victimhood/innocent victims/Black nations as victims
Physical Danger/risk of physical from racially-motivated violence
Vulnerability/vulnerability against authority
Absence of safety
Violence
Rightness is punished/penalised for good behaviour

### Intra-group (negative)
Lack of loyalty between Blacks
Intra-racial rivalry/conflict
Conflict within Blackness
Blackness in different behavioural forms
Physical Blackness/Blackness as racially essentialised

### Intra-group (positive)
Unity/ Solidarity
Blackness as inter-dependent

### Battle metaphor
Black equality & success under siege
Struggle/Struggle for equality
Adversity/Unsupported in adversity
Battle/Battle between police and Black people/Battle on many fronts

Miscellaneous
Anti-gay
Alliance between Blackness and New Labour/Black people benefiting from Labour reforms
Black media used to provide Black perspective/slant on mainstream issue/story
Community as euphemism/synonym for Black population
Appendix 5 - Focus group interview schedule.

Aim of study - To explore the way in which Black people feel and talk about the experience of being Black in the UK and in particular the meanings attached to the label "Black".

Research questions

This focus group should provide information about the degree to which Black people in Britain feel that:

a) they need a culture of their own which is distinctive (from White or Caribbean or both?)

b) the degree to which they feel that the content of their Caribbean heritage already provides them with sufficient cultural support (continuity) to deal with the experience/identity threat of being Black in the UK.

c) some underlying information about the "groupness" of the category.

d) Information about which other social groups are perceived as relevant to the construction of a group identity and on which dimensions eg positive/negative, ingroup/outgroup.

★ ★ ★ - these symbols are attached to those areas of the schedule which aim to elicit answers to the appropriate research question.
Introduction

Hello, my name is Lesley Storey and I am doing postgraduate research at the University of Surrey. I'd like to start by thanking you for agreeing to help me out and also to explain a little bit about what I'm doing and why.

My research is into the lives of Black people in Britain today and during this session I would like to focus on the Black press - publications such as "The Voice", "Caribbean Times" and "Pride".

I should start off by explaining what I mean by the word "Black" - in this context I am using it as a shorthand for people of African Caribbean heritage, regardless of where they were born.

I would like to tape-record this session (unless anyone objects to that), so that I don't miss anything, and so that I can have an accurate record without taking notes.

Phase 1

I would like to start off with a brief discussion of what you see as the purpose of the Black press in the UK.

1. Do you read any of the Black newspapers or magazines? If so how often, what do you enjoy about those paper?, is there anything you dislike? what do you find interesting, useful? [state that it doesn't matter for the purposes of the discussion whether you're a regular reader or not.]

2. Some people feel that newspapers and magazines specifically for Black people are a good idea whereas others have argued against it - what do you think?

[max of 15 minutes for this, partially to be used as warm up/ice-breaker as well as to guide the following task]

Phase 2

That was a very interesting and useful discussion, [give summary of main points made in discussion] now I would like you to have a look at some of the stories which have appeared in the Black media over the past year and talk about them.

You will have up to 30 minutes to look at the articles available, please do ask me if any of this is unclear. Please do not start discussing the articles until everyone has had a chance to read them. If there are 10 articles in total and there are two copies of each.

I would like you to start your discussion, it doesn't matter if your ideas are not perfectly formed, I am just as interested in vague feelings as in perfect arguments.

For example, start off with the article about X, (brief summary of content should also deal with any person who has had reading problems) what did you think about that one?

[provide prompts for keeping discussion going]

What do you like or dislike about the article.

How does reading the article make you feel about the situation of Black people today/about being Black in the UK today, did you think it was relevant/a fair reflection of Black life?
c) Who do you feel that this article is most relevant to? [?♀?]

d) what would this article tell you about Black people if you came from another planet? Do you think that would be a fair/accurate impression? ♀

e) does this article pay enough attention to the culture of Black people in Britain today? - what do you feel should be included? ♀ ♀

f) How important is it that the person/people referred to in this article is Black - could they just as easily have been another ethnic minority person or even a white person? [use as last resort prompt] ♀

g) How relevant was that to your own experience?

h) Did you think that was a fair article?

[if issues of journalistic style are raised in like/dislikes steer discussion more towards underlying themes]

[use prompts & validations from other focus groups as a last resort if key issues have not been raised spontaneously]

At end of discussion

1. You've mentioned a lot of issues which are to do with how Black people deal with being a minority in this society and some of the problems with that. To end on a more positive note could you give me off the top of your head 3 positive things/qualities about Black people? ♀ ♀

Conclude with summary of discussion if possible and thanks for participation.

Total time per focus group - 1½ hours

7 May, 1998 [updated 18 May] - most recent up date 8 July 1998

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Appendix 6 - Interview schedule and sorting task

Introduction
This interview is designed to find out how people see Britain now, in the past and the future. I am going to start off with some general questions and then move on to a sorting task.

1 - Do you have a UK passport?

2 - Would you call yourself British/English?

2a - If yes - what does that mean to you?

2b - If not - how would you define yourself - why?

How would you describe Britain/the British?

Now we move on to the sorting task:

I've identified a number of adjectives which have been used in political speeches or media pieces to describe Britain and the British, some are favourable and others are less flattering.

I have marked these pots with the following labels:

"True of Britain now"

"Likely to be true of Britain in 20 years time"

"True of Britain in the past"

"Not true of Britain at all"

I'd like you to take each of these adjectives in turn and decide which pot is most appropriate for it. At the end we will go through each pot in turn and you can tell me a bit about why you've chosen the descriptions for that pot. Obviously there are no right or wrong answers, but I'm particularly interested in how your own feelings and experiences affect your choices.
Post-sort – Obviously I have chosen these descriptions and asked you to sort them. It may be that you feel that none of these descriptions fit in with how you see Britain and British people so I have some blank cards here and if you would like to you can write your own descriptions and sort those as well.

Final questions
1 - Do you see Britain as a country as more modern or more traditional?
2 - What event from the past do you think was most important in shaping modern Britain & why?
3 - Which do you personally feel is more important, the present, past or future?
4 - How does being Black relate to how you feel about Britain?

Name:
Occupation:
Where do you live?
Age:
Date:
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<tr>
<th>True of UK in past</th>
<th>True of UK now</th>
<th>True of UK in 20 yrs</th>
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Specific prompts:

Britain in future - *Do you see yourself within that vision of Britain in the future? Where/how do you fit?*

Britain in past – *Are you thinking of a particular era?*

November 2001
Appendix 7: Transcript of focus group 1

Sde 1

My name is Lesley and I'd like to start by saying thank you I suppose for helping me out with this, I've got about 10 articles here, right and if you could just look through the articles, you don't have to like read them and inwardly digest them and then after you've looked at them could we just talk about them and tell me what you think about them how they made you feel, is that ok? There's 2 of each right [papers being handed out]. They're all taken from Black papers like Pride or The Voice, Weekly Journal whatever.

[tape-recorder turned off during reading]

D - C doesn't come back from 5...

R - so which ones are we going to discuss first?

LS - Well are there any that immediately sort of jump out at people and make .. and people have strong feelings about, any of them? any of them you liked, any you disliked?

Marg - Gene warfare, because the South Africans were spending quite a large amount of money developing the weapons to genetically wipe out the Black

LS - yeah, the genetic weapons to target

R - Were they? Didn't know that

Marg - when they had the Truth Commission, came out that one of the doctors, he came and saying how much money they'd spent, that's why they were, don't know what they were doing, they were stealing, they were doing something to raise the money they were.

LS - it was illegal wasn't it?

Marg - yeah, it was a secret, it was a secret installation and they were raising the money out in the West to financed, finance that, gene warfare, so that they could develop a weapon to kill off all the black people and leave all the white standing, I don't know how.

D - they could do it

Rose - what genes is only found in Black people that's not in White?

Marg - well they'll find a way of finding one

P - exactly, they'll find a way of doing it if they want to, they find a way, I'm telling you

M - well look at some tests... but don't forget, some of us will have, look some of us have the sickle cell

R - oh right, right right

D - gene right, so you could start with that and work (laughing) you know work your way up or down.

P - they'll find a way, oh yeah

LS - so what were you thinking when you read that, then how did it make you feel?

Marg - well I wasn't surprised

LS - No - angry? scared?

Marg - not scared, not angry, just I wasn't surprised at the lengths, lengths they'd go to and I think they would go to those kinds of lengths... you know... to to develop it and I don't want to subscribe to the kind of theory you know that there's somebody out there doing things to us but... you know, there are government agents that would, that would look at that as a serious way of killing us off. Just the only thing is that there's so many of us that...and we're all so different that.

Y - they would start in Africa

Yeah yes yeah and work their way out.

they would start in Africa

Yeah I think they would... seriously do that

Laughing)

Marg - What do you think Deborah

) - Umm, what was it?
Marg - No I'm saying about the gene warfare and that

Marg - and the mere fact that it's not just thinking about it, they were actually doing it

R - then they're going to finish it then aren't they?

Y - someone's gonna finish it.

P - there's some evil person out there...

Marg - like AIDS might be one of the things that came out of, out of tampering with that kind of idea, how do you know they didn't develop AIDS to wipe out a certain part of the population?

Yes I believe it

LS - you had some strong feelings about the Linford Christie one didn't you?

Marg - yeah

D - what was it about?

Marg - being Black and being British

P - well he's not British anyway

Y - yes he is, well he thinks he is

P - He's not, he's not British, he wasn't born here

Marg - but you don't have to be born her to be British, if you're born under the British flag and under the colonial system and we all were

P - ...I'm sorry,

M - what are you then?

P - I'm Jamaican, I was born in Jamaica, I'm Jamaican

M - what's Marc well why 'aint you in Jamaica then?

P - He's British cos he was born here

? - He was born in England?

P - that's right, so

? - so he's English?

P - That's right, I'm not, I'm Jamaican

LS - Does everyone agree with that that's the bottom line, it's where you were born that

? - Yeah

No

Y? - It doesn't matter where your parents come from, it's where you're born is what counts innit?

? - yeah but you can

R - No, I don't think so, cos that's not how the person on the street sees it?

D - that's where you're coming from you know innit.

??? - Cos if you're born here, you two were born here

R - I was born here

? - how do you see yourself?

D - I'm just British cos I'm here, but otherwise, I'm I'm I'm St Lucian mate

[laughter]

R - are you?

J - that's right

? - don't know about that

All - they wouldn't see you that way though

t - they wouldn't, but she sees herself as that, she sees herself as that.

) - my parents come from there, that's where I come from, I'm only just here because this is where she was, she was here when she dropped me, otherwise you know what I mean just cos of she was here, I'm British but I really come from them, my family don't originate here

S - So you wouldn't say you feel British?

- No I'm just in Britain, just getting on with it mate. I suppose I aint gonna die here, I hope I aint gonna die here

- you say you're a British citizen but you've got what, come from Jamaican origin or something

arg - but when you have to fill in those forms

- I don't fill that in, I never fill that in, cos that's no, that's nobody's business you know

w do you see yourself?

- I am born British, but I don't see myself as British
Marg - so what box do you tick
R - I don't, I don't
Marg - if you had to tick a box
R - I don't, I never tick it, cos it's nobody's business where I'm coming from
D - Caribbean
Marg - how do you see yourself?
R - I see myself as born here though, but not not, as she said, I see myself as a St Lucian, even though I'm not a St Lucian really, I'm born here aren't I? If anybody asks me, yes I'm born here and that's it, but my parents are and that's what I will say...when then forms come I do not fill that bit in cos it's nobody's business, why should they know where where you're from
? - It's not about where you're from, it's how you class how you identify yourself
R - It's not British, so I don't tick it, I don't tick anything, or I put other.
? - yeah what's other?
R - well let them figure it out
[laughter]
D - that's it, let them rack their brains
R - If it comes to it I will tick other
Marg - Why don't you tick Black British?
R - Cos I don't, I don't feel Black British, I may be Black British but
Marg - but that's what you are, that's what they class you.
R - It doesn't matter, no White person is classing me as as British
Marg - but then again when they put the categories they put white, they put White English, they don't put white British, they put White English, cos if you're born in England, then you're English then, if you're born in Scotland you're Scottish, if you're born in Wales then you're Welsh, then so you're English
D - so what happens if they go over to the Caribbean, they drop, drop and then they come over here, what do they call themselves then?...Say a white woman goes over there she gives birth and the baby comes back and this and that
Y - they'd call the child British innit?
D - they'll call it British innit, just cos she dropped it here, she aint gonna say well my child's a Caribbean is she?
? - yeah
Marg - that's for them to identify themselves, it's how we identify ourselves.
LS - Can I just ask you, [to Rose] you know you said 'I don't feel Black British', what does Black British mean to you?
D - that we're part of bloody, you know, England, just here
R - you can, you can't, you can't be Black British because you're not accepted as as Black British are you?
D - that's right
LS - so as far as you're concerned it's meaningless, it's
R - Yeah, yeah it's a stupid word innit
P - exactly
M -cos at the end of the day when we do something for the British government then they remember you're Black British, there's no such thing as Black British no matter where you come from, you could be born here 40 years.
R - Even my children wouldn't say that they're they're...yes they're born here but they wouldn't tell you that they're English, they wouldn't tell you that, they wouldn't say that, they're Black and they're you know, their parent's come from well it's split in two there but you know their parents come from Jamaica and St Lucia even though their father was born here, they wouldn't tell you that they're Black British, they wouldn't say hat...even though yeah we're born here
? - there's no such thing as being British in that way because there's no country called British
R - exactly
) - a white woman wouldn't go to Jamaica, drop the pickney or St Lucia and then come back here and then tell people that their pickney is Jamaican
' no they won't
) - they would say that their pickney is British
yes
1 - and there's no such country as Britain in a sense of, you either English, Scottish, Welsh or Irish. So
Black British is not, it's just a new word to explain Black people

D - I'm Caribbean

Y - so why don't they say Black English then?

that's right

M - but they will not give us the title English

P - as far as they're concerned you can't be Black and be English

in unison: English is white

Marg - so when you get those forms, you'll see white English, but you will not see white British, cos they don't, that's why when they have their flags all over the place, their red and white flags, they consider themselves white and English

M - if you have the Union Jack, there's no Black in Union Jack right? So instead of using the Union Jack, they use the St George's flag to represent I am W-H-I-T-E and there's no other person in this country is English

Marg - Paul Ince and the rest of them can't call themselves English exactly

Marg - they'll call them the Black British players

M - that's why I would never support, I'd never support the English football, I'm glad they beat them, although because we have Black people in there they do not recognise us

Marg - a quota, quota

M - yes tokens, but they do not. But if a Frenchman is born in France, he's just a Frenchman whether he's Black or White [banging the table for emphasis], if a Dutchman is born in Holland, they call him Dutch whether he's Black or White so the British or...the English people right are prejudice

Y - and they contradict themselves with the English football team

M - they contradicting themselves

Marg - If you're born in Yorkshire, then you're supposed to be able to play for the Yorkshire cricket team, but all the Asian boys that's born in Yorkshire can't play, because they don't class them as

M - That's why I say - racism in Britain is hidden under the carpet, but it's there at all times but it's not exposed

Marg - There's racism in America but

M - you know where you stand

Marg - Exactly, if you go, if you go to represent American, be you Black, White Chinese or anything, you're American and you're representing your country

M - you're classed as, what is it, what they call them?

Marg - American, African American, Italian Americans

Y - the last word is American

M - they know they are American, but they don't call us, this Black British man has won this thing, they don't say that, they don't say that.

Marg - do they, you're British when you win and a week later you're something else, of Caribbean, of West Indian parents

M - West Indian parents, no matter if you're born and you're third generation British, you do not have that

Marg - and if you manage to commit a crime, well you're definitely not British, you're. They'll definitely find out what island your parents are from

Y - so that's why I'm so glad they lost the World Cup, I was one not cheering for them. I rather the French, the German, the Italian [hitting the table after each nationality for emphasis] beat them

M - anybody but them

Marg - So Norman Tebbit's right?

I - Yes, there's no Black in the Union Jack, let's put it that way

Marg - Norman Tebbit's right, so we. [laughing] He did ask for us to be repatriated because of it

So no-one agrees with this guy who was writing this article, that Black people in this country should accept that they're part of this country and get on with it

I - No, no

Y - How can you accept you're a part of something when they don't accept you

M - they don't accept us

Marg - we have to tick English when we went into a job

Y - exactly
Marg - No I don't agree with im
?
- the wounds are still too raw, that's why people can't accept it
LS - what do you think would have to change?
M - well what I'm saying to him that right this article is, he's under a what's the word called, a
misapprehension, is that the word? that there's no such thing as a Black British society. Goodbye
? - Is that your contribution?
[laughter, as M leaves the room temporarily]
Marg - what was we up to
d - that we didn't agree with im
all - no, no
R - like what they say on Jerry, what is it they say, get real, when they say tell it like it is, be real
Marg - I was reading this, I meant to bring it in, this article in the Sunday Times, this Donna Kobaru wrote
on Sunday about Stephen Lawrence and the Nation of Islam and everything and she usually writes, the
same kind of thing like this, that you know, we're all sitting around and we're all um moaning about being
Black and we're not getting on with it and we should try and get on with our life in Britain and you know be
British, and Caribbean people are not striving to

do well over here and things like that and in this article because of those guys at um, those 5 guys, the 5
white guys and she's married to a white guy herself, she said she was on front of the television and she
was shouting and screaming at them and her husband was surprised, because she's always putting down
black people in a very nice way and she said because, for the first time she saw when they were
sautnering in like you know it was nothing, she was angry and she was glad the Nation of Islam went along
and were not violent, but aggressive, because she said, what she was saying was all the time, the Stephen
Lawrence family's done really well to get, 5 years on to get the enquiry but at the end of it those 5 white
guys are still walking free

- rubbish

and maybe they need to feel a bit of fear cos the judicial system is not, it doesn't frighten them cos they
can still walk free but at least the Nation of Islam for that, for the two days they felt the anger of Black
people, and maybe it was right that they should, cos a lot of people said 'oh why did the Nation of Islam go
there', you know, but she said she was, and I was surprised, cos I don't, usually when I read her things, I'm
usually shouting and screaming, but I did agree with her there that it was good the Nation of Islam went
and showed them, we don't, we don't always have to want to turn the other cheek, sometimes we need to
be aggressive and show them our anger.
?? - So I pre.. who wrote that article, was it?
LS - It was the columnist in "The Voice"
Marg - yes I thought so.. Tony Sewell...cos he's got a job with the is it the News of the World or something
?' - is he?
marg - is it the News of the World or the Sunday Mirror, watered down. He doesn't even know what he's
talking about.
- so is he still with the The Voice?
S - I think he writes for both
larg - [pointing at article] He starts off with one premise and ends up somewhere lost in the middle of his
argument, so I don't like his argument, most of...and that one [pointing at As Good as Goldie article] was a
false truth to life I suppose.
- I don't understand that one.
hers - the barber shop and how people behave in the barber shop
j - It rung bells with you
arg [laughing] - Not that I've ever been in a barbershop anyway, I've never been in a barbershop, but it
seems like how things go in the barbershop
j - You said it's good that the accused people didn't see Black people turning the other cheek, do you
think that's something that Black people have done for too long, turn the other cheek?
arg - Yeah, I think sometimes we do and I don't think they know, they expect us, the Lawrence family and
they've done really wonder... really well but they're seen as the acceptable face of Black people, if
when Lawrence had been....

exactly because the, all the time they keep saying this boy was like you know the perfect child like it
was amazing that this Black boy actually went to school and thing and they're always saying that every
time they talk about him you know, this child, this A level student and thing you know this one perfect Black
child in the whole of England
Marg - exactly and if he'd been, if he'd had a conviction, or been a bit of a scallywag
R - exactly

they'd been you know, they wouldn't care, the press. But they had to make sure that number one, the
Lawrences were suitable, a married couple, respectable, churchgoers, he was you know a respectable
young boy before the White press take it on board, they wouldn't bother. Look how many young Black men
have been killed in prisons, killed, been arrested by the police and been killed, how many times have
people been talking about it? You know, no-one's bothered to, but you have to be, they like to see us be
dignified and they like to see us being calm and serene and from you know from a good
LS - so you don't think that's a strength in the Black community, I mean for example you mentioned that
the Lawrences were churchgoers and that makes them ok and there's an article there about the Black
churches and that's another thing you know that religion is quite strong in the Black community, stronger
than in the White isn't it? You don't think that's a good thing about the Black community?
- that we're churchgoers?, law-abiding citizens and

??- I've nothing against the churches
P - I'm not a Christian myself
D - but we can't all be perfect, there's some white people, there's enough of them in the prisons for
murdering and if Black people do more of it than they do it but they don't go, it's the Black people are
watching the White people.
LS - so what are the good things then, about Black people in this country?
Marg - good things?
[much laughter]
Marg - we're here to make their lives a thorough misery. We're here to be a thorn in their tail and we're
always gonna be here to be a thorn in their tail, they had it, they had it too good too long, we're here to
recoup some of that, so.
P - I think a lot, Black people keep this country going

LS - things like the economy?
P - Yeah
Marg - the National Health Service would have collapsed, they wouldn't have had a National Health
Service without us.
R - well that's what they brought us here for innit?
Marg - gosh to do their dirty work, exactly
Marg - and now that it's on its way, they want to try and get rid of us, but we're not going anywhere, we're
here to stay and be a thorn in their.
D - We've earned our right to be here
Marg - exactly we're a thorn in their side and
Marg - it's not going to be easy
D - never has been
Marg - by hook or by crook, they're gonna have to accept us
P - I don't think Black people's ever had it easy in this country
D - but that, but that adversity also makes us stronger and what we are, who we are and what
Marg - yeah, what we are
Marg - yes you could have an easy life and be white but ...you know. I don't know any other life but I
could say it's much more interesting, we have...
D - I'm glad I'm Black
Marg - Why's it interesting?
Marg - White life's boring
Marg - yeah, they don't have any aspirations
D - dead stock
Marg - yeah, they just aspire to 2.1 children and the car and the house and the pub
Marg - we have a lot more to us than that and we've got a home to go to when we're ready
laughter and agreement

if the sun. Got real home in the sun to go to when we're ready.

D - real home, not this

Marg - Cos you often think about it, well I don't know about anyone else but you often think about it you
know what it would be like to live white life. I don't know

P - I don't think I'd want to, I'm quite happy with what I am

Marg - yeah, it just seems we have more, we're more artistic, we've got more

P - we've got a lot more going for us, I think

Lj - why do you think that?

P - Because of our history

Lj - what, what bits of it?

P - what we've come through, what Black

D - that's it, where we're coming from

P - and where we're coming from

D - the struggle, the fights we've had to put up with

Lj - because things have been tough

D - they still are

laughter

Marg - yeah they still are, but we take it on board, we don't give in, we don't give in to it and it's been 400
years of taking it on board and coming through it and if they could have got rid of us 400 years ago they
would have, but we're still here and not even in small amounts, we're making the difference

Y - out 400 years ago, the forced us here, we didn't want to come

Marg - no we didn't want to come, but they thought they'd got rid of us

P - so we're here they can't get rid of us, we're here and they can't force us back

? - we go when we want to, not when they tell us

Y - no they brought it onto themselves really when you think about it

Marg - exactly, we're here and we go when we want to go, not when they want us to go

R - exactly, enough black people have come here, done what they've had to do and got their money and
gone back home didn't they? Come here for a reason.

Marg - and you know when the Caribbean people decide to leave a country it's because that country's
sinkning, so they should be glad that we're still here.

laughter

cos when they leave wholesale, there's nothing left to a country

R - and then we'll go over there and chuck all them and make them come back here

D - hey I've it over there in the sun and everything and all this and that

LS - so if it's the problems that we've had that have made us what we are. If you can imagine,

D - they're just jealous of us

like 5 years from now and there are no problems, do you think we'd still be

?? - no problems, no problems 25 years from now?

LS - do you think we'd be different people then?

P - repeat yourself?

LS - if it's all the bad times that we've had that have made us what we are including the strong bits and the
good bits, if like 25 - ok 50 years from now right everything is wonderful there are no problems, no racism,
what would we be like?

R - I think each generation gets stronger doesn't it. We're not going to get weaker so therefore I don't think
theirs ever going to be a time when there's no problem because our children

P - always gonna be fighting for what's theirs and what's rightfully theirs and what they should have

R - yeah

LS - so you think the battle will continue, it'll just be different things that are fought about

P - yeah, oh yeah and it will get, as R just said, each generation gets stronger

Marg - I can't think that 50 years time that things will be perfect, things will be rosy, we'll all be living an
idyllic life. I can't see it because

D - there won't be no Blacks, there won't be no whites. only half-caste

that's true, by the time they've watered us down you know

there won't be no blacks, there won't be no whites, there'll just be half, half people living around here

Marg - I don't think so, I don't think so, I don't think so
there's plenty now but boy,
Marg - yes but you see what's happened is that
D - lots of mixed race children
Marg - yeah but a lot of them are going to identify themselves as Black anyway hopefully if we play our cards right hopefully but 50 years time I don't know, I can remember thinking in 20 years time when I was well in 20 years time, things are going to be better in this country, when I got to 40, it wasn't any better, so in another 20 years time when I'm in my 60s. I know it's not
D - it got worse
Marg - going to be any better, it's going to be worse because people my age group are now going to be the pensioners with all the expectations, cos these set of pensioners didn't have any expectations, if they get a pension book now, they're so grateful to get a pension book, but we're going to be expecting it, that's the difference, we're going to be expecting it and we're going to be expecting all the services that are out there, if they give us a home help we're not going to think 'oh thank you' like the, like the old people do now. 'oh I get a home help you know oh' [old people qs said in a little, weak, high voice] like it's wonderful they get a home help
D - we're going to say yeah get on with it, you're supposed to be doing it
Marg - exactly and that's when it's going to be, that's why things can't change cos our, cos our expectations are going to be completely different and our children are going to expect jobs, they're not going to, they don't want quotas like this [pointing at article about woman-hating psycho]
D - but they're going to be more determined anyway, that's how it goes on
LS - is that the guy in the states the one who the guy who was hired after he murdered somebody
Marg - and they re-hired him again and he murdered some more people but they didn't want to they didn't want to discriminate but we're not going to, our children are not going to want quotas and they're not going to want, they're going to expect jobs because they've got the qualifications
D - exactly and they're going to be working and they're doing more for kids at school now and their education and that, so they're going to be growing up and I've got the qualifications, because I'm Black, you'd better not be telling me anything
Marg - exactly
D - so give me what's rightfully mine and what I deserve after all that sweating
Marg - at the moment it's really difficult to get, especially for Black men to get, to get jobs and to get to go higher and to get promoted, Black women seem to do all right
D - they put all the words and little things to make it look good but we're still in the same boat
Marg - so in 20 years time my children not going to accept to be told that you know and Britain has to get real with the real world, it's about time, it's about time they got real
D - swallow it
Marg - but the kind of politicians we've got like Tony Blair, huh and I voted Labour and been regretting it ever since, we've all been regretting it [all laughing]
Marg - but what else could we vote, God what else we haven't got a choice
Marg - exactly we have no choice, we've been regretting it since the day after when we saw his smarmy face
Marg - regretting it from the day after
I (returning to the room) - good feedback are you having?
S - good row yes [laughing]
Marg - come in and sit down and shut up
S - what did you think of that one? [pointing to the Black nannies article]
Marg - five, five dollars, is that what's that in English money?
S - about £3 an hour?
Marg - about £2.50
S - she's selling herself for £3 an hour?
Marg - she's illegal over there isn't she?
Marg - she wants to get a Green Card, so she's at their beck and call
Marg - yeah lots of people go from the Caribbean and go from here and become child-minders and nannies to get their first step in American I mean and they exploit them as well
Marg - yeah you get educated girls used to do that
S - do you think it's worse for Black women to do that than for white women?
Marg - no because it's a means to an end and we as Black people always have aspirations to
Y - something better
P - I think she can see that there's better to come
Marg - she's using this as a stepping stone and there's nothing wrong in that in using it, if you want to go, if
that's the only way you're going to get in and that's how we are as Black people. We came her, we took the
shitty jobs but we didn't expect our children to get those
Mil - and there's lots of Americans like that, lots of West Indians girls, they from good family backgrounds
and they and they had better education than those that go to school here and that's what they did because
they know they're not going to hang about in there for long.
Marg - Exactly because they know that they're going to go in and once you've got your Green Card, they're
going to move on. Yeah, they're going to move on and
P - something better

LS - this is quite a provocative title isn't it?
Marg - some women will do almost anything to achieve the American dream [quoting from sub-heading],
You might as well say that if you're over here and you go into a
P - that's right that is, cos they're suggesting a lot of things there
LS - they're basically saying that you know you put yourself in the position of a slave to go and do that in a
way but you don't agree, you think it's just a means to an end and
Marg - well if that's what she wants if that's how you're going to get
P - well she's aiming for something better than that, that's just a way of getting in there
M - somebody should do something about her hairstyle you know, it come from a coconut brush actually,
and I right? [looking at the article on Jose D'arby]
P - so I'll tell her that shall I?
M - yes it is and she wears too much of that... to be a Black woman, there's a beautiful black woman
[pointing to other group members] without all that shit on their face. Look there's a beautiful black woman
look at them see
R - oh Femi Oke that's even worse, that is even worse.
M - I don't think a Black woman needs to paint their face as if they're going to war to look beautiful, we are
beautiful without all that muck on our face, need a good wash some of them, see them wig, them brushes
they have on they head, look like from a dry coconut. What else?
Marg - because she's saying here at the end that she's coming nearer to getting her card and the people
think she's going to miss them, cos really she's in there just to get the green card and if that's what it takes
to get your green card

Marg - what they talking about and there's people over here working in the nursing homes for £3 an hour
here and coming from West Africa, coming from the Caribbean working for £3 an hour in the hope that
they can save their money, get to stay in this country, studying at the same time, there's nothing
wrong with that.
M - I don't mind doing that at least at the end of the day when you get the Green Card you can move on
in America you have a better opportunity to move on once you have the education and you have better
opportunities.
Marg - exactly and she's got skills, come back to her in 10 years time and she'll probably got a penthouse
for her own and the money you know, so, I think that article's a bit
Y - a bit, who wrote it, where's that from?
S - that one was in umm New Nation
M - New Nation?
S - Yeah
Marg - Those newspapers they're all much of the same aren't they?
- they're all the same no imagination
S - do you not think that those papers give a good representation of Black people?
- no they don't
Marg - I don't know if it's me but
- they don't. The Voice I don't bother to buy it no more
Marg - you buy it but there's nothing to read in it
- they always make
Marg - Shh don't want to hear your domestic arrangements, your arrangements to go home
[discussion in the corner about going home]
M - I used to buy The Voice, but The Voice isn't saying nothing, it doesn't say nothing. It's boring. It does not represent Black people.
LS - What do you think it should have that would make it more representative?
M - not bits and pieces that that happen in the general papers like you know, try and find the news and make news so that Black people can read it, not about who shit who for drugs, more like a school where you know you report on what's happening
D - They're always looking for the the bad or the
M - the bad, you know the good things
Marg - not only that you know the information, information people want to know what's happening in the community they don't cover, there's so many things, there's so many organisations doing so many things
M - so many different things, whenever you approach them, they're not interested.
Marg - If we said we had 7 women here who have got blond hair and and selling weed
M - got big knockers
they'd be down here, but if we say we've got women are having a women's day and, they're not interested at the end of the day that's not news
D - they're just looking to slander us.
LS - Why do you think that is though?
Marg - because they're owned by white people at the end of the day and, because it's not a truly Black paper, it's not owned by the community.
D - they're trying to get the Blacks into the White community.
Marg - you know, it's not owned by the Black Community so, therefore, cos it's like this, this kind of article
by this boy here [pointing at as Good as Goldie] and there's another one by what's his
M - with the funny dread
name, that one that does the umm. No he's sometimes a comedian, that is the most rubbish I've
M - Adibyo?
ever read in my life and I'm saying there's young people out there, young Black people who would write
articles that you would want to read these people have nothing to say and yet still
[thumping the table for emphasis]
they've got space in The Voice and I don't know why The Voice keeps running those week after
M - stupid articles
week after week after week. Not all of us are Jamaican at the end of the day
D - that's it Y and they believe that all black people are Jamaicans
M - and then you have the Jamaican Gleaner that caters for Jamaicans
Marg - but if you send the Jamaican Gleaner something, they will print it whether you be from Jamaica but
they will highlight what you're doing
M - that is how it is supposed to be but it's not being done that way
Marg - and I'm not saying that there's anything wrong with being a Jamaican what I'm saying is they've got
to go past that that vision that they're only catering to one part of the community
? because everyone's different
and we're all so, we're all amalgamated now, some people have got Jamaican parents some people have
got S: Lucian parents, half and half, not everybody's the same, you know
M - why stereotype?
and if they do an island, they probably do Barbados, Jamaica and that's it. I'd like to know about
M - Trinidad
the other islands in the Caribbean
Marg - there's Grenada, there's, there's loads of other islands what was it last week with
Curac, we didn't even know where to look for it on the map, they don't even know that place exists in The Voice
M - but Curaco is only at the bottom of South American, near Guyana
Marg yeah but what I'm saying is a lot of Black people are there oh I don't know
M - Erland is not made up of an island of Nigerians and Jamaicans, there's other people
R - People from East Africa, North Africa, South Africa, West Africa
W - they don't believe that the continent of Africa is very vast
R - yes, they just think it's Nigeria, Ghana and a bit of Gambia and that's it
Marg - well that's if you get to see anybody else
Y - there's Kenya, there's like people from all over the place who do interesting things really
M - and I don't spend my money on The Voice, he wouldn't get rich off of me, not any more.
Marg - but then you don't have anything else to
R - No I always buy it
Marg - you buy it because there's nothing else, there's New Nation but
R - I bought both at once
Marg - but you can't afford to buy 2, I tried buying one week The Voice, one week New Nation but New Nation's
M - It's just as bad as the Voice
so you end up just going back to the Voice, just buying it for the sake of
M - as a Black newspaper
you flick through it but there's nothing to read.
M - At least if you buy the Gleaner you can read 'Dear Pastor' and I enjoy that. I prefer to
R - oh yeah [laughing]
spend my money on The Gleaner and read 'Dear Pastor' and have a good laugh than to spend my money
on the Voice and not having a laugh and just reading about what crimes have been committed by Black
people you know.
D: got to go now, sorry to be so rude and leave
Mil - I have to go too
? - you can't just go
LS - No it's ok
D - No it's just me and Mildred, you lot are all right
R - well where are you going, she's always trying to get out
M - bring A, D bring my telephone with you
Marg - Shhhh, listen Lesley doesn't want to hear about your telephone bill
R - I'll phone you Mil
Marg - it's him Bernie Grant [pointing at article]
LS - what do you think of him?
Marg - not much, well he doesn't make any, got no say has he, he's just like a
R - puppet
yeah, you know put him in front of a cause and he.
LS - What about the others, Diane Abbot, Oona King..
Marg - well at least Diane Abbott is not, did not kow-tow to the Labour Party, I know neither's Bernie Grant,
Paul Boateng does to a certain extent and I went to a meeting during the week and umm I'm on
the management board of a secure children's unit and I think Paul Boateng's going to be coming there and it
was all 'oh we're going to have Paul Boateng'. The Secure Children's Home's got 99% Black children, the
staff: be truthful, the staff is like 75% Black lower, the lower echelons, the management is White, I'm the
only Black person on the management board, you know and I just you know and I thought well if he came
there would he as a Black person notice those things, or will he come here and just tow the party line. Do
you see what I mean, he's in a position to look at these kind of things, look at, but I don't suppose he will,
he'll just tow the party line, accept the..
LS - you think that in order to be successful, he's had to lose touch with
Marg - yeah, cos once upon a time you would hear about, you know when he first became
an MP, you'd have an article about him
and his family and his children and they
live in Brixton, but nowadays you never
hear anything about his wife, you never
hear anything about his children, it's like
they just gone into a vacuum,
disappeared.

P - ye but what does he do
Marg - he's down as a junior health minister
P - ye but what does he do?
Marg - now that D's gone we can have the gateau
LS - [?] What would you want him to do?
P - sorry?
LS - what would you want him to do?
P - to stand up more for Black people
Marg - where, where, I know that Bernie Grant will say something about Stephen Lawrence but where is Paul Boateng's voice on Stephen Lawrence?
P - yeah where's his voice?
M - Paul Boateng is a White man in a Black skin
Y - a Bounty
Marg - he didn't start off like that
M - yeah, but you see with success, we forget our roots. Let's say all of us started on the shop floor and I was made manager then I wouldn't want to know you, that is our basic attitude.
LS - but why is that?
M - because you know, we never thought we'd make it so we've made it so we have to join with the upper
Marg - but he was a grassroots he was a
LS - he was a radical wasn't he?
M - Yes but you can't be a radical
Marg - and be accepted by white society
M - and be accepted by the Whites, you cannot be that.
LS - so you don't think there's any way that you can be a successful Black person and still..?
M - No, only in your own country you can do that, not in a White society
Marg - well I don't know any
LS - why?
M - why?
R - No cos you don't want to do that, that's why, no cos you want to be accepted
M - that's it, that's it
Marg - I don't know anybody any Black person who is radical and is successful
M - who is that, Darcus Howe you talking about
[laughter]
Marg - he's lost the plot he has, he's lost the plot. I was watching that thing last night that livewire, oh dear
what's that?
M - Darcus Howe
P - was he on it?
M - yeah, talking his rubbish, talking about Black women in magazines
what about Black women in magazines?
M - we shouldn't be showing our bare skins you know because we are ugly, we shouldn't be proud of our naked body you know, you have to be White to be able to show yourself naked,
[laughing]
you understand, our bodies do not look good on umm
M - and I don't know how he always gets, cos I was, I was surprised, there was 4 people on the panel
P - cos I just turned on and I thought this is you know, we need to see some Black faces, you don't care
M - what's on the other side and then I kept seeing the 3 and then suddenly the camera went over and I
ought oh god what's he doing there, you know it's just no Black programme on television can't be on
with him.
LS - why don't you think he's used that power to err, in a good way?
?
- and he's not making good use of it
P - to run his mouth off and chat rubbish
M - cos he never, like he had the Devil's Advocate right
    P - oh god don't talk about that programme
    R - he didn't use it did he

He didn't use that properly, now the Devil Advocate right it was a big word and it meant nothing the way he used it, you understand and it was always him
?
- is that the one we went on?
Marg - we were invited on it and, it was all so staged and it's all geared to how the White media, how
White television wants it, that's why I would never have anything to do with any
R - that's when we weren't, only a certain amount of us was suddenly allowed on and things like this and
we were stuck up the back and
M - and things like that and I fell down the stage [laughing]
Marg - yes well we won't go into that [laughing]
M - no, but what I'm saying is yes they've given him a voice in the media, yes but the people that run the
media, there's lots of young people that could do the same thing Darcus Howe's
Marg - yes cos we're not getting an up-to-date
    M - feedback
feedback of what's happening in the community, how the community feels, he's old man now, there's lot's
of young people

M - and he's not the man for the year 2000
    oh god no
P - he's not the man for us, he shouldn't be speaking for us
M - You know that politician - what's her name, Diane Abbott, Bessie Tit, I really, at the
Marg - Diane?
beginning, she was doing for the Black community, the other day I was watching her Parliament
    R - she was arguing on parliament the other night

Yes I seen her on there but I don't think they do enough, when they get to a stage they don't do enough.
P - but the same goes for all of them though, what about those Black councilors at that one we had, that
woman who
    Marg - she believes that, yes she's a Black councillor, but you know the Whites elected her so she can't be
    seen to
    M - to be pushing Black issues, so they never supported us
Where's she coming from, if you went to a women's day and she says she can't stop because she's got to
go home and do her housework, you must know she had no politics whatsoever, you know this is the kind
of people we have representing us
    M - representing us and then when she made a speech
we were all kicking ourselves thinking. You know how embarrassing it can be when you've got, they've
invited all these feminists from all these universities [to LS] you must know cos you're there with them and
you have a Black woman on the committee
    M - that can't speak English, that can't speak English and use all these big
words in the wrong context
    and then says, I can't speak long because I've got to go home because I've got to do my housework. You
know what does it make us look as, how does it make us look as Black people
    M - as if we're a load of idiots, but Marg the speech was hilarious.
Because one only uses words when one can understand the meaning of it. Not every long word that's
written
in the dictionary is mean to be able to, you know you have to use it in the right and I tell you her English, I
never, I -

- no I wasn't

remember R? Were you there P? I tell you, all I kept
doing Marg was and I kept going like this [nudging]

Marg - and when she said about going home to do the housework we just, it brought the house down
M - and you know what hurt me was all these other intellectuals from you know all these places, how can you have somebody like that represent Black people
Marg - exactly and they were just, you know how, what they were thinking cos you know you're thinking it and it's really horrible when you know that White people are thinking that about a Black woman and cos you're thinking it yourself, so you know they must be, we just held our heads like this [head in hands].
M - and she sounds like a Zinger when she uses them long words and don't really know

Marg - she was even worse at least a Zinger make some sense that was just terrible and I was so embarrassed, that's the calibre of the kind of people that represent Black people.
M - and I always think that, somehow there must be some kind of committee, when they meet to elect these people, cos you know those Black councillors get elected by their wards, there must be other Black people that are sensible and intelligent and articulate and they don't get the votes
P - but I think it comes down to who you know
M - yes
Marg - But I think sometimes they think, 'oh we'll have that one, she's, we can control her, we won't have this one cos he's too radical, we'll vote for her, we'll have her cos she's not saying anything, or we'll have him cos he's not saying anything.'
M - cos the White man doesn't want anybody radical in his party
Y - but even if yeah, what would be a good idea is to be really quiet and get elected and then start getting radical once you've been elected.
Marg - they'll soon have you out once it comes

M - they soon have you out
Y - at least you did something you know
M - the only person I find that speaks his mind is Bernie Grant
Marg - but I don't think so
M - but now he's, he's mellowed
Marg - I don't think so he's so fat and, but you know like good living and when you're on

M - he's mellowed

46, earning 46 or 50 thousand a year
M - he was at the beginning, at the beginning he was
P - but they all was, that's what I'm trying to tell you, they all was
Marg - he's not one of us anymore, They're all hungry at the beginning he's not hungry anymore, now he's got food
LS - so you think it's inevitable then, there's nothing
M - there's a new generation that's coming up
Marg - they got Lee

LS - Lee Jasper?
R - but Lee's on everything now, in he, he's getting on my nerves, he's always got a suit on and a tie on and a and you know, yeah but I'm waiting for him to change. At the moment he's still

? - but he's still saying

saying
P - we're still waiting for him to get there and to
M - I think he should go into politics
? - that's where he's steering to
Marg - you can see that with the suit and the tie
M - but then he also will change when he gets to mainstream
\* - No I don't think so, I don't think so
\* - Lee is always he's talked but then when they get to mainstream
\* - No I think he's different now, I think he's different now than from when he was
M - from when we knew him
Marg - because he's trying to conform
R - exactly and Lee was never somebody who'd ever do that
Marg - yeah, because he was always outside, so now. What's he's realised I suppose
R - now he's inside

that you can't change anything from the outside, so he's gone in and when you go in you have to
conform
M - conform with what's going on
and so to conform with everything you have to put the suit on and the tie, but it's what the work, it's how the
words and how you still relate to your community and he's not high enough now to have nothing to do with
the community.
M - I think things will change
Marg - I don't know if he will change
M - things will change but not now
Marg - and we need more people like Lee, we don't need just Lee, we need 20 Lees to be you know
M - More of him you need more people and young
P - No I think Lee will always be for the people
M - what he should be doing is groom, is encouraging other young people
P - he will, he will
LS - so how would he be different from Bernie Grant then if you're saying that he's not going to be
compromised and
P - because he's still hungry
LS - Yeah but let's assume he's successful and in 10 years time
M - then he'll change and he'll become, no but, that's what Pam is saying
LS - why do you think he won't
P - no I don't think he will, because he's always been for the people and
M - no but he has changed a lot
R - no I think he has
M - he has changed, the Lee I knew and the Lee I know now has changed
P - well Marg knows him better than us, but I don't think so, I think he'll still be there for Black people
Marg - yeah I think so, I think he will be, I don't
LS - so you think there are some people who can get through and still be successful but not lose touch,
give in
M - very very few
Marg - I think he'll still. I think he feels it so greatly that I don't think that if he was to compromise or if he
was to change
M - he has to change to get into politics Margareth
yes we know he has to use
M - he has to conform
Marg - yes he's different, because Lee was always for conflict and attacking and know he's learned that
you can get the same ends by going a different way
M - I see
Marg - cos what's happened is when he was here and he was attacking at social services yes they they put
in systems and they were listening because he was always attacking them, but the minute he's gone,
they've revoked on it, so he's learnt that maybe you have to do it a different way, you have to tackle it a
different way, so that when the systems do change they stay changed, and that when one person who's
aggressive and vociferous walks away that they think 'oh well you know'
I - he's gone so we can revert to what we were doing before
Marg - cos he was using the politics of fear [laughing] and you know if you don't give us what we want
we're going to riot and they soon realised that it will take a lot for us to riot
I - I saw him on something it was before they took away that live, not on cable tv, channel 45, remember
that live thing they used to have with question and one Sunday morning and this English woman was doing
something about Black people and I had to ring him and congratulate him, he wiped the floor with the
roman
P - he always do
wiped the floor and I rang him and then I rang him and I said to him that woman didn't know what she
was talking, she got all confused in the end, he gave it to her and I think we need people like him to
xpress what we are feeling. Remember I'm a generation from the 50s, 60s 70s and 80s and the 90s, so I
now what I'm feeling coming from that to now and things has not changed, they're all underneath the
urface right. I remember one day I rang up for a job, when I rang for the job I spoke to the woman on the
hone and when she saw my face it was a different story so I couldn't have the job at the front anymore, I
ad to 30 at the back, so I told her where to stick it and I never went to the job.
Marg - but then how many people has that got, we've got that's what I'm saying we've got this masses of experience you know and so then when they expect us to cheer the English football, the British football team or the English football team, all those experiences is there in our head you know and it's coming forward and we think there's no way I'm going to do that

M - it was Lyon's tea shop, you know the old Lyon's tea shops and I went for an interview for the job

Marg - she wouldn't know, she's too young to know Lyons tea shop [to LS]

[laughter]

Marg - Picadilly?

M - No Victoria and when I spoke to her on the phone she said 'oh do come in for an interview' and you know and when I got there she gave me the job in the kitchens, so I said to her she can stick it and I went to Picadilly and I got one serving on the front

R - cos when you think about it, things like working in a cake shop and things like that, it's only now you see Black girls working in the cake shop, right you used to be served by old white women weren't you?
When I used to go to school, yeah.

[general agreement]

Marg - that's why I had a dream about the cake shop in Peckham the other day, because, no because you know, you go in there and everybody that was there, the manager was Black, everybody was Black and you know when it sticks in your mind so when I went home and I had

M - once upon a time you couldn't

this dream about the cake shop in Peckham because and I thought why did I have a dream about that cake shop and it was because everyone there's Black and it's something you'd

immediately notice

M - even the one on the High Street on the Walworth Road, there're Black faces and I'm shocked

R - it's only like in the last, the last few years

M - year or so P - yeah

Marg - you all don't know prejudice, I remember umm

younger members in unison - we do [laughing]
you don't, you don't, I'm going back very far, when Metal Box was at Tower Bridge Road, they used to carry all the Black people in the back of a furniture van, they used to pick them up at a rendezvous point at Brixton and bring them in there and I remember I went for a job there in the morning and you know I was quite well-dressed and the woman the way she spoke to me, I said you think I'm one of those catties you bring on that van, I am not, so you can take your job, I want my money and I used to do that all the time right

Marg - in a furniture van? [laughing]

M - yes they used to bring them in a furniture van at the Metal Box and they had to pay for being collected from Brixton, it was the picking up point and that's the God's truth I'm telling you. It is disgusting and those people used to get in that van and I remember when I worked first

P - they used to pay them a pittance

yes and pittance and when I worked, I had a part-time job in the evenings with a biscuit company, Peak Frean all the Blacks did the menial and no matter whenever you come, they'd make the last White person in there supervisor before they'd make people that was in there

P - that's right, that's true

for years and I used to think that was wrong, you know, they never gave them no credit

P - no credit, Black people never got no credit in that place they never got no credit

and yet still, the Metal Box, Peak Frean's, the pie shop down at Camberwell, you remember

P - it's Black people who kept it all going

M - they kept it, the pickle factory all in Peckham was pure Black people

P - that's right? - the laundry

M - the laundry and they was never made the more than, they never even made them chargehands you know, so I remember what you know the 50s, the 60s and those are the old people now who, our bodies have gone, you know, crippled with arthritis and all those things and don't even get their due, the pensions they're due, the respect

Marg - the respect, they're due, cos they did a
the hospitals was the same things
   P - the transport systems, when they tell you
Marg - they had to go on their hands and knees to scrub the floors, they weren't allowed to use the mops, so now obviously all of them have got arthritis because of that
   M - of that thing and I also worked in an old people's home so I have to know what I'm talking about, I'm talking about my life experiences in this country and I think things have not changed, they haven't you see, they haven't changed, so when you see one of those Black girls, you go to the office and you see them and they've got the little job and if you worked with them and if you went in there as just the clerical worker, because they've got the job as a secretary, they wouldn't sit down in the staff canteen and have lunch with you because they're bigger than that, you understand, so there's prejudice among our own people, you understand?
LS - mmmm do you think that's one of the problems? I mean for like when we were talking about the politics and so on?
   P - there's a lot of prejudice
M - yes, yes yes because a lot of Black people, once you give them an inch, that's their mentality.
Marg - but that's what racism does to people at the end of the day
   M - but why doesn't it work in America?
It works, it's the same way in America. What I'm saying is that racism puts people, it divides people as well and you're always striving to be better, that's their aim, always to have us fighting
   Y - that's their aim
each other.
M - but then we were always good, there was nothing we, I'm no better than P and P is no better than me, we all human beings at the end of the day.
Marg - yes we know that, but that's the effect of racism, the effect of racism is always to make us be competing with each other and not even understanding that because Jenny down the road does cleaning and I might work in an office doesn't mean to say that at the end of the day we're all earning our money, no matter
   M - money, no matter what way you look at it we're earning our money. I remember when I was a child and I was going to Piccadilly one day and I got on the bus and the woman refused to sit next to me, I have remembered that racism
   LS - I remember that
Marg - well a man did that last week on the bus on the 1-7-2 and he stood up all the way because he wasn't going to sit next to no Black people and we didn't care, we were all seated so who cares if he wants to stand up and be buffeted up and down the you know
[general agreement]
   M - I if you still look in some of the shops, even the Asians do that, they
   R - no, they're not allowed to do that, no they don't do it,
y tell you that, they don't do that, any Asian shop, they will not put the money in your hand, they'll drop it in your hands then in this country, I've been to a shop where the woman would serve me and fling the money like that, I've seen it.

LS - can I pick up on something that you just said about it's racism that sets us apart from each other, do you, I mean can you see any way around that any of you? Is there anything we can do?

M - yeah we have to re-educate the kids, the children that is coming up now, it's too old, it's planted in us from slavery

Marg - but I also believe, I don't know, I also believe that we've got, it's, there's something in our psyche that's coming from slavery that's whether, none of us are born into slavery and that's the same from 200 or 150 years ago, but something in our psyche is, something is there that

P - it's our background

now we still operating in the same way and it's a change it's to change that

M - It's a change, it has to be changed from the family that the children. Like in the West Indies, you see

I'm Black right

R - yeah that mentality of the colour of your skin, that one amazes me

Marg - it's in our psyche

M - I'm Black and Pam is Black and you're Black. Yes but the banks in the West Indies

P - that all comes from slavery as well would not employ me, oh I could have the education to work behind the counter, but because my skin is so black and P's is so red, although I might have more education than P, P would get the job, that is the mentality.

LS - but why are we still like that

Marg - because it's part of our psyche

M - it's inbred in us, it's inbred

LS - yeah, but that means we can never get rid of it then

M - we can, with re-educating the children we have today.

LS - How?

M - How? by you not keeping saying to them 'oh that one's blacker than you'

R - that is true, that is true, because even Michelle asked me why her hand in the middle is white she goes, her hand in the middle is white. I said 'yeah but Michelle you're Black, Daddy's Black, Mummy's Black and she's now seeing that there's

Marg - Nanny's Black

'- but don't you think it's hard?

' - It is hard because she says 'but Mummy, the palm of my hand is white'. I said 'yes but Michelle you're Black'

'- cos you're there trying, but when she goes out there it's

'- that's it, now that confusion is coming from school

'- when she goes out there on the street

I - that's a different story

'- that's where, that's where I think all the confusion starts, now that she goes to school you know she has
M - cos in my grand-daughter hunbun says to me 'oh you're lovely black nanny' and I thought where you get that from hunbun

Marg - because children do pick it up at school, because I suppose at the end of the day cos we're growing up here, we have to alert our children to the fact that they're black and you're, you have to deal with it, you can't pretend to them that when they go to school, it will suddenly fall upon them they'll suddenly realise, because you've got to protect them against the racism that they're going to experience anyway, so that's a lot for little children to be dealing with and maybe that's why lots of those boys

M - and a lot of our Black parents right are also teaching our children right. Now you bring your a young man home and your complexion, [to LS] what does your mother say to you - 'where you get that Black boy from' - isn't it true, isn't it true, your own mother will say that to you, 'I don't want you going round to that Black boy'

R - Did you say that to me?

M - No, yes I did, I did, where you get that Black boy from. Where did I get it from?

[much laughter]

Marg - that's why I was looking in amazement, because I'm thinking, that's the kind of thing she'd say.

R - exactly

M - so it is part, it is inbred in us, although I didn't mean it

LS - so how will it stop?

M - No you can't

Marg - the only way it'll stop is when you start to learn about your history and you start to have some consciousness about yourself and about where you are in the world and that's when you stop. But then a lot of people, if you tell people about Black history, a lot of people will want to know, but a lot of older people will say things like 'well I'm not Black, I'm not African, I'm not' you know and they're the ones. And they're grandparents aren't they, they're the children's

M - that brought us up grandparents, and if your grandparents're saying you know, saying those things what can, the parents don't have much of a chance.

LS - so it's like a toss-up between saying disrespect your grandparents or..?

Marg - exactly and if you bring too much Black history to your grandparents, they think you're gone 'oh that boy's gone' and then they'll put locks in their hair, it's like you've reached the devil's own

M - and Africans have been wearing locks in their hair for thousands of years

Marg - they don't want to hear that

M - for thousands of years

Marg - I watched my Dad when we went to, when I went to the jazz festival and lo and behold he's suddenly decided that 'oh my god, you see what's happened in St Lucia, everyone's turned, everyone's got lock, all the young people have got locks, why?' I said to him how can ever, all the young people have, look around you, because we're at a musical event and traditionally a lot of people with locks are musicians, so you're going to see a lot more there, I had to tell him that you know. So they're not all got locks, they're not all going to. So then we went to the thing, he sat down and oh [laughing] this woman came and sat on the grass next to him and she had on and he was like this [moving away], like this you know.

M - so there's prejudice in themselves

Marg - and I said to him 'what?' and he's actually gone and like this cos she, and I'm saying to him 'what's wrong, what's wrong with that, you could not?' to him it's a thorough disgrace.

P - they won't accept it though

Marg - you know, it's a thorough disgrace for

P - they won't accept it though, my Dad's like that

Marg - so immediately, everyone reacts against that, what I'm saying is they carry those kind of old prejudices with them.

M - ad I was brought up with a load of old prejudices

Y - ad they're saying that Caribbean children are taught that you know African people are inferior to them and they grow up with that knowledge you know.

M - y's, cos my husband, you know, you couldn't tell him that he came from Africa.

Marg exactly, a lot of people still
you could 'ahh I don't know anything about African....[untranscribable noise]' But you say but we were

ginned from there, we weren't born in Jamaica, St Lucia, Barbados, we were brought there, but they say
you 'I no African'. But we are Africans, that is where our roots come from. That's where man, man came

rg - we've got all these things to fight, we've got all these things to deal with, we've got our own inbuilt
judges against each other, we've got racism coming from the White people
M - each other yeah
we must be quite strong to be still surviving

rg - that's why there's so much people in Maudesley, in the madhouse you know because if you think
out it, it's a lot to deal with and if you don't want to deal with it you just shut off innit?
I think it's tribalism because most of the wars in Africa is tribalism.

ethic groups fighting each other.

- so when are we going to stop?
- we're not going to stop, history has to wipe us off and we be born again, we have to be completely, the
h has to be completely.

No

will never change
g - well the Scots, the English and the Welsh, never mind the Irish, cos they're still at it. They used to
against each other.
but they're still fighting against each other.
g - yeah but, what they've realised is that they can achieve more..by unity, they can
M - by unity

if they unite together they can
eah that's what we need unity, we can't communicate within ourselves, we're always arguing
:os P is from Jamaica, I'm from St Lucia, she's from, you see that is it, that's the beginning of not being
her.

amaicans believe if you say you're from St Lucia, then they're oh it's a small island and you know
the first thing
M - small island, you've got small brain, they've got the biggest brain
do you think that is stronger in us than getting together to deal with the situation here?
es, yes
at this person is from this place, you're from that place

why is it stronger? Do you think it's because we want to hang on to our Caribbean roots and so
fore the divisions that are in the Caribbean we bring with us and we want to hang on to them?
es - but when you're in the Caribbean the divisions are doesn't seem to be that great, it's when you
here. Cos when you're in the Caribbean, everybody's Caribbean as far as they're concerned,
they be Jamaican, St Lucian or whatever, there's a mix but when you come here people still have

M - they call you small island
still hanging on to that kind of myth. What I'm saying is that because we're all so divided we haven't
the whites can unite around issues, they can have their common market, because they know they
b us out, but we can't have a common market in Africa to keep them out because we're all still
against each other. They've realised that they can, they can gain a lot more against people of
if they use, unite. Because they're not united to

Y - by uniting

ore against each other, they're united to gain more for themselves against people of colour whether
ians or it be Africans or wherever, it be Chinese or whatever. So the Chinese have learnt that, the
se have learnt it, so you know, even all the other people in Malaysia
M - all the other races

kind of area have learnt that if they unite together monetary, they can combat the West, what we
fighting
still arguing with each other
- but we're sitting here talking about this now and we can see that this is not a sensible way to go on
- but then who's going to change it? The, the, us in here can't, you need a majority

rg - yeah, but I think a lot of people can see that it's not a sensible way to go on, but it's
where do you start?

where do you start
rg - it's the coming together, you need Africa, it's the countries in Africa to unite

why do you think the West keeps the unite, keeps Africans divided? Cos if Africa was to unite, you
give what could happen?

g - exactly and that's why when that happens the follow on will be
but that's not in the White man's interests to be
it's not in their interests for us to unite
they always want a Black person to be
Just like the aid they give them and then sells them the material at the higher price

you know

so it's for Africa, for all the countries in Africa to open their eyes and wake up

M - and wake up and no longer rule their country by tribes and this and that and the other.

the thing with African governments is they all corrupt, they all corrupt, so how can they

M - that's it

together to
everyone is corrupt because everyone wants a big BMW and a Mercedes parked outside and a large
e, that's it
everybody's lifelong president

nd a gold bed and the 10 wives

and you know it's like the, the West yeah, they send money to Africa to invest in stuff yeah, but the
ments they just squander the money, you know cos the nation, the nation
- but they know they'll squander the money
it if the African governments, yeah, took advantage of that you know in a positive way to help the
is, then we would be much stronger
- but they know they're squandering the money and they giving them the money because they want
to squander the money, they want them to have 10 wives
not in their interests
- give them as much aid and take it back and make them pay for it in interest rates and high interest
they want them to have the money, they want the leaders to squander it, if the leaders were to take
oney and start doing positive things with it, they would soon stop it
n't you see that the West only backs governments that that they know do rubbish with the money
- exactly and oppress their own people, they want you to. The day Africa wakes up and unites

West is, South Africa is under Nelson Mandela, the West is not giving them any money anymore

were saying the other day it's going bankrupt

yeah well, all the White people are moving out

what they want in South Africa is to show them that the White people know how to rule and the
people do not, so what do the Black people do, they shoot up each other, they hi-jack cars, they this,

b, instead of concentrating on educating the people, the poor

Y - exactly, there's so much crime going on in South Africa

that with a good education you can then unite a country, with no education you can't unite a

that where you think it should start? I mean is that what you think would be the trigger?

trigger is to, the trigger is, I think education is the most important thing in any nation that wants to
ou do not educate the people, what do you get? you must ask yourself that, what do you get? what
get?

Y - a bunch of savages?

that woman in Australia, Australia belongs to the aborigines, yet still she's voting and them white
are now voting with her, right for what that belonged to the aborigines in the

Marg - exactly, I tell you

e for thousands of years. We allow the White man to march in with the bible and the bullwhip.
ight, religion is the problem to the Black man, religion, that thing about the one God is our downfall.
- that's what I liked, when I took the kids to St Lucia and they went into the church and all the things in
a church are black aren't they, because you've got this thing about God is white right, well what makes
u think he's white? but they watched them in there and they seen that

M - he isn't
u know those things are Black.

- how did they, what did they think of it?
that made them more proud of what they were and they'll tell you that now, they're not into none of that
nsense.

- Nonsense, religion is the way man has used to usurp other people, other races and you see it's
king in Ireland because what you see in Ireland is church, if they were Black skin

Y - Catholic, Protestant
white skin, but they not, it's all to do with religion, popery.
rg - but look at how the media portrays Ireland, right, look how they portray it, if when they portray
ca when people are fighting or tribes fight oh the tribal wars, but at least it's a tribal war and there's a
son, because they're 2 different tribes, but they're all white and they're all English at the end of the day,
I Irish, they're not, they're all

M - some of them are English, some of them are Irish. They're all Irish because their
cendants of the English, because when they were persecuted, they all run to Ireland
'g - so what's the big, what is the big deal, these people are going to kill each other going to stand, to
ch down the road. We can't go, in this country if I decide we're going to go and have a march and bang
ie drums, we have to ask the police permission, we can't just walk down the road and because we did it
year doesn't mean to say that you can get permission this year and so because you'd did it 300 years
doesn't mean to say you have to do it this year and to me but it gets the way the media plays it up,
don't play it up as being so absurd that, as far as I'm concerned that part of Ireland is supposed to be
of the United Kingdom, England, Wales whatever, subject to the same laws as everybody else why
ld one set of people dominate another set and yet still, over here you pick up the papers, you read

M - dominate
pro-Protestant garbage that I'm really shocked and surprised that you know it's printed, but
don't bother with it no more.

I - but, what I'm saying is when they've gone to talk about Bosnia or anything else it's all, fly in the UN,
come's the UN hasn't gone in to Ireland, why isn't the UN there now, peacekeeping force cos that's
it, it's a war. Why isn't Kofi Anan going down there to discuss whether they should march on that
but no it's a peculiarly English thing, they can kill each other round the corner, it's all right innit?

M - religion has been the downfall of man
yu can kill your next door neighbour it's alright innit?
- it's alright that's what I'm saying and I'm thinking well this is an international thing, it's not just a

1 thing because

M - America is involved
should be, the United Nations should be there, it should be like they treat Sudan and everywhere
and Ethiopia and everywhere else, that is exactly what should be going on there, the people with the
the blue berets, united Nations peacekeeping force should be in Ireland, right cos at the end of the
is, it is a civil war that's going on

M - that's going on, but they don't want to treat it as a Civil

y, they treat it like it's a little incident, just going on you know

M - a skirmish, but it isn't, it's something deep-rooted
s the Sudan, we'd have all the pictures, we'd have all the thing about how these terrible Black people
ing each other, but we don't

1 pictures of the starving children and
- exactly, but we don't have any pictures of Ireland like that, it's brave whites you know combatting
ng] each other because one happens to be Catholic
st of out troubles right is, no it's not the white man, it's religion, because they

Marg - come through the White man [laughing], it is most of our troubles is them

at the bible to suit themselves
maybe in 50 years time we'll all be mixed race and they'll be wiped out
right that's what they frightened of, that's why they have that white supremacy
[laughter] Y? - it's true you know
White supremacy, but remember they brought us from Africa, they are the ones that rape our
fathers.

exactly, we didn't ask to come here
yes right and they brought this thing and they told the mulattos that they were better than Black people,
's why them stupid red-skinned people always think they're better than us
'g - yeah but what I'm saying is, if everybody became one, if there's lots more mixed-race people
yeah be all one colour wouldn't they?
- but would that be a good thing though?
'g - and if the identify with Black as being the colour, we'll be laughing because then the
but no, any mixed race, they only identify you as the Black half, they don't identify you as the White

- yeah but what will happen when there's hundreds and thousands of them, well then they might
de they're not Black and they're not White and they're just mixed race and they'll, they'll be more
blems then.
For a civilisation that started in Africa it has really spread to all different, cos they're still trying to find
f they was a different race that was born in the White, in in Europe
Marg - course there wasn't

: here wasn't.
'g - if they could make it up they would
they would, they tried to and now they found out - no way is it, you know
'g - so at the end of the day, 50 years time, I pray
M - 50 tears time I won't be here, I'll be picking up the daisies, but I hope my, I live on in my children
and my children's children live on in them you know,
that's how we live on, I think death is final, there's no
resurrection, there's no turning back, there's no coming
all - laughing
'I - wouldn't it be so nice if they came down and they were Black
saw this one on the cable where these aliens came and they were killing off all the White people, and
black people were in charge, some stupid film or other
'I - wouldn't it be nice, wouldn't it be nice, well that would be really different wouldn't it?
and we have everybody like
Marg - I suppose it wouldn't happen, but it would be nice

'ldn't happen, but we need in England now, we need decent people in politics, that will be our
 essman for us on all the issues that is affecting us, but we haven't found anybody that could represent
be true to us, no-one else, we haven't found that.
'll we ever?
'se we can if we start educating our Black children to be, not a stereotype, not trying to mimic our
part, to be ourselves and educate them
- I think, I think they will, what we haven't got is that kind of charismatic leader we don't have, you
where as in America they seem to be able to throw up, throw them up, we don't seem to have that.
nyone we get they get them twice on the tv and they talk a load of rubbish
- maybe what we need is to throw up somebody that's not no, we need to
M - that Farrakhan, we definitely don't need him
somebody from the generation, from the Black British generation if you see what I mean, the ones
here born here
hy are you saying Black British?
- no, because I mean the ones that are born here and maybe second generation,
M - they're Black English

eneration, not they might come from Scotland or whatever, but maybe we could throw up
M - the British Isles
f those whose parents, grandparents came from Jamaica, another grandparent came from another
and, whose and great-grandparent came from another island, you know what I mean, so they're just just some of them might have part Nigerian or part Ghanaian, so they just so?

- mixed

- they have no roots to hang on to

rg - exactly and they're just able to speak then, it would take a
they have all the advantages

- to encompass everything?

rg - everything, might not be every island, you know what I mean, but cos we've got lots of children who
now mixed Caribbean and African, so out of that is gong to come, I think out of those kinds of children
going to come leaders of tomorrow, that's where I think it's going to happen
that's what I said, it's not in this generation

rg - they'll have all the advantages
we don't know
It won't be in my generation, Pam and it won't be in yours

- they'll have the advantages because, I just think that the mixture of the two cultures and the two
eriences will create children that are going to be completely different to the children, the Caribbean and can children we know now.

- I mean it's interesting that you drew the comparison with the states, because some people who've
wered at the states and they've said that the reason why these charismatic leaders are thrown up is
as you know historically, the Black community has been segregated in the States and so people
a been able to go through, they've gone to an all-black school, an all-black college, they've gone to all-
churches, all those things have been entirely all-black so they've effectively been a nation within a
and so therefore, they've been able to progress and become the people they are without, if you like, an interference, I mean do you think that's part of what's missing here and that's why we wouldn't have
obody like Luther King, Malcolm X, Jesse Jackson or whoever?

- because of their experiences
because the reality is that we don't all love in one little tiny area

- no, yes, I suppose so yes

- because as people become more aware, as Yvonne's generation becomes more aware and
married between Caribbeans and Africans or whatever and as they, and they will teach their children,
when we're going to get the leaders coming up at the moment we're too divisive and if I'm Jamaican I
want, I'm St Lucian and I don't want a Jamaican telling me he's my leader, but those, those
eations to come won't have that attitude that hang-up

M - that hang-up
they'll all be so mixed that they won't have to, yes we'll be saying that our parents, they my
parents were St Lucian but they'll have common a common entity which will be being born here and
what's going to throw up the leaders, out there somewhere coming soon is somebody like.

ut I cannot foresee it in my lifetime
- no because I don't think there is anybody at the moment
cannot foresee it in my lifetime, my lifetime is very short
low long is your, how long do you?

u could be 110 and still going on

my lifespan, no I cannot see it because

LS - another 30 years or something?
could be dead in another 30 years
- no, we will be so lucky [laughing]
another 30 years, how old will I be?

- exactly, so that's still young. Joan Collins is 60-something and she's still got toyboys, so 84 in 30
time, that's young, that'll be young.

o you're thinking more 50 years?

thinking 50 years, I am thinking 50 years, I am thinking of my grandchildren, not that generation, I
anking of my grandchildren children's generation, that's what I'm thinking.

- yeah, that's what I'm saying
at is the timespan you need and you need Africa has to be reborn again, you understand what I'm
ying, Africa has to be reborn again so that they have a more united

- we will have a Black Prime Minister in this country

you laugh, you laugh, you laugh but

- you don't think it will ever happen?[to P]

I can't see it

- In America they have the Black

In America yeah not here, not here

that won't happen in America, he'll be dead

can't we get rid of the British monarchy first, the scavengers of society

all - laughing

- why don't you think it will happen here?

I can't see it, it's just too far-fetched

will, when I'm dead and gone it will happen it will

Black Prime Minister?

- you never know, Prince Charles's, Prince William's great-grandson might marry a Black woman

God, can you imagine it

anyway, who wants to mix up with that kind of blood

- not me

- can you imagine it, just think about it

Blair is a waste of space, but also that idiot, what's his name?

Y [laughing] - which one?

- telly-tubby innit?

think, don't insult the telly-tubbies, at least they have brains and they, him I don't think he has a brain

know, I think he needs something that you know that, that's all he is an idiot, an idiot, you know so if

save them in Parliament, idiots like him, that say they're going to rule the country, might as well have a

Prime Minister then couldn't we?

[laughter - general]

- it's true, it's true, because who would have thought 20 or 30 years, you'd have somebody like

Hague leading the Tory Party?

- they've run out of people

they're scraping the bottom of the barrel

- that's what I'm saying, so they have to re-evaluate themselves and try and find somebody

whatever you think of Tony Blair, he is a crafty man

Y - innit, and so sly

and very sly...
... be in power for the next 8 years at least, so he has, what he's doing, well I hope
P - well he's young enough to be
actually he's really giving the middle classes what he thinks they want, but funnel enough it's not what they
want. He thinks he's giving them what they want now and but
not giving the the poor, the poor is not getting anything
RG - and what he doesn't realise funnel enough is the middle class voted for him to change because
they felt the conservatives were going too far towards the right and what they wanted was somebody to pull
back and he's, I think he's miscalculated and he's thought that that's what they wanted, but I don't
know the middle class wanted that, they didn't want to go so far to the right and because we're heading for
the 20th century, the 21st century and you can't have people earning, talking about minimum wage at
34, what he's talking about, you know.
the price of bread has gone up
Marg - exactly and they sneaked the price in without anyone knowing
and you know what? inflation will soon hit you know, it's there
well you can see it going that way
you can see it going that way, the mortgages are going up
g - it's like that price of the bread, you didn't even notice it til they told you and they didn't even
ounce it to show you that people. No I just think that this country's never had the revolution and maybe
P - exactly the White people they just accept
silly and maybe that's what, that's the difference we make, because we don't accept and maybe that's
difference we're making here and maybe that's what's going to happen that will wake them up, because
they've always just accepted and if you give them a pittance, a little bit they're, they're, as the British
authorities have always done all the time, when their people are discontented they give them a few
and they feel alright, maybe we're making the difference, we're making them more aware, cos when
I came to this, well I was a child, I don't remember much but I don't remember, they never discussed
this and discussed what the government was doing as they do now, but politics has always been
that Black people have always been, you know if you come to the Caribbean, politics is close to
body's head and they're always discussing it, endlessly, no matter how small the island.
M - yes
're always discussing it endlessly, so that's what we've grown up, we've grown up with a kind of
al awareness which a lot of English people haven't got and maybe that's what we're bringing to this
try.
and because we, we as we got freedom, politics was the only way
- yeah, because it's important, it's important to us.
M - it's important. That's why in Jamaica, they kill each other over politics you understand.
- because it's a serious thing, whereas here they've always just gone along and voted for their
and their betters, but we've never seen it as been voting for your masters and betters, we've
just seen it as you know, you're voting for a party that's going to do something for you or that you
in or whatever, so, this is what we brought to this society.
and again, we vote, we didn't vote for the Conservatives for 13 years and the Black people have been
bottom of the pile, now we voted for that snidey snake right, and we're still at the bottom of the pile
- we're even farther down [laughing]
en further down the slippery slope, right all that's, I'm not cutting you Marg, all that money they spend
ication, education, what is it for, what is it, what's the word I want to use?
at's in it
that's in it for the Black children? not the ones we see coming through the door and they excluded
ind they have nowhere to go. If you take a stock of how many Black children has been excluded this
om school, they on a pile heap you see so what education are they getting, how can things be better
How can things be better for us? It cannot be better for us, so I hope all that 58 million is given to
ion, it must touch one of us mustn't it?
n two [to P and R] have got young kids, haven't you, how do you feel about it, in terms of like
the best use of the education system for your children.
always done that, I think I've always done that, I always made sure I was in there
hat, like talking to the teachers?
M - and things like that
- get involved really, with what's going on in the school.
arg - because now it's going to be even more difficult to find schools for your children because you know, they don't conform and they don't have high marks in their SATs test, then they're going
- But I find now, that's a two-way thing now. Children that are band 1 are not getting in the schools, in the
school, because they're saying well that child can go anywhere, if you're a band 3, they're having you
cause they're getting more money for you, so you know do you push your child to get the best mark or
it you push your child, so that it gets into the better school which is, that is what's happening more now
in it was when my other two went to school.
- because of the competition
rg - I was looking at those those
but if you're band 1, you don't need to go to the top school, because it don't matter where you go,
're still going to do something.
rg - yeah, but they're going to change it so that they take in more band 1s, they 3, take in a certain
centage.
grant-maintained schools, they take band 1, they're more ready to take band 1
yeah yeah, but the others are only, cos they're over-subscribed now, so you're waiting right to the very
now, now they're telling you 'oh you're on a waiting list and you have to wait', but you have to wait till
member.
g' - what are those new schools, those schools he's got, those schools announced this week that are
schools of excellence, the ones that are the best
here's none in London
g' - there's not one in London, so how are we gonna get, how are the teachers in London and the
is going to get this expertise, there's not even one, there's not one school in London that's one of these
I thought well that's stupid, well maybe if you're going to do that kind of thing, shouldn't you say well
uthwart, this is what we think, the best school
R - well there aint one is there?
but, whether it be grant-maintained or whatever, everybody's got to learn how they you know, lets all try
aspire to that kind of level. There's no point telling people in Southwark to aspire to a school in
wickshire, what good does that do them, what are teachers from South London's going to go to
ingham to find out what they did in their school and all the schools all the areas where they aint any
people.
that you see, they always blaming the schools, I blame some of those teachers too, some of them
ers.
ey need to be re-trained
trained
achers can't handle the children right
as they want to be part of the in-crowd, so how can they teach?
- this young Black girl, well her daughter was about 13, she said, she was saying to this girl 'it's about
hey brought back them old teaches that we used to have' you know they're, get rid of all the young
we need those old teachers
ey commanded respect and when they came into the room, you sat and you listened, they were the
ers.
eah but the teachers I had when I went to school were racist.
y my teachers weren't
yeah what at your school, they were all racist.
ll I didn't
you were too young
ey commanded respect, but they were racists
I was taught
o, because I was Black and they didn't want to know about me.
well I can't say that, I always said, I speak as I find, I went to X girls' school and you had to do your
, you had to, there was no something or because you were Black and you were, you had to, you
answer the questions, you had to, I don't know about their racism, but they were racist, but they
they were racist, but in those days, each teacher, your class had to do well be they black, be they
ite or whatever, the teachers got, that was their kudos, their class. If their class passed the exams, as a
cher that's the measure of their success, you didn't and they didn't want no Black child coming in there
failing cos nobody was going to say 'oh well it's only because you had a Black child that you didn't
be a 100% success' they wanted a 100% success.
- I cannot say that, I went to school here in the '50s and the '60s and me and my sister
Marg - and there weren't that many Black children
s the only two Black children in the whole school right, I was the only two, it was an all-
Y - exclamation of surprise/disbelief
school and I thought those teachers taught me, they did. They didn't say because I was Black, sit down
the corner and look at the, I had to learn you had to have the marks in your book, you had to sit down
I do the work and when you gave in your homework, you had to bring it in or you had a 100 lines right,
they did command respect and they did teach you.
rg - I'm not saying they weren't racist
I wouldn't say they weren't racist but they taught me
g - they were very racist, but at the end of the day, cos I went to school in the '50s and early '60s and I
you that's my experience that when we were just, when there was only just a couple of us, we did learn
we were taught and I don't think that I ever felt
I never felt that I was because I was Black was thing, No I can't say that.
g - I can say that when there were more Black girls, as I got older and into the 6th form and more
Rl immigration I can say definitely, I can look not for myself but I can look on how the others were
ted and see that they were treated with a great deal of racism but when there was only a couple of us
I could never give them a bad name, I could never give them a bad name. I can remember my
hers with long purple drawers, she used to do history and geography, she used to take you for that
you had to learn what she put on the board because if you had the wrong, she'd give you a hundred
and you have to do that exam again, she kept giving you
rg - I don't remember sitting at the back of the class because I was Black. I was always
M - I never sat at the black of the class
h front because, they graded you, cos if you were bright, you sat at the front, you didn't want to be,
use the coal fire was at the front, so if you were Black and you were not used [laughing] to the cold
didn't want to be at the back, so you'd better learn to be at the front, cos they had you in rows like this
[illustrating with hands], no central heating,
M - you felt the cold at the back
coal fire at the front, so the brightest people got the heat
laughter]
so you did make sure you did your work and you put your hand up for the questions.
Marg - yeah because you want to be at the front
get good marks
Marg - you don't want to be Black and sitting at the back in the cold, freezing already at a
vantage. So, I mean they don't do that nowadays and looking back at it, it was very unfair to a lot of
ren, cos you knew who was first in the class and who was last and I don't think the people who were
vere, they weren't stupid or anything like that but that's how they graded you and I think with some of
people who were at the back went on to pass the 11+ and do well, so it wasn't that they were stupid,
develop at different ages and different rates at different times but if you were bright you sat at the
and the heat was at the front, so I always made sure I was at the front.
I don't understand, because I can't relate to prejudice at school in this country but the children say
R says that, other people say that, but I could never, I could not
P - yeah but each generation is different
xnowledge that because I was Black, the teacher ignored me, no no
at I'm not saying that they ignored you but when I was at secondary school that was one particular
er, that was just one teacher and that's why I made sure when them two went to school that I was
because I wasn't having that and now Michelle goes to school I still ain't having it, so I will be
but I won't be there as in I'm gonna beat up the teacher and that's the two differences, a lot of them
done that
Marg - because of their experiences
use of what they
- what they experienced as children they take with them, when they take it into the classroom when
because they feel angry and you think, it’s not that particular teacher, but you’re thinking of the
• teacher who did it to you really so they get really aggressive because they’re not accepting that you know
it anyone’s going to treat their children like they were treated, but as M says I can’t remember being
• I can’t remember for the life of me, I would be telling a big lie. I didn’t notice the difference, I knew I was
• sick but I didn’t notice the difference.
• I mean from the children, the girls in the school even then I don’t think it was that
but did you realise what racism was then?
• No I didn’t because there wasn’t

Marg - it’s not that we didn’t realise that racism
• nobody, the only person that called me nig-nog was one girl right, I was coming out from school one
• and she called me a nig-nog and I turned round, grabbed her by the hair and showed her what the nig-
• could do, my Dad had to come up to school the next day, but me

[laughter]

her became best of friends.

no, well you see, by the time we got to school, there was more of us and therefore, they

P - there was so many

I didn’t afford to do those things.

g - what I’m saying is that when we first started, because there wasn’t any, you know you go to school,
• re the only Black child, or there’s only two of you or whatever, yes you could, I think you if you were
• maybe felt it more, but we didn’t
we join in, I used to play tennis, netball

g - I don’t remember, maybe it happened but I don’t remember, I never remember going home saying

M - I never said to Dad, I don’t want to go to school, cos they calling me names, they
• didn’t
know that it did happen when they were more, when there was more girls in the school, then and
actually in the ’60s when it was really a lot of immigration, then I know I can look and see how they were
• ed and how I was treated and I was treated completely differently from how they were treated

M - it was a joy to go to school
• continue to be treated differently, because like Mrs Lawrence I was the acceptable face and they were
• nacceptional face, because I grew up, I came here so very young that I didn’t have a language

em

eh, that’s another thing, they could understand what I was saying.

- they didn’t feel that you were a threat, you know they didn’t say it was, you see what I mean it was
• can you explain’ and I’m thinking I can’t even understand them myself really but you know, that was
• difference, people were coming as older, as teenagers, maybe they’re coming 13, 14, already set in
ways, already having some schooling, already and it’s difficult when you come into a new school and
• other country and you’re 13 and you’re 14 and you have to assert yourself and you’ve got other people
• been there, who’ve grown up there because there was a difference because they used to say that
• as English because we were Black and we spoke English English, we so very English we were like

M - English

in children, so there was that difference, they disliked us because we were Black and we’d been there
• than them and we weren’t behaving like them because you know, they all had to be aggressive and
• ad to fight for their corner and that’s expected, but when I didn’t understand it then, but I understand
• ing back, that was to be expected, of course they were going to be aggressive, of course they were
• to fight, of course they were going to try and battle their way, because you try to get your little corner
school, but the teachers didn’t understand that, and immediately it was ‘o those Black girls’, they
call us Black then they called us coloured, it was ‘o those coloured girls’, they had endless meetings,
ven employed a Black teacher to talk to the girls about hygiene and

R - expression of disbelief, P - excuse me?

• at me. They employed the teacher for that.

ey separated out the Black?

• yes, not me because I told you, I was the acceptable face, I didn’t have to go to that because I’d
• ere long enough, but yes they had to have a lesson after school in hygiene

R - what Black person needs to be taught hygiene?

I my friend Marcia

• re showing your age now
arg - that's what I'm saying that's when you see it
- people who never have a bath?
- only Friday nights and when I was at school, the girl says to me, I can't remember her name, she says me 'oh I do hate Friday nights', so I said to her 'why?' she says 'I've got to have a bath' so I says 'but n't you have a bath every day?' she says 'no, Friday night'
arg - and the tin bath hanging up behind the back door
- and I says to her 'but, I beg your pardon, don't you have a wash in the night and you have a wash in morning?' - 'wash?'. [general laughter]. It was when I went to Margate to work, I shared a room with this and the girl used to go to bed with her stockings in and in the morning when we got up to go and serve breakfast, right I've been a lot of places, she used to took the mirror [with accompanying actions] and n she had this thing, you know the mascara [makes spitting noise] and then she take the wet rag and go [with accompanying actions] and then she take the cheap Woolworth perfume and she go sh sh h accompanying actions]. So I had to go to the manager and said to her I couldn't share a room with because the smell that was coming from them underthings and one day I picked it up and I looked at it th accompanying actions] and it was so stif. [much laughter and expressions of disbelief]
You watched that, when you went on holiday, like you go on school trips, every night you go to have a shower or your bath and then they go to bed, so how can you tell Black people about hygiene.
g - I went to Scotland at 12 years old on a school trip, they went to Scotland, I was the only Black girl on the school trip, there wasn't many of us anyway so there was only me who went and that was an eye- ter, I've never been stared at so, maybe that's why I am like I am because I got stared at constantly, ywhere you went people came out their houses to look at, to stare at the Black girl, the Black person people kept coming and touching me, you know and touching my hair, it was just so horrible because 'e thinking what's, you just see yourself as another girl going into, on the school trip and yeah it is an opener when you see how many things I've got in my suitcase and how much things they've got you i. Your parents pack you knickers, your mother packs knickers for every day, socks for every day and es to change into and they've come with just the bare things and that was a surprise.
and the stench in that room
Y - still do that
- yeah they employed a Black teacher to do that to help the girls assimilate into English life and she, I don't think she ever did broach them subjects because, they'd have drummed/thrown? her out the but she, but then again in those early days and there weren't many Black teachers and it was really sing, in those early days, she was quite astute, because we used to and they used to go in the room, use she used to let me come along, they used to go in the room, they used to talk about everything ut that, used to talk about how they felt
ception from telephone call]
osed to talk about those kind of things, she talked about different things. So she was quite aware, very at that time, when you think that they didn't have many Black teachers.
tere's Deborah it's 4.15
- oh see I took my umbrella out of my bag, I thought oh the sun's shining, I don't need this
n't bring my coat
look at the rain
not cold outside
and the woman at the sweet shop, see we how we've changed, we speak to White people now, cos e discussing the weather and she said to me 'have you got your umbrella?', I goes to her 'no' I didn't is woman she goes to me 'you didn't bring out your umbrella' I goes 'no because the sun's shining', as 'well I've got mine', I said to her 'no, it's alright', look she was right.
'n't finding nothing wrong with people of any other race, you know I get on with people if you get on, I don't say because you're Black or you're white, it depends how you express yourself to me. I think we've got the best of both worlds because we have. Because if you live in
P - we can be impartial
ibbean all you ever see is other people from the Caribbean, you hardly see anybody from re, but here we mix with the Somalis, we mix with the Kenyans, we mix with the Ugandans, we mix Nigerians we've got friends who's from, who's Asian, do you know we've got all sorts, yeah and we and we're all, I think we have a much better life
unds of the incident with D and her children come from the street and the group rushes to the window and the group dissipates and the discussion ends]
Appendix 8 - Transcript for value-sort interview

I - I'm just going to start off with some general questions and then we'll move on to the secret of the plastic pots, don't look!

ED - put them over there

I - so you're 40 years old and you're a therapist for London Underground and this is where you live permanently and do you have a UK passport

ED - mmmmmm

I - and what's your initial of your surname?

ED - D

I - E E-E, you're two Es are you

ED - No ED when you said E E, I thought expressed emotions came to mind there (laughing)

I - no I don't have any of those

ED - no my first initial E, family name D

I - ok, and would you describe yourself as British, English or something else?

ED - (laughs), not English, British umm African Caribbean male umm hmm there's a mixture

I - mm hmm and what does that mean to you, what's behind that?

ED - what does that mean to me (clears throat) encapsulates my ... historical identity encapsulates my ... historical identity umm gosh this is a whole new debate, this will take up the whole of your tape (laughing)

I - that's what I like to hear

ED - (laughing) so go for it, is that what you're saying

I - yeah

ED - ok, umm it goes back quite some way, when I was young, growing up often I'd hear in the Black community you need to be twice as better, you need to be better than the White man and so forth and so on so that was resonating for quite some time and as I grew older I said well if I'm looking at someone else then I'm not really watching myself kind of idea came so therefore time came to find out more about myself so that I can draw strength from me as opposed to looking and making comparisons to someone else umm and out of that long, going back a few years as I say um and out of that came a true understanding as to who and what I am which is that I am not, I am more than what I was told, if I was just, if I was English then I would subscribe to the history of and I don't, now if I was Jamaican then I came into being in 1492 or whenever it was when Columbus stumbled across that little island umm but both of those here and there are significant in my development so I encompass all of that but I'm beyond that I go right back to the dawn of time, I take on board all of that umm Egypt, the first human beings were Black and so I draw strength from all of that and that's what fuels be, that, the Caribbean and here fuels me and fires me.

I - so you think that's quite a positive
ED - I see that as very positive

I - right and something that gives you strength

ED - yeah and I draw my strength from that....the acknowledgment of those who have suffered and died so that I could sit here in this room with you today, so that we could have this conversation today, I draw strength from those who have martyred themselves basically so that I can do what I'm doing umm and also that I draw strength from the fact that I am blessed that I am Black fundamentally you know umm it's not perceived as being a negative thing, it's not perceived as being as something that I'm anti anyone else, but it's taking strength from who and what I am umm so yeah.

I - ok, you've mentioned quite a lot about that past and you know continuity and so on there, I mean for yourself as an individual, would you describe yourself as more past, present or future-oriented.

ED - ... future oriented but roots drawing upon the past

I - so you, do you see the two things as linked?

ED - yeah, umm what came to mind was as you were, as I was hearing the sentence what came to mind was some, sort of to know the, you look back so that you can draw from the past to forge ahead into the future so the two are linked.

I - mm hmm and do you have quite a positive vision of the future?

ED - mmm....yes. oh you want me to elaborate

I - no you don't have to

ED - yes, yes I do (laughing)

I - umm, just off the top of your head in a couple of sentences, how would you describe Britain or the British people or both?

ED - British people, British people, what's British (laughing) umm that's the first thing that comes to mind, what's British, how would I describe the British people? I don't really have an opinion on British, I can talk about groups of people because British Britishness is uh it's a mass of different peoples, so to talk about British people, what group are we talking about here? You get the stereotypical imagery you know then that comes to the Englishness, stiff upper lip and all that kind of stuff, well that's Englishness pff I think

I - is it easier to describe English?

ED - umm to run down a line of stereotypes? yeah I could do that, but then it doesn't make it any easier to define Englishness, it doesn't make it any easier umm unless I was going to you know read off stereotypes, but particular groups of people then, even that's not particularly easy because they're all so different you know there are more differences within groups than there are between groups and I'm getting all academic now, but you know it gets harder you know umm. Britishness ... certainly there are, there are if I take like as a unit a global view of it umm there's a certain arrogance with the views of being, of coming from this island, others have a view of people from this island as being arrogant because you know English the language has sort of gone off and oooff the four corners of the globe hmm umm and the expectancy that everyone should understand what we say when we go abroad that kind of, so that might kind of go into
perspectives and attitudes, as to whether or not that's no and that doesn't apply to all... sub-
groups of Britishness

I - and would you share that view of that you know slight arrogance

ED - would I, do I?

I - do you see that as a, you mentioned that that was how other people might see the British, is
that a view that you would share?

ED - right, not I mean again, if we're taking a global view of what it is it means to be British
then I wouldn't say that everybody who is British has that, but for certain categories, sort of White
English, White British and even within that there's only probaly certain groups then yeah I would
say that it's more apparent... but possibly more among the young Black British as well or other
Britishers as well, so to an extent I would share it

I - mmhmm ok

ED - oh, I got there in the end (laughing)

I - yeah, that was obviously a tough one.

ED - it was, it was, because as I was talking I was thinking at the same time and it's one I start
that.

I - it's hard to do I think without, just off the top of your head umm, but I wanted to get your view
before I sort of started sort of on this bit of it. Those are for you, and this is where the pots come
in.

ED - dull that's me is it (laughing), dull

I - oh no no, so we've got true of Britain now, likely to be true of Britain 20 years from now, true of
Britain in the past and not true of Britain at all and what I'd like you to do is to sort those
adjectives or umm describers and decide which pot you think they most, they best fit in. they're all
descriptions of Britain and British people that have been taken from media pieces or political
speeches and some of them are positive and some of them are less positive and once you've
done that if you can talk me through why you've done it the way you've done it. I'll turn the tape
off to give you some space.

[post sort]

ED - the scores, I'm thinking I wonder how it's all panned out, it's interesting

I - no it's not scores in that sense but umm what I'd like you to do now if it's ok is to go through
each of the pots in turn and talk me through why you put the words that you put in the pot.

ED - what did I put in here

I - So this was in true of Britain in the past

ED - yeah, one of the things that I didn't, when I was doing it I wasn't, I didn't start off by taking,
by approaching this exercise from a personal point of view, I was looking for a universal
perspective and thinking umm de de de that sort of process as opposed to thinking it from a very
a personal point of view, do I find it, do I find here dull and why (clears throat) so if I'd taken it
from that personal perspective some of my answers may have been different. Having said that,
dull umm because I wasn't around in the past was my first gut instinct and it was dull, it was you
I - when you think of the past are you thinking of any particular period?

ED - .....I was thinking more ... in fact no I wasn't I guess if it was, then I'd assume it was industrial revolution or going off around the world and conquering and whatever must have been pretty exciting, the exact opposite to being dull, you know what I mean, but I wasn't, I wasn't looking at it from that perspective or the gut feeling it from that perspective at all it was more... it was more about I guess the weather, it was that sort of dull it was nasty weather, not getting out, dull drab colours, that sort of thing, I wasn't looking at innovations and industrial revolutions and Sir Francis Drakes and Queen Victorias

I - that's fine, so does that mean that you don't feel Britain is dull now? Or not as dull perhaps

ED ...I don't think Britain is particularly dull ...now, got global warming, the weather's changed, that was my parameter, my yardstick (laughing) no

I - not today

ED - no not today, umm no I don't think Britain is dull no... and now I'm looking at it from also a personal perspective, the things that have been done from within,... all the opportunities, as limited as they are, that are there, and there's still the glass ceiling, still the doors to be kicked in, but that's exciting for me that's, I don't mind kicking doors so that's exciting, frustrating but exciting so therefore not dull, umm ... and I guess being cosmopolitan and appreciate, appreciating all the different perspectives and so forth and debates that are taking place that makes it exciting umm but then having said that the flip of all that you know can be pretty frustrating and at the same time but not, not as dull

I - ok, that's great

ED - does that make sense?

I - that's fine

ED - gosh, this is what the present?

I - yeah

ED - aggressive, when I read this, when I saw this I thought of football hooliganism umm I also thought of the aggressive policies, government policies, umm I thought of IMF's and things of that, aggressive I guess my work in the probation service seeing the crimes and the types of crimes and where some of that stems from as well, dysfunctional families and so forth which can be quite aggressive so that's where that comes from. Creativity, creative...creative, the opposite to dull I guess some of which I talked about, the opportunities that are there umm and how creative we need to be, we as in Black people, need to be to get some things done (laughing) it takes a bit of creative thoughts to get things done umm so that's where that came through. Creativity, I just saw something in the papers the other day on fashion and all that kind of stuff and it's funny that that popped into my head. Umm I think the creativity are the opportunities and subsume all that I've said under that, opportunities. Arrogance, arrogance the umm everyone speaks English... we can go out across the world and umm we go out across the world and expect everyone to speak, I heard myself saying we as well (laughing), I wondered if that's what you were smiling at, the arrogance umm, umm

I - do you see any arrogance internally?
ED - internally? Within?

I - within this country?

ED - ....yeah umm ... arrogance.... I see it played out in policies that you know there are certain things that, certain attitudes umm that unless you are this way then therefore you, you need to become like us in order to be accepted and this sort of attitude that we know best umm: policies.... Disenfranchisements...stemming from this pious position that organisations .......constantly play out you know umm and it goes back, this feeds back into the creativity one where often in order to overcome that we need to be creative in order to work around this arrogance, this historical arrogance, institutional arrogance umm individual arrogance umm and I'm not really putting any isms there because there can be any any ism umm so yea yeah and this one this blank one, (laughing) dishonest, dishonest well dishonesty is all in the the is the rage right now, transport secretary dishonest (laughing), Tony Blair dishonest (laughing), dishonesty umm, dishonest (exhales)... dishonest ... (exhales) when I, when I looked at that it was again it came down to, what came up for me was umm the native American saying speak with forked tongue, say one thing and do something else and again it feeds back into the policies and so forth umm umm umm

I - is that dishonesty taking the form of hypocrisy or...

ED - yee yee yeah umm ... (exhales) .... mmm I'm hesitant now because I'm not quite sure how how to put into words this this concept dishonest, if somebody lied to me then I'd say you're being dishonest, now am I saying that I've come across people who lied to me or am I say that people are being hypocritical or am I saying all of those thing (very quiet) what am I saying with this one dishonest, it just feels dishonest, I don't know if there's such a thing, it just not being told everything, I know umm I know historically that the people have been lied to and I'm very much in tune and read up around things like umm intelligence tests and so forth and that's been this group is umm inferior to that group and you know Black people are at the bottom of the pile and then you have the Caucasians and the Asians and just a few percentiles between them but we're way off scale umm and then out of that you have certain attitudes, out of this dishonest, this dishonest use of statistics or using statistics to create whatever it is that you want to create and you have policies developed from that, dishonest policies developed from that, you you have people who are affected by that and I think that fuels me because that's something that I'm particularly interested in umm and so that's where the dishonesty and this sort of stuff came to mind when I was thinking about dishonest, not necessarily about your next door neighbour being dishonest, Mr & Mrs so and so not liking you although that can be dishonest, it's not what I was thinking. Did I do this one ignorant?

I - no

ED - ignorant, yeah a lot of ignorance again about (clears throat) the other, who is this person, umm acceptance of of difference umm when in fact you'll probably find that people aren't as different as those who are ignorant might at first think so yeah that's where the ignorance came in

I - did you have lazy in that pot?

ED - didn't I do that one, oh sorry, I'm glad one of us is

I - you don't have to talk about it if you don't want to

ED - lazy, lazy, lazy this is a hard one, lazy maybe that's why I chose to ignore it

I - (laughs)
I - you think it's more widespread than that?

ED - yeah, so I'm I'm... I don't know if I'm running of stereotypes with this one "you know people are so damn lazy" (Caribbean accent), I'm probably going back on some of that sort of my developmental stuff here but ....lazy

I - you seem to be describing a form of apathy also though when you talked about it?

ED - mm now that......that might be it

I - is that better?

ED - yeah, maybe apathetic umm....lazy it's a very powerful, there's another one that I hesitated on .......................for the present, see now you've got me, now really I'm confused now with this one really (laughing)

I - you don't have to say anything else

ED - no ok (laughing)

I - no that's fine, that's enough if that's all you want to say about that one. The future.

ED - the future, outward-looking. I think at one point in here, I began to start to look internally, I kind of drifted, some of them were personal, some of them weren't and so it kind of all mushed up umm outward-looking, I think that there's a lot of scope, there's a lot of umm but it takes work....maybe that's where the lazy came in and the apathy because there aren't, there's not enough being done at the moment, there's not enough ground-breaking, there doesn't appear to be enough ground-breaking, innovative, cutting-edge umm radical aah umm research, talks, debates, conferences umm life-changing, mind-blowing work done and I think that's where the apathy is and we but with those that are are involved in doing good work, the future is, the future is bright but that requires work umm I think probably that's where the laziness was coming in, that's the point here umm so with those provisos the future is good umm the future is good, the future is bright. Adaptable, adaptable yeah mmm just a few little words can conjure up so much imagery........basically it ties in with the other one umm inasmuch as to do all that there needs to be flexibility, there needs to be ...adaptable not at a governmental level but at personal levels we all need to be able to adapt and to change and to take on and so on which ties in quite nicely with the hard work, umm yeah I think I talked about the hard work and uhh the tolerance, so they're all they're all pretty much, they're all tied in, because one needs to be tolerant to order to be outward-looking to be adaptable which requires a lot of hard work.

I - so those are all quite positive umm sort of that vision of the future, is that how you feel about it are you quite optimistic?

ED - yeah, and that's on a personal level as well umm and I think that's when I, when we were doing this and you said something or something was said about you know it's how I interpret this exercise and I can, it can be personal and before that it was a case of doing sort of academic gymnastics in my head, how can a people be, you know that kind of thing but then having settled with the personal then yeah it, that's where these are coming from.
I — ok.

ED — not true of Britain, not true of Britain - fair (laughing), Britain is not fair, now let me tell you why Britain is not fair (laughing), no it's not fair, it never will be fair, it never will be fair, it cannot be fair.

I — why?

ED — the mere fact that it has policies as taking care of its own people it cannot be fair, just just you know, it's going to take care of this little island, it's going to seek its own solutions to its own whatever and that will mean the exclusion of peoples now whether or not the peoples within Britain subscribe to what Britain is doing. England is doing I guess is a different argument but Britain is going to want to ensure that its people get what it believes to be the best for its people and if that means exploiting someone else it will do it, that's government policy and that's something that I, sort of not, it comes into some of the work that people need to do to get involved in the system so that that can be changed but then having said that even those that get there, they will no doubt find themselves not being particularly fair even though they might start off with these high values, umm fair, fair, fair, fair fair.

I — so are you saying something fairly universal about human nature there or?

ED — I think I am mmmmmmmmm to an extent umm because I do think, it is possible to to if if if you know, it depends what your agenda is, what what the groups of peoples are what their agenda is and if if if it is just I guess to exploit and to look at it in terms of that and to have policies that do actually exploit, whatever that policy may be, whether it be education or the police or whatever it is, anything that causes harm or discomfort to another group of people if if if that's not recognised then it won't be changed and therefore it will not be fair, but if it's recognised to do something about it, then you can address this issue of whether Britain is fair or not but it requires hard work to do that and I don't, I don't think that Britain has proven itself to be fair in the past or is currently proving itself to be fair and the things ... and if the past and the present is the stepping stones to the future, then the future universally is not one that is is going to be particularly fair unless the other one comes into play all these good points come into play to combat this (pointing at the future pot), does that make sense?

I — ok, yeah that's great, that makes great sense thanks

ED — it didn't sound as if it did (laughs)

I — umm, if you had to sort of go down on one end of the spectrum or the other, would you define Britain as a more modern or a more traditional country?

ED — so there's no inbetween, just those 2 points? Modern or traditional? Modern or traditional? Umm modern.

I — modern, why would you say that?

ED — because we've got a young Prime Minister? (laughs). No modern or traditional, it depends what you one means by modern or traditional, that's what came to my mind, so I interpreted modern as being outward-looking as being wanting to engage in debates and again from a personal perspective wanting to put things on statute books that says that this is wrong and that is wrong and we need to address it, it may not be to my liking but the process is there umm, the resources are there as opposed to being umm arrogant I know best and this is the way it's always been and it will never never going to change so yeah.
I – ok, and thinking about sort of Britain now in the early part of the 21st century, if you had to pick either a time period or a particular event from the past that’s been sort of absolutely you know pivotal in making Britain what it is now, which would you pick?

ED - …industrial revolution

I – mm hmm why would you pick that one?

ED - …the period leading up to it is when the institutions came into being, banks, insurance, the slave trade, institutions have developed forging a sort of a can-do mentality, umm we rule the world type attitude and it laid it laid the foundations for the institutions that are still running and still umm still running the show now, so yeah that would be the sort of thing, that would be the era.

I – ok. there’s a sort of optional part to this now that you don’t have to do if you don’t want to but umm I noticed that some of the words that I gave you, you found a bit sort of

ED – you want me to put different words or something (laughing)

I – well it’s just to give you, what I’m aware of is that I picked these words from you know these various pieces and to a certain extent you’re sort of put in a box you have to do these, but now what I want to do if you want it is to give you the opportunity to pick your own words which you might feel define any of these pots that really are important to you, words that you would choose, rather than words that I would choose, I don’t know if you want to do that or not, you don’t have to.

ED – define the four pots or the words in them?

I – no, for you if you had to choose a word, other than the words I gave you that was true of Britain in the past, you might have something completely different and similarly with the others…. If you want to do that, I’ll give you some cards?

ED – no, these are although I had some problems these were ok

I – ok, that’s great then thanks
Appendix 9 - Transcript for value-sort interview

I – We’ll start with some questions and then move on to the sorting task and then I’ll wind up again with a few basic questions, ok?

MM – yeah

I – so you were born in this country and you have a UK passport?

MM – Yes

I – If you had to describe yourself, would you call yourself British, English or something else?

MM – uhh I normally put ‘other’ when I’m asked that in questionnaires, as I tend not to bother letting people know, but I guess it’s Black British.

I – mm hmm and what does that mean?

MM – obviously I’ve got heritage from elsewhere, but I’m British because I was born here and some people umm, I don’t know, some people, if I was born elsewhere, if I was born in Africa then I’d be African obviously but born in Britain some people find it more interesting, I don’t know how can I put it, I’m very conscious that I’m being recorded you see.

I – sorry

MM – umm, Black British I think it’s because some English people insist on Britishness, yeah that’s the best way to describe it I think.

I – so you feel the need to bring in the Blackness to emphasise the distinctive quality?

MM – no I feel the need to bring in the Britishness

I – to emphasise that

MM – to emphasise where I was born

I – right, so the Blackness is central and the Britishness is secondary?

MM – you could put it that way yes.

I – yeah, is that, would that be a fair

MM – yeah that would be fair yeah

I – yeah? And is there any sort of emotion attached to that description….. or is it more of a technical description or

MM – I’ve never really thought about that to be honest.

I – do you have a gut response to it?

MM – to if there’s any emotion tied to it?

I – yeah
MM – I don’t know, I guess it has a bit because my Dad might describe me as umm second generation Jamaican born in Britain, but I’d say myself more British, but I don’t know the emotion that might be there is that my Dad might feel offended by it, but personally I just think it’s an easy enough description.

I – so it’s just a statement of fact in a sense

MM – yeah, yeah

I – ok that’s fine, so if I had to ask you off the top of your head to describe in a couple of sentences Britain or British people what would you say?

MM – Lord, Britain or British people

I – the first thing that comes to mind

MM – yeah, the first thing that comes to mind is that I initially though you was asking about White people, but that’s not necessarily what Britishness is

I – is that part of the picture that is in your mind?

MM – yeah initially, yes yes

I – anything else?

MM – run the question by me again

I – an off the top of your head description of Britain or British people

MM – umm, snobs come to mind actually (laughing), they are polite and they queue up

I – ok that’s good, that’s good. Ok so now we’re going to move on to this bizarre thing I have here. I’ve got these 4 post which are falling apart having been around the place now. That’s true of Britain now, that’s not true of Britain at all, that’s true of Britain in the past and that’s likely to be true of Britain in 20 years from now and what I’ve got are these descriptions which have all been used by uh politicians or media pieces or whatever to describe Britain or British people and what I’d like you to do if you don’t mind is to sort them into whichever pot you think they best fit in and then when you’ve done that if you talk me through why you did it the way you did it ok? And I’ll turn this off so you don’t have it there.

Post –sort

I – ok do you want to take, start off with whichever pot you prefer and talk me through why you put the descriptions in

MM – I’ll do not true of Britain first, it’s not lazy, Britons all how can I put it, they’re very active on the world scene, Britain’s very active on the world scene so I wouldn’t say they were lazy, they do get about quite a lot with the armed forces in that sense and export and so they’re not lazy. And uhh, not true of Britain I put fair’s not true of Britain because when I look at how they treat the colonies that they had and the Commonwealth at the moment they are a bit one-sided, Zimbabwe for instance, they’ve not been entirely fair they look out for what happens to the Whites not necessarily for what happens to the country ok. Umm likely to be true of Britain 20 years from now, outward-looking because they are a bit inward-looking and xenophobic, but umm in time the way the population will change with it’s colour, becoming more multi-culturalism it will probably become more outward-looking.
I – so that will be sort of a side-effect of the changes which have already taken place you feel?

MM – yeah and taking place yeah. True of Britain in the past, very aggressive ummm the East India company, the East India Tea company I think it was called, I can't remember now, umm they liked to get across to other countries and take what they have and dishonest which would probably describe the same things they used to go for, they used to do umm yes. And true of Britain now, I say we're hard-working because we do do the longest hours in Europe as far as I know and it must be hard work trying to colonise the whole world. Adaptable, most big businesses, if you look at Britain as a business in the way in which it exports things and exports itself and its culture but that's only in the sense that there's a business opportunity which they have to try and challenge for you know a market that they need, then they'll do whatever they have to make sure they get there.

I – so it's out of self-interest?

MM – yes

I – right ok

MM – true of Britain now, dull that's just the weather generally and it is a bit dull today

I – it is a bit yeah

MM – and the food, it's a bit bland. Ignorant in the sense that none of them seem to uhh how can I put it, they're ignorant in the sense that they believe stereotypes about people but if you talk to them properly, if you get to know them then they're fine but generally they just can't be bothered, they just say oh well 'that's what they're like', 'this is what they're like' so in that sense they're ignorant. It's not a colour thing is what I mean by this one.

I – in general groups of people are characterised

MM – yeah they don't, they don't look beyond skin colour sometimes, some people to the older generation and they're ignorant of how but well I'm educated but if a lot of the older White people who look at me will think that I'm just I don't know a mugger or a thief or a drug dealer you know or a stoner, but then I still use the word tolerant as well because some of the younger generation are you know understand and accept the differences in culture and people ok. Arrogant, now it seems to be that looking at it, there's two different types of people there's the older generation who's a bit more arrogant and the younger generation that's not quite so. So the older generation's arrogant in their beliefs. I was on the train yesterday and this old lady just walked right towards me and just expected me to get out of the way and I was like 'slow down, slow down' and she still didn't look at me, talk to me just tried to get past me, that's that arrogance whereas a younger person would just take their time and would see me if you know what I mean.

I – and why do you feel that there is that generational distinction?

MM – it's propaganda from that time, the war you know, the belief that, the belief that White people are supreme over other colours and if you've been brought up like that and I don't necessarily blame them themselves, it's not intrinsic or inherent, it's just the way they were brought up that gives them that manner. Creative in the same sense as what was the other word adaptable, umm I think there is artistic creativity in England, but creative also in the sense of being able to meet challenges and umm be (unintelligible) so to speak and maybe also in a profiteering way.

I – so again, that's a slightly self-interested dimension to it?
MM – yes, but saying that though, they are umm with the music scene, some of the arts, they are very creative umm in a particular style which is their, which I quite like, take the Beatles for instance the creativity

I – ok

MM – ok?

I – umm were there any, was that ok for you in the sense of were there any q, any descriptions you would like to have had there that didn’t appear, I mean is it

MM – yeah, the first one that springs to mind is racist, I’m not sure where I would have put that one. I think I would have put it in true of the past, true now and probably true in 20 years time.

I – all of them?

MM – yeah, apart from the not true now, and that’s the first one that springs to mind, and uhh I don’t know umm .... I’m not sure if intellectual is the right word, academic, umm well-educated might be a description of how they are now, how they have been in the past and probably will be in the future yeah

I – and can you think of an example of what would what would encompass that sort of educated element

MM – umm an example of it?

I – well, I mean do you think it’s a good thing?

MM – it is a good thing, to be educated, it’s not such a great thing when some are more educated than others and the others don’t have the opportunity to become as such, but umm it’s not a problem as such

I – mm hmm and do you think it’s used appropriately?

MM – no, not really, but when people can have an edge on other people, they’re not going necessarily going to balance the score if they don’t have to. I’m not going to, and if I’m educated and I can do certain things then I’m going to be better than the next man and I’ll get paid more so

I – do you think that’s just a general sort of human nature type?

MM – yeah, it’s human nature definitely

I – is there anything else?

MM – any other words I would have hoped to have found there? Umm, nothing springs to mind.

I – just those two, that’s fine, so umm if I had to ask you to come down on one side or the other, would you describe Britain as more modern or a more traditional country?

MM – hmm, it’s hard to think of comparisons you see, more traditional, I’d have to go down on modern.

I – why?

MM – mm why? Because they’re constantly, even though the systems are, some of the systems are archaic umm they still adapt to the situations and the technology is quite good to use and
yeah I'd say they were more modern than traditional yeah that's more in a material way than in a sort of emotional way.

I – so would you say in terms of emotions it would be more traditional?

MM – modern, mmm mmm yes I think it would

I – yeah? What emotions are you thinking of?

MM – mm, err the treatment of race and some of the deference to do with royalty that sort of thing hierarchies in a traditional sense yeah.

I – right, so there's this interesting distinction between sort of material progress if you like and actually a sort of umm mental or emotional traditional, traditional outlook?

MM - yes, yes

I – yeah? And do you think the two things are able to work together?

MM – well, they maintain the systems, but continue umm they maintain the traditional systems but continue to make progress then yeah it does work, for them at any rate

I – but not necessarily for people on the receiving end?

MM – no no, but some people are that blind that they wouldn't notice anyway so for them it's not a problem, you know the wiser ones up the top know what's happening, but it's not a problem because they're at the top

I – so they're in on the game anyway?

MM – yeah indeed yeah yeah

I – ok and you mentioned umm certain eras from the past when you were talking about some of the descriptions that you chose, if you, thinking about Britain today, if you had to pick from the past an event or an era which has been sort of pivotal in making Britain what it is now which would you choose?

MM – the industrial revolution and uhh yeah the spinning jenny and all that lot you know there was quite a lot of advances following then and they used those advances as well to get their pink slice of the world, so yeah it would be that sort of era yes.

I – right, so that was the sort of starting point for modern UK if you like?

MM – I wouldn't say that, I wouldn't say that depends on how you ask me the question

I – no, ok go on then what would you say was the starting point?

MM – of modern UK?

I – yeah

MM – probably when they won the world cup
I - (cackling laughter), so it's pretty young then?
MM – yeah umm, you know I'm not sure because if we've got a definition of modern which is material then it would be the industrial revolution, but if you've got a definition of modern which is sort of emotional then like I said I'm not sure how I'd, because it's still

I – mmm, so if you had to make that, continue that distinction through and you have the industrial revolution as being that sort of pivotal event for umm the material modern Britain, what would you do for the other, the less, the less modern, the more traditional emotional Britain?

MM – oh as in, no I'm not sure what you mean.

I – because you've created this distinction between umm err err a materially modern country yeah?

MM – yes

I – but it's a more traditional emotional country or a more traditional outlook country and for the err pivotal event you've chosen the industrial revolution for the material country, so which would you choose for the emotional country if you can?

MM – but they're not modern emotionally so

I – but what would you say was the thing which had the biggest effect on creating that traditional outlook?

MM – mmm, .... oh I see what you mean, I think I see what you mean, umm the royalty aspect has gone all the way through for hundreds and hundreds of years apart from when umm Cromwell had that church for a bit St Mary's over there (pointing), so that maintains a sense of tradition and hierarchy you know and deference and all that kind, so that might be the continuity

I – with that sort of social structure

MM - yes right

I – so we'd have to go back to whenever the monarchy started for that

MM – yeah

I – William the conqueror or whatever

MM – yes

I – ok, umm and for you as an individual, what's the most important, the past, the present or the future?

MM – for me as an individual? The present?

I – mm hmm, why's that?

MM – because I'm an existentialist (laughing), because I believe in now, you know what I mean, that's what I do, that's why I can sit in the park in the day time and you know laze about and and

I - but you're also still planning for the future though aren't you?

MM – mm yes, but whenever I plan for the future it's I still enjoy what I'm doing at the moment, yeah, I'm not very good at planning for the future personally, yeah the present's most important to me personally.
I – ok, and umm how old are you?

MM – I’m 28, 29 in 2 months

I – and you live in Putney, yeah?

MM – right at the moment yeah?

I – and you’re a journalist?

MM – you’d better call it a freelance journalist, because I’m not getting paid at the moment, but I did spend 7 years in Preston

I – and how do you feel that that, you know a lot of the things that you’ve said, do you feel that time that you spent in a different sort of Britain if you like has affected the way that you see it?

MM – the time I spent in Preston has affected the way I see the whole country?

I – yeah or Britishness if you like

MM – I think it’s had more effect on how I saw Black people in some respects, because I come back. I met a guy on the train yesterday and he was all patois, he was probably born here, but he was all full of patois and he really got on my nerves actually, but then if I go into a room of, if I went into a pub in Clapham or something a Black pub in Clapham, then I might feel out of place and if I open my mouth then I’d sound like just different, you know what I mean, yeah so that’s, but my whole view of Britain hasn’t particularly changed except for how people up north, I was surprised to find that they were less racist than the people in London, than the White people in London.

I – what form did that take, I mean how did you feel that they were less racist?

MM – umm, I tend to use as this example when I was trying to explain it to other people, is that I was been in Putney before I was going to post a letter and it was snowing and really icy on the floor and this woman clutched her bag and tried to cross the road just to get, she nearly fell over in all that ice and snow but she just wanted to get out of the way, but in Preston people you walk past them and they all say good morning or hello you know and there’s no problem with, they don’t look at you as, maybe they look at you as different, but they don’t see you as a threat you know and it’s just much more friendly.

I – do you have a feel for why that should be?

MM – do I wonder why that is?

I – mm hmm

MM – I think it’s because there’s not many Black people there, so they’re not seen as a threat, once you get, I always laugh with my mates that if there’s 3 of us we shouldn’t stand still, you know 3 Black people can’t stand still, 2 of us is fine, 3 or 4 they think it’s a riot, so yeah I think it’s because there’s less perception of a threat whereas umm down here in London there’s a lot more people might find threatening yeah

I – so it’s a numbers game?

MM – yeah you could put it that way, yes yes
I—right, the reason why I wondered that is because most of the people I've interviewed have been based in the South East and have lived in the South East all their lives, particularly London and umm I've lived outside London and found it very different and I just wondered whether you know you'd experienced anything different or whether it had made you look at things slightly more differently?

MM — you mean I didn’t answer your question properly? (laughing)

I—no you did, I think you did, because but I was interested that you said that in a sense that it's had a bigger impact on your sense of being Black as it has on anything else?

MM — yeah it has yeah yeah, I mean if I'd gone to South Bank University or whatever it was, I'd still be talking like I used to do, I used to be quite upfront and mouth on to people, then I'd use Northern accents and turn of phrases like ay an things like that

I — call people lass

MM — yeah yeah (laughing), I think that's quite endearing actually, but yeah so it's only my perspective, my perspective of myself as a Black man has slightly changed yeah

I — so do you feel that Black people in the South are perhaps not open to different sorts of Blackness in a sense?

MM — yes

I — I mean you can't be Black and Northern?

MM — yeah I think they, people in the South, they have their turns of phrase, their manners of speaking and cars which they wish to drive and there is a hierarchy there yeah, umm once you, if you got out say and study, have a different accent, use longer words, they might get a bit nervous of you and think that you're trying to join, you know and call you coconut, not that I've ever been called that, but you know think you're trying to join the White middle classes and they might be either threatened by it or I don't know probably think that you're not genuine, not genuine Black but it doesn't actually bother me very much.

I — you're strong enough to ride it out

MM — yes, and I can generally talk myself out of trouble with words

I — that's handy

MM — it is

I — that's it, that's all my questions, so what would you like to ask me now that the tape is off?
Appendix 10: Transcript for value-sort interview

I – listen to you and not me [reference to positioning of tape recorder]

R – sound really butch when that comes out, sound really deep on the tape

I -(laughing) I doubt it, umm ok just to confirm you do have a UK passport

R – yeah

I - and were you born in this country?

R – yeah I was born here

I – live here most, all your life?

R – all my life

I – ok, would you describe yourself as British, English or something else?

R – Black British

I – what does that mean

R – that now, before I used to just say I, I don’t think I used to kind of identify myself apart from being me, but now I call myself Black British because I feel that’s what everybody kind of labels me more than anything that’s more acceptable, I’m not British because of the colour of my skin, but I was born in Britain so I just think that Black British is the category that I put myself in and I put my children in the same category so we’re all sort of like Black British

I – and your children were born here too as well

R – yeah

I – ok and you said before you didn’t usually you didn’t use that label, what changed?

R – I don’t know, I think a sign of the times really because I think before I just used to say I think well if I go right back when I think when people used to say like school times well where are you from, I used to say well I’m English, that was it and as I’ve got older my concept’s completely changed and now I just see myself as Black British because I do think it’s all about the colour of your skin and everything I don’t think I’d feel a fool standing up. Ok, like for example a lot of things you get from school like when my kids come home with all the different umm categories you can now sign off in thing, you used to just have, it was always Black, English, Chinese, Indian that’s all it was I mean nowadays it’s Black English, Black this, Black that, I’m quite shocked in the amount of things it does even in my own little category ie the Black which used to be very small now that’s Black mixed, Black Caribbean, Black English, Black Chinese, Black other, so so for me now it is about your colour and then what are you so umm I suppose in the last 10 years I’ve created this other thing where I do say Black British.

I – so it’s partly in response to the fact that there are different options available as well now?

R – yeah I just think, I think now because that’s what I was saying before there wasn’t any of that, you was either this, this or this and now there’s so much and I think like Black British, now I can’t remember where I first heard it, I think it in was a book I was reading and then I thought oh well that’s what I am because I’m British but I’m Black so I’m not obviously White British so that’s just how I kinda categorise it now
I—ok I mean you’ve spoken about it in very matter-of-fact terms about you know it’s about the colour of your skin, it’s about where you were born, is there any emotion or anything attached to that label for you?

R—yeah because I do find it quite annoying, because like both my children are really very fair, very fair and umm I mean they obviously know that I always sort of tell them that they’re Black British and everything and to the point where I’ve got another friend who her children are mixed race, she’s English and she gets quite upset she says well I tell my children, I said but you can’t tell them that they’re English because they are Black English and you know we like sort of got in this debate about it and I was saying well obviously for me I would just, I would feel a fool saying anything else because I think I’d, apart from the fact that I’d be laughed at and I do think it is although people say but you shouldn’t sort of like place yourself on colour I think that’s a load of crap because that’s what everybody else does, that’s what’s done on forms and everything it’ll be what’s the police IC1 or IC2 so so when they’re saying that then you know that everything goes before you first you are, I see myself as being I would be Black, female, R, date of birth blah blah blah, but my colour’s coming foremost they’re not gonna, that comes before anything and everything and I know that because because obviously I’ve experienced it they don’t say oh her name’s RW and she’s English, it’s RW IC, I don’t even know which way I don’t know if the IC is English or whatever, but that’s that’s what everybody does umm do I get angry? I don’t feel emotional over it or I will stand my ground, I am Black foremost and then the British comes after because that’s how, but then when I’m abroad, like when I, when I do go to the West Indies and everything I it’s really weird because then everything I’m saying it sounds quite hypocritical because when I’m there, I always say well you know I’m Jamaican and then they tell me yeah but you’re foreign because you’re from England but I don’t dither about that, when I’m there I am Jamaican but I don’t do that here, here I am Black British whereas I have as much right to say here I’m English but I don’t I don’t say that.

I—mm hmmm, but you’d never bring the Jamaican aspect into your self-definition here then?

R—Oh no I would here, what I’m trying to say is when I go to Jamaica I obviously you feel more comfortable just by saying I’m a Jamaican

I—with no extra

R—yeah, but here it’s just different I just feel very different here

I—you mentioned that people would laugh at you if you just called yourself English, who do you think would laugh?

R—I just think in general, I just think I suppose number one it all depends in what circumstances and then there’s always that thing where you know I know a lot of Black people that are you know English-raised or foster care or whatever and they will sort of stand their ground I am English and I do this when I say well we’ll have this argument til the cows come home because you are of Black colour you can not stand up anywhere and say oh I am English, you are Black you fool, that’s how I know that sounds really kind of abrupt, but that’s how I would say and that’s why I do what I do because that’s what I feel comfortable with, because I don’t think I could stand anywhere and say I am English, yeah I was born here and I was raised here but I think that we’re all put into pigeonholes now for the sake I just find this very sort of like Americanised because I remember years ago umm watching something an I kinda grasped on the fact that everything in this American programme was oh like Black female, Black male, Black this and I thought it was quite rude back then and now what I’ve noticed we’ve now just adopted what they do now, yeah like she’s Black American, Indian American, Irish American and that’s what I think that England’s done, pigeonholed everybody but I feel more comfortable with that anyway definitely.
I — ok that’s great, if I had to ask you just off the top of your head in a couple of sentences to describe Britain or British people what would you say, what words come to mind?

R — British people, umm I’d say err very pompous, first word, very pompous, then need to be liberated, head in the sand and hypocritical

I — so they’re quite negative in a sense? ... Right ok...

R — but also I know that that isn’t the major, that there’s you know I’m not being negative on the whole but that would be the first thing that came to me if I had to go to

I — no no that’s fine
R — the moon and they said oh what are they like there, that’s what would come to my mind straight away

I — no that’s fine, that’s exactly what I wanted just the first thing that comes into your head.
Moving on to this bit, I’ve got 4 pots here this is umm true of Britain and British people now, true of Britain and British people in the past, this is likely to be true of Britain and British people 20 years from now or in the future, and that’s not true at all of Britain or British people and what I’ve done is I’ve picked out from newspapers, media speeches various umm things like that words which have all been used to describe Britain or British people and what I’d like you to do is to decide which pot you think they should best sit in and then once you’ve done that if you can talk me through why you did it the way you did it, ok, I’ll turn the tape off.

[post-sort]

I — if you take one pot at a time and just oops
[phone call interrupts interview]
R — True of Britain and British people now

I — ok, what have we got in there?

R — ok dull umm, it’s not even apart, first and foremost I would have said yes that’s what the British have always been labelled with, they’re not very adventurous umm... but I’m travelled, I’m well-travelled and it’s a fact they are just dull, there’s no experimenting, I think they’re becoming a little bit more cosmopolitan now, but on the whole I just think they are just a very dull nation umm dishonest, I don’t mean dishonest, when I looked at this I don’t think dishonest as in stealing like you could let somebody in, I don’t think I don’t just think they’re dishonest with themselves umm authority wise I think they’re dishonest in the sense umm, it’s almost like being nurtured dishonest as I say I don’t mean from stealing and things I mean dishonest to themselves in the sense that I think from tradition once they believe things they kind of brainwash themselves with it so it’s being dishonest but in a not dishonest kind of way, does that make sense?

I — sort of convincing themselves that something’s true?

R — yeah it’s just been so like, such a like you know an onward thing, it’s always been that way so that somebody doesn’t even really comprehend that they’re being dishonest because it’s just lodged in there that’s why I put that

I — ok

R — and hardworking, I put hard-working because yeah I do think that they are hard-working but again that’s only I don’t mean hard-working in you know the very physical I don’t mean in that sense, I just mean they’re very hard-working to gain, gain for personal means kind of thing, they put out the stops, there’s loads of things that could be done and should be done and need to be done but I feel that they’re very hard-working if they wanna muck down and get on with something that’s traditional and everything then they become hard-working in that sense.
I - so it's quite specific

R - yeah I don't mean in general, I wouldn't think oh yeah English people are very hard working, like if you was asking me the same question about like say Indians I would say oh yeah you know they're grafters or whatever but so I don't mean from that kind of side. Aggressive, again I think that's not like an aggressive nature but they can be aggressive on things, very much like what I was saying about the hard-working on specific things umm they can be aggressive.

I - do you have anything in mind?

R - umm...um ok aggressive when it comes to maybe debates and personal arguments they can become aggressive, be very placid in I don't know I threw a stone at your window and I smashed the window, they wouldn't probably see the aggression there but aggressive in a, not in a pompous way but in a way because I've seen it and I've experienced it not aggressive as in fisticuffs aggressive but aggressive if it was not stand up for your rights but umm, how can I explain it umm an aggressive, there's an aggressive nature for change I think they can become aggressive because they don't like change, very traditional, I think they can become

I - so it's almost a defensive?

R - yeah, that's it defense, defense aggression rather than sit and speak it out they will be 'yeah but my grand-father fought all these years' [said in theatrical voice] and they just become so aggressive that this is no longer debate, it's an argument now umm arrogant a hundred per cent, very arrogant, very arrogant black and white no in between... and that's how I see that one definitely, this is this and this is if you don't like it they just moving, you can go on.

I - ok, great

R - true of Britain and British people in the past, ignorant did I put that oh

I - do you want to change it?

R - true of British people in the past, no I probably put those, I've my first thing I'd like to I've put those in between true of British people now and British people in the past but then I'd also like to... it would be nice to put that in the not true, but it isn't not true.

I - so you think it's true of all those three to some extent, but perhaps more of the past a little bit

R - very ignorant, very ignorant and again I don't mean ignorant where you walk past and they might not give me a seat or I could be heavily pregnant and they wouldn't open the door, I don't mean that I just think they're ignorant mentally ignorant, mentally ignorant because they don't flex, they don't flex, they just don't flex, they're not flex-i-ble they won't I think they just don't see, hey we are living in the 21st century now and England isn't White and I think their ignorance needs to be dropped, because I think if they dropped their ignorance then I think everything would be a lot, a lot nicer so yeah although I would have liked to have placed this in many pots but I suppose true of Britain yeah I put it in this pot now because I suppose there was ten times more ignorance back then because even though like as I say obviously when I was at school total ignorance, total total ignorance but if I had to answer that then and to answer it now then they have flexed, you know things have changed

I - but not enough

R - no, but I think that's down to generations it'll be up and coming generations that'll change the ignorance
I – so you mentioned that maybe it also may it fits slightly in this one too, do you think that in 20 years it won’t have changed enough?

R – umm I don’t know I think actually from what I saw in the street now and to people that I sort of mix with, I’m a bit of a busybody person cos I do like to be everywhere, I like to see everything, all walks of life and all different classes and everything umm and I think there is a possibility of it being able to go into this one but then I’ve not if asked why I would say the only reason why I think that now is because I think that’s because there is more umm inter-racial mixing now so I think it’s not even the actual British people I think that will just or I hope I don’t know if that will or I personally hope that will just phase itself out, so that’s why I put that in that one.

I – ok

R – likely to be true of Britain and British people 20 years from now...outward-looking cos I think they’ll have to I took outward-looking to mean umm more outward-looking uhh to...ummm what am I trying to say, outward-looking to have more of a .... To see things more in other people’s umm umm eyes and realise that it is cosmopolitan everything is changed and I think eventually which is what I was just saying there I think eventually I do think because of, because I think that the up and coming generations will have hopefully erased most of the ignorance purely because of the multi-racial mixing and everything that’s going on, that’s why I think that.

I – so in a sense you’re interpreting it as sort of the ability to see other people’s point of view, is that fair?

R – yeah, being more just being not more hip just seeing more cultures more yeah everybody has an opinion, a different point of view whereas I don’t think they’re very outward-looking now and it certainly wasn’t back a little while ago, it definitely wasn’t.

I – ok

R – not true of Britain and British people.... No I don’t think they’re lazy umm...no I don’t think they’re, but then I put lazy on a physical, on a physical lazy but I do think they’re very lazy with their brains in the sense that they’re lazy because if they were to really use their brains and see what goes on around then I think everything you know I think it would be much nicer, but I took that to be physically and physically I don’t think they’re lazy umm. Adaptable no, I don’t think they like change I don’t think they’re very adaptable. Tolerant, no I don’t think they’re very tolerant at all....

I – are you thinking of any particular examples of tolerance?

R – tolerant. Well because because we live in the world that we because of how we live, different nationalities, different religions there just is no tolerance, there’s no tolerance in umm you see a temple going up and it’ll be ‘mm mmm bloody pakis putting them bloody things up’ and I sit there and I’m like then well why didn’t you build a church then, why didn’t you build something on that waste land if you or why didn’t you build a school or why didn’t you do this umm and I just think no they’re not tolerant, to be tolerant you need to be able to take on other people’s views, cultures, religions, habits anything, and I don’t just mean people of colour because umm when I, when I sort of say people multi-racial I think people sometimes think Black and White thing, I don’t mean that I mean that of any nationality of any colour skin and I just don’t think the English are tolerant at all, they cannot tolerate you know walking down the street well why’s she got to wear that headscarf, why’s she got that yashmak, we need to respect other people’s

[interview interrupted by phone call]

I – so we
R - tolerant, so no I don't think English people are tolerant umm creative yeah I don't even know why...what did I put that in, not true of British, creative umm no not really again I didn't think creative as in umm ....being creative put together things I just think to be really creative you have to be adaptable and again to be adaptable you have to be tolerant, you have to be adaptable you have to be fair and that means to me all the things that British people aren't no

I - ok

R - and fair, no I just don't think they're fair

I - and did you, were you thinking?

R - I was thinking fair as in fair as in ummm I think if you had, if if the face doesn't fit then it would be more or less guilty until proven innocent rather than the other way round that's why I just thought that.

I - ok, that's great. I chose obviously these particular descriptions is there anything that you you would have chosen that you would have wanted to put in some of these pots?

R - you mean on the labels?

I - yeah

R - ....true of British people in the past, no nothing that I can think of

I - no, there's nothing that sort of when when you were going through you were thinking why didn't she put this one or??

R - true of Britain, with the words you'd chosen?

I - no with your own words anything that you would have wanted to have

R - true of British people now umm.... I would have probably put, if I had another one to put I probably would, I wouldn't have put shocked because that's a bit silly but I would have thought surprised because I think that there's people that would shudder to think that although I don't think it's come a long, although I don't think it's we've come a long way in the sense of being adaptable to other people's ways, cultures and everything, we have really and I do think like that I would have put shocked in there in that people are like 'oh my god I would have never thought that this would have been allowed to happen' now so I would have put that in there. Not true of Britain or British people now umm no I can't think of anything

I - just that one, just a sense that things have changed but people perhaps haven't quite caught up?

R - yeah that's it

I - yeah is that all right? Ok, umm you mentioned for the future you had outward-looking, umm do you have a sense of yourself and you mentioned you've got kids as well, do you have a sense of yourself and your family as being part of that future?

R - yeah definitely, because I think we've got flexible minds because I think it's all about the flexible minds and I think and in some cases I think it should be almost compulsory for people to travel you know like if you've got, I don't know if you've got a reason like if they take children to France and to the Isle of Wight for the week and I think to myself no no no, they shouldn't be taking them to France and the Isle of Wight for the week, they should take them somewhere
where they get a culture shock because I think until you actually get out there and see how other people are then you don’t really know what’s happening in your own fence, so I just think umm...

I – so you feel you’ve benefited from

R – yeah definitely yeah and I think because I have then obviously my children have as well

I – mmm ok umm

R – but, sorry but then having said that how I was raised I think the children of now have kind of got that because obviously there’s more different there’s all different kind of people in Britain now, so in a sense I think they’re kind of getting that anyway in a sense

I – without having to leave the country?

R – yeah yeah but you know like in schools I still hear it and still see it now ‘no my child’s not bloody taking part in the Diwalli’ and stuff whereas my kids can do it all then, but because they’ve travelled a little bit and because we have different friends in different areas it’s not a problem for me for my son he’ll come home I mean he did the other week I know and he said something, he was saying something to me, it was Indian and I was like all right Tyler and then my daughter looked and we just all laughed, he probably made it up ask him in 15 minutes, we asked him again later and he said it again and we’ll ask him again at bedtime and he said it again and it wasn’t until one of my Asian friends came and he was singing and she went oh how does he know that, that’s from whatever in the film and I went oh my god and we kinda laughed him off but umm, but it isn’t a problem for me, but then I have seen other people and I have got friends that just cannot comprehend how I can allow him to talk Indian, I just look at it as it’s a bonus then because if he can end up speaking Hindu or Punjabi or whatever the case may be then well [whispers something about Christmas presents] but no I just think anything, if they’re picking up on anybody else’s culture or anything I just think it can only be a bonus, I cannot understand how it can be, how it can be anything but as long as they keep their won identities as well

I – how old are your kids?

R – uhh, Nicola’s going to be 19 in January and Tyler’s 8

I – you don’t look old enough to have a 19 year old child. Ok, I’ve just got a few more questions, if you had to decide whether you know on one side of the coin or the other, would you call Britain more modern or more traditional?

R – traditional

I – mmm hmm why would you say?

R – see you mean as you’re asking me all these questions now, I, what comes into my head I just I look at the pompous I look at umm parliament and all those kind of guys that’s what I just that’s the kind of things that I’m I see so I don’t know whether I’m being ignorant and categorising I’d think yes those people are, but again because I have this big hope thing I think that I can come in and sort of change that but I do

I – so you feel it will become more modern?

R – yeah yeah, it’s trying, it’s getting there and I do think it’s being moved along but there’s still those few people like with heels it’s like a tug-of-war kind of thing, think there’s all these people come on, come on but there’s still them few pompous people that unfortunately do hold the vital key that’s still with their heels dug deep in like no no change, and then even having said that then some of those people I think well you can’t really blame them for the change because they’re so
old and I don’t mean old in age I mean and in tradition that it’s hard to break, it’s hard ok it’s like
saying expecting an Englishman to come home every Sunday and have a curry, you can’t cos it’s
just not in his blood or in his genetics to really do that, so I’m not saying anybody’s got to really
change but I just think everybody’s got to flex a little bit so

I — mm hmm, ok umm you talked about the past and you talked about you know your own
personal past and so on, if you had to think about the sort of past of the country and think about
either a period of time or an even that has been important in making Britain the way it is now,
what, what would you choose?

R — if it’s something from the past

I — mm, whether it’s either a period of time or an event, a specific event that has really sort of
had a big impact on making Britain the way it is now

R — ... I think.... Umm....oh I don’t know.... Big event.... ... ummm.....I think there was a thing that
that sticks in my mind, two things I think, there was a thing umm they were trying to stop that big
event against racism in Southall many many many years ago and I think it was Blair something
yeah got killed wasn’t it because that was a big event because I think that really changed, that
really really changed things umm and that showed because Southall’s such a very small area and
over this way is all you know I mean people sort of say this is country over here because there’s
so much green whatever and I think that changed thing loads, that changed things for me
because I didn’t realise that there was so many unblack people, I say unblack people because I
don’t know their nationality or whatever they wasn’t of black skin and I was there and it really kind
of showed me like oh my god, that really showed me that other people do care that they had
white faces if you like umm and I think another thing that’s, another big event that’s changed
things and let other people see other people is probably Carnival, I know it sounds trivial but I
know people that just don’t mix with Black people but they love the carnival thing and that’s their
time, when I say they don’t mix with Black people they don’t intentionally not to mix with Black
people they either live in areas that there aren’t a lot of Black people or they just don’t come face
to face with, but I think that’s an event when lots of people, I know people that I’ve met and said
oh you know I’ve never eaten anything you know until I’ve gone to carnival and now carnival isn’t
just about you know Caribbean now you know you’ve got as many Indian stalls there with Indian
food, Chinese and everything so I think when I’m just thinking event that’s what I think

I — ok

R — and I think there should be more cultural events let people do their thing

I — right, ok that’s good. For you as an individual, what’s the most important the past, the present
or the future?

R — the future

I — mm you mention

R — aah the future, but the past is important because unless you deal with the past, the past can ,
if you don’t deal with the past correctly it can stop you having a future because you can be so
stuck in the past that you won’t have a future.

I — mmm and you mentioned that you had quite a positive you know hopes for the future

R — yeah, I think that’s because I’ve learned now and obviously an age thing as well, that to let go
of some of the past but that’s something I didn’t comprehend til not too long ago actually but that
that was probably more at a personal level and now I’ve got to that way of thinking that I think well
that’s how it must be for everywhere because sometimes you can you know you can sit there in
self-pity or whatever and stop your past letting you have a future so I think that can mean the same

I – ok, umm that's it can I just double-check, where do you live?

R – Hounslow

I – Hounslow, you're 32 is that right? and I've got down that you're unemployed is that also right? do?

R – yeah, I do a lot of care assisting

I – oh right

R – with umm youth offenders, that's what I've tried that's my goal now, I'm going to be going to college in September umm but with like the youth offenders and everything hopefully

I – oh right ok, sounds interesting

R – yeah, I do a lot of voluntary work with them at the moment which is basically it's like getting all the practical skills but rather than you still have to do the paperwork, but rather than having to do more paperwork it's whether I can actually say I've done all this practical stuff now

I – mm, so you're unemployed but not not working

R – yeah

[End of tape]
Appendix 11: Transcript for value-sort interview

I - umm just to sort of recap, it's about trying to find out how people see Britain and British people

CH - yeah

I - and what their perceptions are, so I'm going to start off with some sort of fairly general questions and then we'll move on to the pot thing

CH - [laughs] yeah

I - so you have a UK passport?

CH - yeah

I - and you were born in this country were you?

CH - yes I was

I - so you've always lived here have you?

CH - yeah

I - ok, and if I had to ask you to describe yourself would you call yourself British, English or something else?

CH - British

I - uhh ha, and does that mean anything in particular to you, or is it a legal definition or something else?

CH - umm, it's just geography isn't it? For me yeah...there's no nothing legal

I - so it's just a geographical description?

CH - yeah

I - there's nothing emotional there or...

CH - oh right, so you're asking me kind of what being British

I - yeah, in terms of when you use that description what does it, what's behind it I guess

CH - oh gosh, being British, what does being British mean? Umm....... 

I - you don't have to say anything if there isn't anything there

CH - yeah maybe it'll come out in the course of questioning but

I - that's fine, that's fine

CH - I could give you loads, I could give you an essay on what I think being British is, but I'm not sure that's what you want

I - well maybe if it doesn't come out we can come back to that?
CH – yeah ok

I – would that be all right?

CH – yeah of course it is, yeah

I – ok, umm and if I had to ask you off the top of your head in a couple of sentences to describe Britishness or British people or Britain whichever you prefer, what would you say?

CH – umm, conservative would be, umm proper umm, ... the best of British is kind of umm the ideal image about Britain is the lovely countryside, the quaint little English villages, its all that kind of stuff, the worse side of it is the inner cities and the umm you know, the crime and the all of that stuff umm North-South divide I think someone who's come from the North I do see that a lot

I – yeah

CH – so the, I used to live near Liverpool so I sort of saw that side of being British, also I used to live in Hertfordshire so I've seen that side as well and I think they're very very different um one's very harsh, the other's very soft umm maybe for a lot of reasons whatever, they're not as political they're not as hepped up about things I suppose, so umm yeah I think I think about culture, I think about Shakespeare, I think about umm you know they're the good things about about being British, I think about pop music because we're good at that, I don't think about football (laughing), patriotism yeah I think definitely umm being an English rugby supporter

I – oh right

CH – you know I watch the six nations every year avidly you know, my brother is in the British navy so all of those bits, I do there is a sense of nationalism there I suppose yes, but it's a mixed view about about sort of stereotypes which do exist I think, countryside stuff does exist, but I think the other stuff is alongside it

I – mm and I mean so you have sort of identified 2 different sorts of Britishness in a sense, but you see them as both being equally valid and equally British?

CH – yeah

I – not one more than the other?

CH – definitely not definitely not and uhh you think about some of the creativity that's come out of the inner city you know areas like Manchester, Liverpool and Newcastle you know err that's that's all part of it isn't it umm so yeah maybe I don't know the adversity of those areas makes people you know people who're genuinely talented, get on with it and makes them really make a go of it, I don't know, the two are they're not negative and positive, they're just two different worlds really yeah

I – ok, that's great now we're going to move on to this umm little thing and what I've got is umm these 4 pots, that's true of Britain in the past, that's likely to be true of Britain in the future, that's true of Britain now and that's not true of Britain at all, and I've got these descriptors which have all been taken from media speeches or political speeches to describe Britain and British people and I'd like you to sort them and decide which one you think they best fit in if that's ok?

CH - yeah

I – and what I'm really sort of after is your sort of gut response so don't think too hard
CH – don't think too much
I – about it, I'll just turn the tape off
I – particularly people who think for a living actually often find it quite hard

CH – (laughing) that’s me, I should have taken more time

I – no, this is much better, much better and what I’d like now is if you could go through each pot and sort of talk me through why you’ve put what you put in there and what sort of came to mind while you were doing it, you can do it any order you like

CH – I’ll do these first because these are being particularly positive about Britain erm, I found this one quite difficult I have to say because I think I think it’s a trying to be fair, but I don’t always think that it is I think that umm I think that a lot of groups in society get a really unfair deal, I guess what I mean by that is that we’re attempting to be you know the groups that I’m talking about I feel are recognised and I feel that we’re trying to do something about it uhh positive stuff I think there’s people generally trying to do positive stuff about it but I still think it’s probably haven’t got there yet

I – so the intention’s there but?

CH – yeah, yeah but I wouldn’t want you to think that I think well I think everybody has a really great life and you know I simply don’t think that and I think there’s loads of minority groups that are simply not in the mainstream I think if you’re not middle class and earning over thirty grand you’re like I think you have a struggle frankly, ok so there we go. Tolerant, erm again I don’t think this is ideal, umm but I don’t think we were tolerant in the past umm I don’t think we’re going to be any more tolerant in 20 years time but I think again I think the culture is about tolerance uhh I think that tube behaviour is a classic example isn’t it of how people tolerate the most awful dis you know conditions and umm the way we patiently queue for things, and all that sort of stuff, I think we tolerate a lot of behaviour that maybe isn’t right but we you know we do tend to do that and we unless we’re really really irked we actually don’t do a lot about it

I – so do you think that’s a good thing or?

CH – erm... the tolerant the tolerant bit in bad situations is awful, it’s an awful thing umm because we I think what we do is we turn a blind eye and I think there’s no doubt about that, I mean the comment about there’s no homelessness in Britain I mean you walk past so many every time I go to work you know around Waterloo area you walk around and the underpass and there’s stacks of people sleeping out in sleeping bags you know, so err you know I don’t think it’s good but I think that’s what we do I think we are a very tolerant country I don’t think you know I think we were 20 years ago, when I was at university actually we were so much more radical petitioning for this that and the other and I think now look at the students and what’s important to them now, it’s fees and it’s careers and it’s different things it’s not about Greenpeace, it’s not about you know homelessness, it’s not about that sort of thing, so I think we’ve become a tolerant place, but that’s not necessarily a positive thing.

I – ok

CH – Is that, did you get that?

I – yeah that’s fine

CH – I think we are hard-working, too hard-working, do too many hours that’s you know, higher than the European average isn’t it erm ridiculous yes there you go

I – again so not a good characteristic particularly
I - so it is a virtue but it's just gone too far?

CH - yeah yeah so something about trying to come back from that a little bit because what comes with that is this bit about umm err not being seen to go home early, not being seen to you know to do things that are maybe better for your health, not being seen to have too many days off sick when you actually need it, you know people that are pregnant thinking that they must come in even if they're not feeling very well and I think that's the bit where it's taken too far really so it's okay but I think you know we just need to sort of re-establish some boundaries around it again, so I think that's what we are. Umm, actually I think that's in the wrong thing....adaptable umm I mean I suppose I'm coming from my own profession really and I think that's it may not be everybody's perspective, but from certainly from where I am in the NHS I've only been in the NHS 10 years and I've, I must have seen some sort of structural change probably once every 18 months in that time

I - mm hmm

CH - you know and I think that umm you know if that happened in the private sector I don't think a lot of people would would cope with that, I think we are very adaptable, particularly in this professional group, constantly having to change, constantly having to sort of look at the political agenda and make sure we're addressing it, changes in politics end up with changes in the health service as well and I think that's that's changed quite a lot in terms of my my profession umm .... just leave that for a moment (quietly) umm and I also think we've become more creative as well, we're much more creative about finding solutions to difficult problems, I think creative in terms of the talent in the country you know in terms of the various different err the chefs the you know, music the artists you know I think we're giving a much more creative image than we ever have before you know.

I - when do you feel that that sort of shift took place, because you say that you feel it's a change, when do you feel the change...?

CH - err I think it's happened in the last couple of years I think and I think we've one of the things criticised Britain about in the past was about you know this sort of stupid imper you know empire bit going on and err you know we couldn't hang up, we couldn't get rid of that sort of perspective about our empire and as a consequence everybody else started industrialising and Germany started leaping ahead and doing all the things that that needed to do which we should have done a long time ago and we've always had that kind of fairly stuck in the past kind of feeling and I feel like now things are really moving on and I suppose it's a little bit, I'm not particularly enamoured with Tony Blair but I do think that the government's got that kind of agenda, it's about delivery, it's about being adaptable, it's about being flexible and I just feel like you know that certainly comes through in what I'm doing and that's my perspective on things

I - and that's sort of spilled over and stimulated sort of more changes you feel.

CH - yeah I think it has a more positive perspective about about Britain about Britain being creative err you know this stuff, you know stuff about the Tate Modern and all that looks really good you know, we've just had the Baltic Mill even opened in Newcastle and you know that would have been unheard of in Newcastle sort of you know 20 years ago and to have had it so crowded out with all these people who want to go and have a look you know umm so umm... yeah I think it's changed quite a lot I think we're much more creative about the building side of things as well, the way we're using sort of deprived areas to really build those up, the North East in Gateshead
they're even doing something with the riverside up there which is just you know it's one of the most deprived areas in the country and it's you know even there they're trying to generate some sort of income regeneration there and try and encourage people to live back there again and I think it's just using what we've got and being much more creative about it I suppose

I - ok

CH - was that ok?

I - yeah that's lovely thank you

[pot moving sound]

CH - this is my fear that might be true of Britain in 20 years time is that all of this kid of moves into arrogance and that you know with all the things that are quite positive at the moment err... moves into complacency and arrogance in the future because we then achieve some sort of improvement in all of the aspects that we, that are important to all of us like health and transport and those sort of things but actually we become complacent, we become arrogant about what we've done and we don't keep looking to the future, we don't keep moving on and you know that that concerns me I suppose, I think that's a a potential a sort of victim of our own success in a way

I - do you have a feel for what would sort of prevent that occurring?

CH - umm...yeah I mean I think I think a lot of it for me is linked to to the government actually about not being complacent about what they've achieved umm and therefore not making us feel complacent I think a lot of it's attached to that umm, what else would stop us from going that way

I - I only asked that because presumably I mean I do you see that as inevitable or not?

CH - it's not inevitable no no, but I think it could be a potential problem if we feel like we've ticked the boxes in all the things that are important err yeah I think the thing that will probably keep us grounded is that we'll never ever achieve all the things that we need to achieve so that will prevent it, but I hope we don't get arrogant and I think it's you know, people, people in the middle classes are getting richer I do think that becoming a really strong voice and I think err to assume that we're ticking the boxes for those people doesn't mean we're still meeting the people in other areas you know in the working class classes and I think I think that's where the arrogance might creep in as well umm you know because the chattering classes are ok they're happy but you know still not made the difference in terms of the other groups but you know that's going to be an issue.

[pot moving sounds]

CH - umm true of Britain in the past, definitely lazy umm phh why do I think this (laughs) umm

........ why did I instinctively think this? True of Britain in the past? I think linked to our...I'm a historian and I think it's slightly linked to err (laughs) the imperialistic perspective about Britain and I think we kind of thought because you know we were owned, we owned all these countries and we had a presence in all these countries and we ruled all these countries and I still think that's true in some cases that we were quite lazy about about what we did, we just expected things to come to us without actually working for them and err and I think that's what lead to a lot of our problems really umm

I - so do you have a particular period of time in mind that you're thinking of, presumably you're thinking post-imperial?

CH - yeaahh, think think about the way sort of err England er English presence in India you know and I just think about ugh it just makes me cringe about the way we were you know and I think we've just bloody lazy and umm you know but it's a historical thing it's a real thing about the past
about Britain in the past and I think I still annoys me about the umm people's perception of the European Union I think that that to some extent for me illustrates this bit about the nationalism and there's elements about the bit Britain being unique and special to anybody else in the whole world that we can't accept the same currency as everybody else because we're so special and there's something, that to me illustrates the how we were in the past and there's still that bit that people hang on to, for me you know we must we must move forward you know, it's about moving forward, it's about, it's all about partnership, it's all about collaboration for the future and umm you know we can no longer be, it's not the way the world is, we can no longer be absolutely self-contained and doing our own thing and all the rest of it and we're fine thank you very much and you know the the in the main I think you know we've moved on, but I still think there's this bit about nationalism that really irks me you know I think that's. Aggressive err...... yeah I think we were both aggressive and dishonest and I think that for me goes back to the sort of Thatcher era, both of those things, I think it was about greed, it was about you know the awful eighties wasn't it, it was all about err material wealth and it still is to some extent but you know there's kind of a rosier glow on it and there's at least some some embarrassment about like those excesses you know though at the time there wasn't was there, it was just wonderful and great and just, so that's why I thought those sort of things.

I – so the aggression, did you feel, were you thinking of that in terms of at an individual domestic level that people were aggressive in pursuit of their own desires?

CH – yeah because sorry
[phone rings]
I – do you want to get that, we can stop if you want?
[tape turned off]
I – aggression in the 80's
CH – ah yeah, was it a personal thing? Yeah it was and um I think it was at all levels though wasn't it, it was top-down in terms of the government it was saying it was ok to be like that and in fact it was actually a positive thing and a mark of your success if you were like that, but it was also a personal thing you know and this complete lack of respect and regard for anybody who you know who didn't have you know the skills to make money and you know if you didn't have money you weren't any good you know it was kind of
I – so it was social as well as individual?
CH – yes it was that message really, we'd moved away completely with actually being you know umm people with caring people who have a range of you know a range of personal qualities it was about being a good person, we'd moved into kind of well you know if you had the porsche, the this the and the other, I think you were, you'd made it and that was good, and it was that's what differentiated a bad person from a good person and I think that that just completely screwed things up really for Britain for a while and of course it was you know emphasised by the media and it wasn't everybody, of course it wasn't, in fact it was probably only a very small proportion of the society but it was the way that that became the norm really and that became a a, the headlines the way things were quite undermined people that didn't want to be like that so I think yeah, there's probably not a lot more I can say about that, is that ok?

I – no that's fine.

CH – ok, not true of Britain outward-looking umm... having said all this stuff about us being adaptable, this is going back to my issue about about, sometimes it's this bit about Britain that's so analytically retentive in terms of umm err understanding about world politics, understanding about things in other countries err understanding about cultures in other countries, other people that are different to us and that's ok umm understanding about you know that we no longer, you know we need other people and part of a European Union we need to move on you know and there's a part of Britain that I think is very inward-looking and I think that's why I put that one in there. Umm, I don't think it's dull by an stretch of the imagination now err and I don't think it will be in the future which is erm why I put it in that one?
I do you think it was dull in the past?

CH - umm

I - just you said now, I was just wondering?

CH - yeah err no, I don't think we've ever been dull I think we've always you know

I - just straight N/A

CH - yeah because we kind of always had whether right or wrong, we've always had quite a fruity past haven't we, we've got a fruity history in so I can't say that we've been dull in any shape or form, but you know I'm interested in politics and things like that so I probably would say that (laughs) umm (taps card) umm don't like that, not true of Britain ignorant...

I - did you want to change it?

CH - ....I don't think I feel it could go anywhere which is why I put it there I don't think it's not true of Britain per se, because I think we're incredibly ignorant about a lot of stuff umm ...to take a contemporary example, Jade on Big Brother (laughs) you know, although people have focused a lot of you know a lot of criticism on her about how thick she is and ok she might not be miss average but there's a lot of people out there like her and East Anglia might be next to Tunisia for all they know, you know what I mean and I think (voice raises in volume and laughter starts) I really think that we are arrogant and ignorant in a lot of knowledge in a lot of aspects about knowledge and about our history and about politics and so on and so forth umm so I don't know, I didn't think it fits in any of them actually in a way, I wouldn't say it's completely true of, I wouldn't say it's completely not true

I - yeah

CH - but we are, we are ignorant in lots of respects, so it's a bit of a outside of the pot here (she puts it on the table away from the pots)

I - that's fine, that's fine, we can have outside of the pot yeah. Umm the next the next element is a sort of optional thing which is just that I'm aware that I picked out these umm descriptions and there may be other things that you think are very important about that you would have chosen to use to describe Britain that you would want to bring out. Is there anything that you would have expected to see or hoped to have seen that would, that wasn't there?

CH - umm, umm............ummm I think the thing about your question, the reason why it's so difficult to answer is for me anyway is because it's on so many levels you know and I found myself answering your question in terms of personal experience, where I'm coming from in terms of my career, my views about politics and my views about our history and my views about the social economic sort of scene as well and you've got the big macro stuff, you've got the little micro stuff, you've got the local politics stuff, the things that you your personal experiences as you grew up and then you've got the absolute much closer stuff and I found it quite difficult to kind of, kind of I could answer all of those things in lots of different ways

I - yeah

CH - and it's really difficult to try and on the top of your head to try and think about it in a way that doesn't sound sort of, about about just the broad stereotypes really I think it's obviously a lot more, it's a lot detailed subject and it's so subtle, there's lots of kind of emotional stuff going on as well isn't there about being British, I found it quite difficult to answer umm so ... so I don't know whether I've given you a really good accurate view of what I think about Britain because I've probably just given you like a skim surface, you know the first thing that come into my head about
it as opposed to kind of the detailed stuff, so that's the only thing I'd say about the questions so far, but that might be ok, you might just want the initial reactions I don't know?

I - yeah well either to be honest, it depends on how deeply you want to go to be honest

CH - yeah

I - yeah, but I mean in terms of what you've said, that's fine that's not a problem at all

CH - right ok

I - but I mean did you want to say more things, were there things that you know, areas where you would have liked to have gone into more detail or explore some of those complexities?

CH - yeah, I mean it's kind of a personal level the things that you think about Britain are always attached to your personal links in the country as well you know and the reason why you are attached to a place in a sense is because you've got your family here and your partner and your boyfriend or whatever and your friends are here and err I think if you have positive views about Britain or thoughts about Britain, they're often built around those things aren't they, those kind of connections, so umm maybe I haven't spoken enough about that but maybe bear that in mind in my perspectives on all those things.

I - ok, that's fine. I've just got a few more questions and then we're nearly done. You sort of touched on this a little bit, but if I had to ask you to come down on one side or the other would you describe Britain as a more modern or a more traditional country?

CH - now more modern

I - mm hmm and when you say now, when would you feel that it became modern?

CH - in the last ... 5 years

I - so a recent development

CH - recent yeah

I - and before that you'd have called it traditional

CH - yeah I would, definitely, if you asked me that question 5 years ago I would have

I - and umm.. again is it related to sort of political changes that you feel have sort of made that shift?

CH - yes, yeah I do, I really do

I - ok, and if you had to think back to the past, you mentioned that you're a historian so you should be good at this and you had to think about an event or an era which has sort of shaped Britain you know the Britain of today what would you choose?

CH - umm.... ......... ......... ......... mm{em}m ......... ......... ......... lots of things, but I'm inclined to fall on when Labour finally got power in err whenever it was, the most recent Blair, when the Blair government came in

I - mm hmm, so that's sort of a very recent sort of pivotal event that's

CH - I think, I think it's been a turning point yes, yeah
I – so you wouldn't look at anything further back than that?

CH – well I was thinking about that when you first asked the question, umm ... erm....and I was thinking about all sorts of political events I suppose erm......but in terms of what I thinks given us this new most recent change move towards thinking a bit differently, I think it's been the change of government that's led to it.

I – mmhmm ok, that's fine and for you as an individual, the present, the past or the future?

CH – umm...... ooooh, the present I think

I – yeah, why's that?

CH – err... because you've got to you got you know you've got to live for the moment, you've got to take what you can because you never know what's going to happen tomorrow you know, you've got to enjoy life, make the most of it while you're here, it's a perspective I've always had

I – ok, that's fine, that's it, I just need to double-check on how old you are and I know you live between two places so where do you want me to put down you actually leave (laughing)

CH – maybe you ought to put North East I think because that's probably more accurate and I'm 31

I – and what, what actually is your occupation, because I know you have 2 jobs don't you?

CH – I'm an NHS manager

I – ok, that's lovely thank-you.
Appendix 12 – Transcript for value-sort interview

I – this interview is designed to assess or look at how people think of Britain and British people, what their perceptions are.

AG – Right, ok

I – simple as that, so we’re just going to start off with some general demographic questions and then we’ll move on to a sorting task which I’ll explain as we go through it.

AG – fine

I – right? ok?

AG – yeah

I – you can drop out at any time, you don’t have to answer any questions if you don’t want to

AG – fine

I – right, do you have a UK passport?

AG – yes

I – and would you describe yourself as British, English or something else?

AG - ... umm if I was asked, I would probably say, I would probably say I was British

I – mm hmm and when you say that, what does it actually mean, is it...

AG – when I say it, it doesn’t really mean anything, it’s just a sort of label really

I – a technical description?

AG – yeah umm, I don’t I don’t think I necessarily have any strong deep-rooted feeling of being British, I don’t really, possibly that’s possibly I do intrinsically or subconsciously but I don’t really, it’s not something I think about very much I have to say

I – so you’re not filled with pride every time

AG – well I (higher pitch) well I am in a way, I mean like the last month’s been quite nice cos of all the sort of you know and I do quite like that but I’m not, I’m not I wouldn’t really class myself as a raging nationalist who’s sort of has great sort of real passion, well passion’s the wrong word but I’m not, I’m not very protective of British sort of... I don’t know, I don’t know what the word I’m looking for is, but you know what I mean

I - yeah

AG – I’m not like it’s just a label really and whilst I quite like, whilst I suppose I have some sort of fondness for England and Britain and I’d probably rather live in England or Britain rather than anywhere else

I – yeah

AG – I’m not, I wouldn’t say I’m hugely protective of it, in the way that I think possibly some people are, but then I don’t take I’m not of the view that of the Daily Mail that that England is about to collapse and the world’s falling at our feet and we all need to sort of I don’t know, I’m not that panicked by it so maybe that’s why
I – so you feel quite secure in that sense?

AG – yeah I think so, yes yeah

I – ok, if I asked you off the top of your head just to define or describe like you know in a couple of sentences Britain or the British people, what would you say?

AG – umm, ... oh gosh umm (snifs), in one or two sentences

I – you can take more if you want but

AG – well I think there is a certain sort of element of defeatism, I mean I think, I think, I think Britons aren't very I don't, I don't mm dear, it's quite difficult to describe I don't, I can really only compare it with America which is where I spent most of my time when I'm not in Britain and in America, there's a real sort of you know 'God Bless America', a real sort of patriotism everywhere you go there's lots and lots of flags and you don't get that over here or anywhere as much and I mean, whilst I think a lot of people would describe that as people not being very patriotic, I just find it a bit more rational, I find it a bit claustrophobic when I'm in the States, just sort of I don't like it actually, you know I find it a bit bizarre and a bit isolationist and I think that sort of shows up in the sense that a lot of Americans are very, they don't really know anything about the world outside their boundaries and I don't like that and so I think I quite like the fact that that Britain's not particularly sort of, we're quite I think you you get the impression certainly, possibly this is a South East thing, but if you looked at many other parts of Britain you wouldn't find it so much but I think it's sort of quite open and quite sort of aware of the world around us and I think a lot of people would class that as a negative sign but I don't think I do, so umm so I suppose that's one sort of character trait in the sense that they're not so, they're quite sort of aware of the world around them; but also (snifs), I suppose there's the classic British trait of being you know the natural underdog and fairly defeatist and I think that's probably to a certain extent true and whether that's sort of a function of the fact that they don't have a great sort of extrovert pride in their country, I don't know whether those two things are linked or not but I do there's a certain element of you know, you almost expect not to, it shows up in sporting tournaments, you just expect not to win and I think there's a certain element of Britishness in that. But I don't know, I think it's almost impossible to characterise a country in two sentences I think you can't do it, I mean you can characterise London or Liverpool certain parts of Britain better than England as a whole, because I think if you went, if you went to Bradford your experience of Britain would be very different from if you're sitting in Guildford where you know [unintelligible]

I – so would you say you know the fact that it's quite a diverse nation, would that be part of your description do you think in a way?

AG – yeah increasingly, I think that's I think that you can't argue with that, can you it's blatantly more diverse, so I mean that's fine, I don't have a problem with that but I don't think that's an opinion, that's just fact it is more diverse than it was 50 years ago, that's fine

I – ok

AG – does that answer your question?

I – that does answer my question, yeah because there isn't, you know there isn't a right or wrong answer to that so that's fine. Umm now we move on to this you know, this, these falling-apart pots. Umm, what I've got is 4 pots and umm each is labelled, one is true of Britain now, one is true of Britain in the past, one is not true of Britain at all and one is likely to be true of Britain 20 years from now, so that's to go across the time frame.

AG – right, right
I — umm and what I also have are some adjectives which have been taken from media and political pieces, so they’ve all been used to describe either Britain or British people umm in the they’re most, they best fit in

AG — ok

I — right so I’ll set them up for you so you can sort in peace

[post sort]

I — ok, so if we can go pot by pot and you can sort of shout out which ones you put in there and sort of talk me through why you did it the way you did it and what you were thinking of

AG - which one shall I start with?

I — any, it’s up to you whichever order you want to take it

AG — shall I start with not true of Britain

I — yeah

AG — well I don’t think Britain’s dull, I mean there’s ... I think it’s a very interesting place, I mean I think again it’s whether you’re talking of, I’m sure there are several British people who are dull, but there’s an awful lot to do, there’s an awful lot of culture in Britain, there’s an awful lot of sort of (sniffs), even just taking a fairly sort of banal example you know what you sort of quality of stuff you get on tv it’s much more interesting than the sort of thing you get in a lot of other countries and I think it’s quite interesting place to live actually. I think that’s probably linked with the fact as well that I’ve put somewhere that it’s outward-looking you know it’s quite, it’s quite I think it’s quite interested in the world around it, so I don’t think it’s dull. Arrogant, ... yeah that’s quite difficult I think there are a lot of people in Britain again who are very arrogant, umm who think that sort of you know if you almost if you live anywhere else, you know a bit imperialist still, but I don’t think, I think increasingly, maybe I should have put mmm, maybe I should have put that in true of Britain past actually.

I — you can change if you want

AG — yeah I think maybe I should have put that in the true of Britain past pot, because I think possibly we were arrogant in the past, but I think increasingly we’re less so nowadays, so I think possibly yeah that should go in there [transfers card], so I’ll come back to that one in a moment

I — ok

AG - dishonest, no I don’t think so no more than anybody else, I might be completely wrong on that, I have no real strong views on it but I don’t think we’re particularly dishonest. Now ignorant and lazy, now these two are very interesting because these are very interesting because there are an awful lot of very ignorant and very lazy people around, a lot of them, but I don’t think that’s necessarily an intrinsic part of British ness, I think you’d find that wherever you went umm you know people who don’t want to do an honest day’s work blah blah blah, but I don’t think, I don’t think Britain as a country, I mean we work quite hard, we work quite long hours, you know we don’t have rampag, you know I don’t think we’re particularly ignorant or lazy in in, there was an interesting thing in the Daily Mirror, not that I read the Daily Mirror on any regular basis but there was an interesting thing in the Daily Mirror last week, this quiz of 20 questions which had been asked to people all across Europe and Britain had come second to bottom in it or something and only beaten in ignorance by Portugal, and you then watch Big Brother and see people like Jade
I - laughs
AG - you begin to wonder, I I think they're quite sort of facile ways of looking at it, you can look at the other extreme and we have I think quite a large number of people who go to university, quite a high quality of higher education in this country versus a lot of other countries and people come from all around the world to go to British universities and I think (sniffs) you know you meet quite a lot of very intelligent and hard-working people as well, so I don't think we're particularly ignorant or lazy but [emphasised] as I say I think there are an awful lot of very ignorant and very lazy people.

I - ok

AG - so that was that one

I - that was not true

AG - right, true of Britain in the past, right yeah arrogant. I think we used to be arrogant, I don't think you can, I think it's almost impossible to deny when we owned half the world, I'm sure we were very arrogant and basically looked down on anybody else, I think that's changing though over time umm maybe I'm just being blithely optimistic, but I don't think we are arrogant anymore, no I don't think so I mean... (snifs), I think we can be arrogant in certain circumstances, I think for example our, the attitude of much of the British press to the EU is tinged with arrogance umm you know they seem to think that they, anything that comes out of Brussels is just inherently worse because... what happens in Britain is right and cannot be improved upon, I think that is quite arrogant, but I don't think, (snifs) I don't think we're intrinsically arrogant umm in the way that I would say again going back to America, a lot of Americans are quite arrogant about their country in the sense that they find it very difficult to appreciate why anybody would want to live anywhere else and I think that sort of, their complete disbelief after September 11th that anybody could dislike them umm and the way in which they reacted to that probably does show that they are quite arrogant and I don't mean that in an unpleasant way, it's just a sort of you know their attitude to the world almost is quite arrogant even if them as people are perfectly pleasant and very very nice and not in any way arrogant or could be very very humble, I just think it's with respect to their American ness they're quite arrogant because they're indoctrinated with it from day one really I mean when I was at school in America for a year we used to have to sort of recite some sort of God Bless America chant every morning which sort of smacks of I don't know type of brain-washing umm so I think that's the sort of arrogance I'm thinking about, I don't think Britain is arrogant in that way hence the fact that I didn't put it in there.

I - you mentioned that you thought that there had been a degree of arrogance in the past and you sort of associated it with imperialism and so on, what do you think made the shift so that there's less arrogance now?

AG - umm

I - if anything

AG - I think people are a bit more realistic now and I think when you, I think when you do [emphasised] own a third of the world you're probably quite right to be arrogant because you're in a pretty powerful position and I think I don't you know in the modern day where you don't own a third of the world you can't really afford to be arrogant because if you are, you're just being stupid and naïve and umm

I - so it's just adjusting

AG - I think it's just adjusting to a changing world really umm

I - that's fine
AG – ok, true of Britain now, well many of these are just true of Britain full stop
I – laughs
AG – rather than particularly now, umm well hard-working is the opposite of lazy so if I said that lazy was not true of Britain, then hard-working is true of Britain so the same points hold. Umm adaptable, yeah I think so I think you know you know drag some people along kicking and screaming. But I don’t think you can deny that … for the world, you know Britain is pretty pretty modern in comparison to most even other developed countries umm you know they’ve taken on the internet, everybody’s sort of got them now you know, changing working practices de-industrialisation blah blah blah, it’s all sort of happening, increasing number of people going to university for good or for bad, but I mean I think you know we’re pretty adaptable really. Creative’s very difficult just cos I don’t really know anything about it I mean I think, do you mean we invent things, do you mean that we write good literature, do you mean that we’ve got lots of fantastic composers, do you mean that we produce good pop groups because on some of those scores we’re pretty good and on some of them we’re not very good umm … (exhale) … I mean I suppose in a way we’re quite ahh I don’t know, I don’t know I find that one quite difficult to justify but I find it quite difficult to place I don’t really know, think … (sucks teeth), let me come back to that one. Outward-looking, well I’ve said that many times already, I think we probably are quite outward-looking umm even if we’re not then necessarily very willing to (sniff) learn from things that we see when we look outward, I still think we’re aware of what’s going on and I think probably is the definition of outward-looking. Umm now aggressive, yeah I blame the Daily Mail and the Daily Telegraph really for that, I think you know there is this real sort of … there’s a real sort of … I don’t know people are very very protective I think of of sort of … I don’t know, I blame Simon Heffer really I mean I just
I – (laughing) just Simon Heffer?

AG – well no but like the sort of views that he espouses which sort of brainwash an awful lot of people who I don’t think are themselves inherently aggressive and I don’t think that necessarily that, well they’re not inherently aggressive, but I think the sort of the sort of views that a lot of people have as a function of the sort of media in this country can come across as aggressive, I just fundamentally disagree with virtually everything that’s written in about 80% of the press, so I just I think I just find that sort of attitude quite sort of, I have no real strong views about the ways in which people should live their lives and (sniff) I have no real strong belief that the word society necessarily has to mean nuclear family and I just I think that the way in which a lot of traditionalists in inverted commas sort of go on and on about that I find that quite I find that quite aggressive and I think that sort of ties in with the fact that I’ve put tolerant in this likely to be true of Britain in 20 years from now sort of thing in that I think probably things are changing but it’s pretty slow and I just find that attitude quite aggressive and in many other ways we’re not aggressive I mean you know you know but I think that was what was in my mind when I said that.

I – ok

AG – pile, I think also you’ve got to look at sort of umm what else do I mean by aggressive in the you’ve got all sorts of race riots and all that kind of stuff that’s quite aggressive umm … I think people in Britain are quite … quite willing to stand … you know … well I stand up for what they believe is probably not strong enough, yeah have I done enough on that one?

I – mmm yeah

AG – creative I don’t like that one at all I have to say umm

I – I know when you put it in there you said umm Britain invented football and that must mean it’s creative [referring to comment made during sorting while tape was off] was that tongue in cheek or was that
AG — well sort of yes, but that’s what I mean in the sense that we have the Beatles and we invented football and yeah an awful lot of stuff which is quite important in the world has come out of Britain and I think that’s probably why I put it in there

I — so it’s almost in an innovative sense?

AG — that’s why I did put it in there but I find it [snif snif] I can’t think of any modern day examples of that but that’s because you know you don’t know whether an invention’s going to be long-lasting or world-changing at the time at which it’s made umm creative in the sense that again you know we have leading higher education establishments full of people who are doing creative work and I suppose that’s quite creative in a way that you don’t have in much of continental Europe and you certainly don’t have outside the developed world so I think that if you on that basis we’re quite creative but I [exhale] yeah I think that’s probably why I put it there but I just find that one quite hard to justify in any kind of cast-iron sense.

I — you’ve done a pretty good job. The future.

AG — Likely to be true 20 years from now and being wildly optimistic. Now, fair, yeah that’s interesting that implies that it’s not fair now... (snif) getting there I suppose, I suppose the first thing you think about when you’re talking about fair is you start thinking about umm male female rights all that sort of stuff, don’t think you’re quite there yet, but I think moving in the right direction and I’d have thought 20 years from now, possibly would have gone even in the other direction the way things are going at the moment so

I — do you fair er

AG — yeah I think we’re fairer now than we were before

I — and continuing

AG — possibly we are maybe the reason I put it in there is because I think it will carry on moving in the right, in that direction now whether it’s gone far enough already I don’t know in which case it should go in the true of Britain now pile but I think that’s quite a dynamic one so I think possibly the right place for it. Tolerant, well as I said that’s the opposite of aggressive in a way so yeah, again similar to fair really the whole sort of politically correct movement all moving in the right direction.

I — and do you think that’s a good thing or a bad thing?

AG — I’m not a big fan of political correctness I have to say, I I don’t like you know I don’t in the sense that I think you can, I think words are very important but I don’t think, I get slightly annoyed when you can’t use the word blackboard to describe what is quite blatantly a blackboard I find that frustrating and annoying but I think possibly what political correctness represents underneath I agree with completely, but I think you know you can take it too far, but I think that the movement is definitely in the right direction. I think I think ... what bothers me much more than words is actions and I think often we can sort of you know the press and pressure groups and even minority groups can get too hung-up about words and ignore the actions which I think are much more important and I think that the actions are what’s moving in the right direction.

I — ok, that’s that’s great umm is there anything that’s, I mean obviously I chose these you know these descriptions from the newspapers and whatever, is there anything that you would think of that was, that would be key to describing Britain that I haven’t included in this? Because it’s just you know

AG — to describing Britain?
I – yeah, yeah you know if you’re thinking about it in this sort of the past, present future sense. You know something that you might have expected to see in that little list of words that didn’t crop up perhaps?

AG – .... Hmm (exhale)....possibly proud

I – mm hmm and which one would that have gone in?

AG – now that’s interesting you see because 6 weeks ago you’d have said no and now you’d say yes... umm I mean that last 6 weeks have been very bizarre in a way in the sense that I haven’t really experienced anything like that ever, there’s been nothing sort of massively tangible, but there’s just been this sort of ... you suddenly you watch the news and it’s not filled with sort of political gripe it’s a bit sort of you know I’m not a monarchist at all, I’d get rid of them but I think you know there’s sort of something quite nice about watching the news and lots of people out in the mall it’s quite quite, it’s sort of quite warming and then the same thing with the World Cup and you’ve got it now with Wimbledon, and it’s just there’s sort of an element of, it’s all quite trite to say but I think there is, there’s been a bit of a reflection over the past 6 weeks as to sort of as to what Britain is and I think people seem to realise that it’s not quite as bad as we have made out if you (sneezes) excuse me

I – bless you

AG – (sneezes) excuse me yeah well you know what I’m saying so possibly proud but I can’t think of anything else

I – but, and proud would be a good sort of proud?

AG – yes, yes, yes

I – ok

AG – proud is what you get before you become aggressive (laughing) I said they could be aggressive as well so I suppose pride is a sort of I don’t know yeah.

I – ok right umm few last questions, I think this one you’re probably already answered actually, would you see Britain as more modern or more traditional?

AG – well it’s a weird combination of the two isn’t it? It’s umm, well that’s interesting you said I’d already answered it what

I – well no, go on then, you tell me about it being a weird combination and then I’ll tell you what I thought you said

AG – well I think it’s quite modern to be honest

I – yeah that’s what I thought

AG – I think there’s quite a strong element of traditionality as well I mean I think really what encapsulates Britain today is quite modern but I think we like to maintain some traditional elements, if we were modern we wouldn’t have a monarchy for example and we do umm if we were modern then many of the rituals of parliament would no longer exist, of we were modern then you know, there’s that sort of element of Britishness which remains which I think I probably wouldn’t have it if I was omnipotent and could decree what Britain would be like but I don’t I’m not sort of, I’m not rampant about it if it doesn’t really bother me, I think that that means that we do have elements of tradition but

I – and it is quite a key part of Britishness
AG – yeah I think it probably is but I don’t think, I don’t think you can describe Britain today as being sort of determined by tradition, I think it’s essentially you know what makes up 98% of our GDP is modern rather than traditional

1 – right, that’s what I thought you were going to say. Umm and if we’re talking about modern Britain, if you had to look back over the past and pick out one event or era which has been sort of critical in shaping and forming modern Britain which one would you choose?

AG – oooh that’s an interesting question umm … … (sucks teeth) I don’t know because I’ve never studied modern history but I don’t really really know

1 – you can go back as far as you like

AG – I haven’t really studied history (laughing) mmmmm tough question, I don’t think you can attribute it to a particular … a lot of Margaret Thatcher however awful she was probably quite a lot to do with it umm (exhale) but I don’t want to give her that much credit

1 – [laughs]

AG – umm (sniffs). … mmmm……..I suppose the eighties were quite an important period but I don’t think you can attribute it to a particular, I don’t think you can say in 1979 we were traditional and in 1991 we were modern and I don’t think you know, you could probably say in 1890 we were traditional in 1990 we were modern, but I don’t know enough about the sweep of the 1900s to be able to answer that question, I can’t imagine that you can attribute it to a particular period of 5, 10 years or whatever.

I – and there’s no event particularly that you would say well you know, before or after that event things changed or

AG – mmm no not really I don’t ever think that, I think single events can always get blown out of proportion, single events can happen and you hear on the news that night about how you know this is going to change the sweep of history blah blah blah and I think that’s bollocks I really do I think, I don’t think I thin certain events can be quite important but I don’t think you can ever look at, I mean I suppose September 11th is possibly and exception, I think again going back to America I think that that has in a way changed, but again we’re less than a year later than that and who knows in 5 years time are you going to be able to look back at how America is in 5 years time and say September 11th defined how they are in 5 years, I’m not convinced you will to be honest because I think these things get forgotten’s the wrong word but but they become less important as time goes on and I don’t I don’t I mean single events, you can look at the second world war and that was a pretty important single event but it it’s not, when you said event I was thinking what happened on a particular day and I don’t think you can ever attribute.

I – so if you would count the war as an event would you, would you say that was

AG – well again that’s interesting I mean.. I’m not convinced that that changed whether we are today traditional or modern umm in a sense I would have thought that would have made us more traditional in the aftermath of a war because people would go back to sort of again I know nothing about it because I haven’t studied the second world war but I know nothing about it but my immediate thoughts would be that people would become more traditional after an event like that umm (blows nose) more reflective, umm obviously I think it’s shaped many aspects of Britain but I don’t think in the context of are we modern or are we traditional I don’t think necessarily

1 – mmm ok

AG – I just think, I think the fact that we are living today means that we are modern I think that’s just you know what’s going to happen and in a hundred years time we’ll be modern but that won’t be what we are today I think no-one knows what will be modern in a hundred years time
I - so it's just the sort of flow of things

AG - yeah, yeah, the flow of time I think you can look at over what period of time things change quite quickly, I think the 1980s is an example of that but I don't think that you would say that if the 1980s hadn't happened we wouldn't be modern, because being modern would be something different if the 1980s hadn't happened I mean it's you know, the more I think about it the more I don't like that question (laughing)

I - ok that's fine, ok last question umm, for you as an individual what's most important the past, the present or the future?

AG - not the past.......mmmm...

I - you're very adamant that it's not the past, why's that?

AG - well...because the past doesn't really determine what I want today or where I want to go I don't think I mean obviously you draw lessons from it but I don't think.... It's just I don't think yeah what determines my life today is really determined by the past...clearly my background has quite a lot to do with where I am today so in that sense the past is very important but in terms of decisions I make today I'm not convinced that the past is that important (snif) umm I suppose it's a combination of the other two isn't it

I - mmhmm

AG - I don't know I can't

I - if you had to just err on the side of one or the other, which would it be?

AG - (loud exhale) can you repeat the, what's the exact question again?

I - which is most important to you as a person?

AG - to me as a person (snifs and blows nose) ... I suppose as of now the future (snif) in that when you're 24 years old, you think about what you might be doing in 10 years time and that I suppose that's quite a guiding influence over what decisions you make today

I - and you feel that you've got your life ahead of you and that's

AG - yeah, but in 15 years time my answer to that question will probably be different because you'll be in the future by that point and I'm not convinced that you, well maybe you do but at the age of 40 the decisions you make at the age of 40 are they determined by what you want to do in your retirement I don't know, maybe they are but the answer to that question might change

I - so you think it is quite sort of age-specific?

AG - yeah possibly

I - ok, that's fine, is there anything you'd like to ask me?

AG - no not really

I - no, ok then shall I debrief you and explain what it's all about.