

## Editorial Statement

We are pleased to welcome you to the Third Issue of the journal. This issue has two main essays and two comment pieces.

The first essay is *British Pakistani Muslim Women's Political Empowerment and Boundary Crossings: Case Studies*, by Dr Fazila Bhimji, of the University of Central Lancashire. Dr Bhimji uses informal interviews with three Pakistani British Muslim women to, in part, 'contest some of the dominant discourses surrounding British Muslim Asian women'. She is concerned to examine the ways in which these women 'experience, contest and negotiate a series of spaces in the course of their political engagements'.

These interviews address their interactions and relationships with their families, mosques, members of their own and other communities, including their political engagement. Dr Bhimji is clear in her analysis that although these three women are not representative of Pakistani British Muslim women, their experiences, hopes and dreams are of interest and value and that they widen our understanding of the complexity of the lives, values and activism of women from these communities. These certainly belie the stereotypical views of the mass media and, too often, of academics. As such, the author has provided us with valuable pointers of the form future research should take.

Dr Evan Smith, of Flinders University, Australia, has written the essay, *Conflicting Narratives of Black Youth Rebellion in Modern Britain*. The author compares interpretations of Black youth rebellion in the 1980s developed by the (primarily White) British left – the Communist Party of Great Britain and the Socialist Workers Party – and radical Black activists – associated with *Race Today*, *Race and Class*, and the Asian Youth Movement. The White left saw:

these rebellious youth as part of the vanguard against capitalism. A potentially revolutionary section of the working class that could provoke a broader movement against the police, the Government and the capitalist system.

According to Dr Smith, the second group, the Black radical activists saw:

these acts of rebellion as part of a struggle by the black communities to assert a collective identity as *black Britons* in post-colonial Britain, while combating the racism still prevalent in Britain at the time.

Having constructed the binary nature of these responses, he proffers a third approach, that of:

hybridity, developed by scholars such as Homi Bhabha, can be useful in negotiating between the interpretations, recognising that people and events can reflect a multitude of differing and conflicting ideas and/or motives.

The success of this enterprise will be judged by the value of the provision of the range of contemporary material thirty years after the events of the early 1980s and by readers' judgment of the validity of the characterisation of the nature of these responses and his assignment of particular interpretations to specific organisations and publications.

Dr Saima Latif, a Research Fellow at the University of Manchester has contributed a Comment piece, *Health Inequalities for Black and Minority Ethnic Groups in the UK: What Has Been Done?* Dr Latif summarises the evidence of Health Inequalities produced over the past ten years by a series of high profile reports and then analyses the range of Health Inequalities Policies that grew out of these reports.

She concludes that:

the most important activity in achieving any of ... [these objectives] is to ensure robust data collection of ethnic minority statistics. Unfortunately, the lack of ethnic monitoring being statutory within primary or secondary care represents a serious flaw in developing health care services to address health disparities among BME groups.

Monica White Ndounou, Assistant Professor at Tufts University, has contributed a Comment piece in the form of an extended review of Debra Walker King's *African Americans and the Culture of Pain*. This book is an 'interdisciplinary study of the distinct ways the black body serves as a rhetorical device and political strategy in literature, film and television from 1930 to 2005.'

Dr Ndounou provides a clear and perceptive summary of King's argument and her identification of the complexity of Black experience in the context of American identity and citizenship rights through discussion of the ways Blackpain affects the daily lived experiences of Black people in the United States. Dr Ndounou also discusses King's complex discussion of African American experiences by identifying gendered distinctions in representations of Black bodies in pain by African American authors. She identifies the importance of a number of concepts developed by King in inspiring and shaping continuous interdisciplinary study into cultural pain studies and the development of counter-hegemonic theories of transference of power – 'King's approach allows readers to assess the role of patriarchy in the representations of blackpain, which encourages active reading.' She concludes that '*African Americans and the Culture of Pain* is a call to action for scholars, artists, teachers and audiences.'

We welcome contributions ranging from Book Review Essays and Comment pieces to Essays, from activists, researchers, scholars, faculty in higher and further education institutions, and graduate students.

I would like to thank all of our peer reviewers for their very professional and thorough reviews and all of our contributors for their creativity and hard work and discipline in responding to the recommendations of the reviewers. I would also like to thank all those who have sent in material and to the staff at the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre who have worked so diligently to produce the journal and to our colleagues at Manchester University Press for their contribution.

Professor Louis Kushnick, Emeritus, OBE  
Director of the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust