

Editorial Statement

This issue has an interesting range of subjects being discussed in the two essays and the Commentary piece. One theme is that of the construction of identity, in these pieces, in the UK. The essay by Darrell Newton, "How Can We Help You?": Hugh Greene and the BBC Coloured Conferences" is an historical analysis of BBC archives, which considers early attempts to shape BBC responses to post-war immigration from the Commonwealth to the UK. Sadia Habib's Commentary piece, "Bermondsey Being and Belonging", addresses these issues in a contemporary setting in a multi-ethnic area of inner-city London. The other theme, Environmental Racism, is of great importance throughout the world and Perlita R. Dicochea's essay, "Discourses of Race & Racism Within Environmental Justice Studies: An Eco-racial Intervention", provides a critique of the existing literature and a model for future research.

Although Sadia Habib's piece is based on detailed interviews with two students, the perceptions of her interviewees about their lives, communities and identities, and of 'Britishness', are of great salience. She argues in her Conclusion, that the "students discuss the "racial" aspects of being British – and what this specifically means in their personal experience of Bermondsey. The students show us that any discourse on Britishness will inevitably highlight the complex relationship between family/home and identity/belonging. Lastly, the students are extremely articulate in voicing the ever evolving nature of Britishness, as well as its intricate mingling with multiculturalism".

Darrell Newton's essay examines the cultural and ideological framework which shaped the BBC's approach to the highly sensitive issues of race, immigration and xenophobia. He concludes that:

...racial formation and postcolonial difference continued to be a social construct, which subsequently became a way of comprehending and explaining these new citizens. However, West Indian settlers as the focus of these programmes often remained muted by comparison, able to offer little input on these representations and their ultimate affect upon the British public. These immigrants as settlers needed further opportunities as agents of change to tell their own stories and develop multiple narratives of the Afro-Caribbean experience; particularly through the seemingly liberal social framework of the BBC.

Despite these limitations,

Even if not fully acknowledged by these dominant producers as fundamental in their programming schema, management it to engage with these subjects, due in large part to constructs of postcolonialism, nationalism, and subjectivity. Simultaneously however, discourses of those West Indian cultures represented resonated within the gathering, and challenged constructs of Britishness and whiteness.

Perlita R. Dicochea's theoretical critique of the dominant view of Environmental Racism in the study of Environmental Justice includes a case study and concludes that there is a need for a new approach which she defines as an 'eco-racial consciousness' which

...may guide more captivating evaluations of race and racism as discursive and material forces allowing for the intentional consideration of the full spectrum of race-thinking and race-making as processes of power that are engaged by the more and less privileged within and beyond political borders and revealed in our complex, ever changing relationships with an equally dynamic and powerful natural world.

We are pleased to be bringing such a valuable range of articles to our users and hope that many of you will share them with colleagues and we encourage.

Editorial note

In this issue we feature the essay 'How can we help you?' Hugh Greene and the BBC Coloured Conferences by Darrell M. Newton. This in-depth examination of the BBC's approach to programming featuring Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) communities provides a window on the way in which BME communities were referred to, and treated, not just in the media, but by the general public. One of the most obvious expressions of this is the commonality of using the word 'coloured' to refer to Black people until the 1980s. The use of the adjective 'coloured' throughout the essay is in keeping with the use of the word as part of the name of the conferences discussed, but also in the everyday language of those involved in said conferences. The editorial team thought it important to retain the use of the word throughout the essay for these reasons.