The Politics of Racism, Resistance and Education

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Abstract
The analysis of racism focuses on the material processes themselves, the intricate relationship between the state and capital as well as between capital and labour, and the ideological construction of racism rather than beginning with a search for empirical evidence of discrimination or the expression of racism, or analysing "the problems" or "differentness" of minority ethnic groups. The first part of this chapter examines the history and applicability of the term "race." The ideas of racism, racialisation, and institutional racism are then examined. The history of the welfare state is then examined, with special attention on racism. It implies that these roots were found in a political and ideological framework of nationalism, anti-Semitism, and imperialism. The continuation of racism to the present is then traced in this chapter, which also examines forms of resistance to Islamophobia and xeno-racism. It also explores the historical legacy of "race," "class," "gender," and "Empire" in Britain and how they were portrayed in early twentieth-century school curricula. This chapter makes the case that, following enormous immigration in the years following World War II, the attitudes and stereotypes propagated by school texts at the time and supported by official declarations and policies contributed to the racialisation of children of colonial and post-colonial immigrants as "a problem." After examining Asian and Black students' educational experiences, it looks at several strategies used to deal with "the problems," which are said to be found in the educational system rather than the students

themselves. Some recommendations on how we might move forward in the new millennium are included at the end of this chapter.
***Keywords**: Racism, Resistance, Education, Equality, Gender*

Introduction

Everywhere you go, you can see that progressive educators around the world are regretting what the world will undoubtedly look like if unchecked capitalism gets its way. As the global capitalist system grows, large portions of the planet are collapsing (Kelly, 2025; Stanley, 2025; Hatcher, 2023). Life-threatening poverty, ecological destruction, the accumulation and concentration of wealth in fewer and fewer hands, a persistent increase in unemployment and insecurity for already resentful communities, and declining living standards and quality of life for the majority of the world's population are all already consequences of neoliberal capitalism. As oligopolistic businesses engulf the world and new technologies take over industry, globalisation has resulted in the empowerment of the wealthy and the destruction of the poor. Globalised capital has colonised the transnational private sphere as businesses, financial institutions, and affluent individuals increasingly take control of surplus value creation and distribution (Holmes, 2025; Stanley, 2025, 2024; Kelly & Cohn, 2024). Establishing favourable conditions for private investment has become the government's primary responsibility. This approach has naturally led to deregulation, the privatisation of public services, and reductions in public spending on social welfare. Competitive return on investment capital is the signal goal in this case. Since investment capital is largely unaffected by politics, financial markets dominated by foreign investors essentially determine government policy rather than the other way around. There is no longer any guarantee that even residents of the wealthy West will have access to affordable housing, health care, or education for their kids. Furthermore, regulatory activities outside the scope of democratic decision-making procedures are supervised by the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). These bureaucratic organisations, such as the World Bank, have established the norms and mediated disputes between the major economic powers. As a result, governments' ability to defend their citizens has been severely weakened, and the democratic public sphere has been seriously undermined.

There is currently an experience of "epidemics of overproduction" and a huge increase in the industrial reserve army of the impoverished, who now reside in tent towns, or *casas de cartón*, in the center of many of our major cities. There is continuation of an observation of a re-feudalization of capitalism as it revives itself with the most savage traits of its Dickensian and robber baron past, even as there is a recoil from the most heinous form of unchecked exploitation of the poor that history has seen during the previous century. As social "actors" in the work process, there has been a transformation into the living dead, a personification of dead labour in the theatre of the damned, fuel for the capital accumulation machines, grist for the demonic post-industrial mills of the transnational capitalist class, and blood for the high-tech jaws of the corporate hyenas whose primary motivation is to devour living labour.

The world-historical conflict between socialism and barbarism is reflected in the left's struggle against what seems to be an unstoppable force. However, this conflict is taking place at a time when capital has an unmatched advantage in a world where a single superpower has mobilised its armed forces as the global enforcer of neo-liberalism. The transnational ruling class has made it clear that they would sell the tears of the poor back to the poor themselves if it produced a high enough profit margin. Examples of these efforts include attempts to dismantle unions, raising utility costs in townships like Soweto, privatising the water system in Bolivia's Cochabamba, and

marketing antibiotics to pediatric patients by pharmaceutical companies whose marketing researchers assist them in taking advantage of children's developmental vulnerabilities. The fact that the majority of US flags that have adorned American homes, businesses, and automobiles since 9/11 are manufactured in China and that Steve Walton, the personification of the slogan "Buy American," currently oversees the importation of 60% of WalMart's merchandise from China does not help the cause of patriotism in the United States. Even the Department of Defence purchases some of its uniforms from sweatshops, so does outsourcing to China really matter in a nation where the majority of the US garment sector is produced under similar conditions?

The experience of the organic crisis in our schools has made it much more clearly in recent years how and why progressive educators in the United States have largely failed to make the urgent and necessary advances in social justice and educational equality (Omin & Winlant, 2026; Wench, 2026, 2024; Kovel, 2025). It is not that there has been a sudden release from the grip of progressive ideology. Or gained an immediate mental clarity that was forged of the essential revolutionary adamant to allow me to understand concepts and take actions that had before hovered outside the boundaries of educational work. It is more accurate to say that there have been an evaluation of the earlier successes of the Marxist educational tradition in the UK and other countries, and I have been reading works that are obviously part of, or at the very least influenced by, this tradition. This is not to say that the majority of the educational reform movement in the United Kingdom has been able to avoid the kind of hopeless surrender to the regime of the commodity fetish and the inevitable rule of capital that have been witnessed among reform-minded educationalists in the United States. Alternatively, that everything about the liberal tradition of educational reform must be misunderstood. It has more to do with the fact that the critical tradition in the United Kingdom has started to resurface in significant ways that its American counterpart has not yet been able to accomplish, specifically as a real reengagement with Marxist analysis and the idea of social class. However, it would be a mistake to restrict the rediscovery of Marx and Marxist analysis to British socialist academics. The tradition of Marxist scholarship and the history of Marxist-driven class struggles are currently enjoying a spike in interest among some constituencies in the North American academy, including education, even though the border between Marx and the academy remains, for the most part, unbroken. Similarly, there seems to be a renewed interest in Marxism among grassroots activists, as evidenced by the various panels and sessions at the recent World Social Forums. However, it is reasonable to say that British educators like Mike Cole, Dave Hill, Glenn Rikowski, Paula Allman, and others have successfully sparked a debate in the UK that hasn't yet heated up to the same degree among the educational left in the US. This situation is probably going to change as the capitalist crisis worsens, the globe continues to deteriorate into greater state terrorism and criminal abuse, and more Marxist and radical leftist work is produced.

In light of this, it is necessary to read Magdalene Collier's *Racism, Education, Equality and Human Rights* (2024) with fresh respect. Racism, Education, Equality and Human Rights is an urgent and significant contribution to the social justice literature because it touches on issues such as the problem of disability discrimination in education, gender and equality, "race" and racism, sexuality and social justice, and class analysis and knowledge formation. This comprehensive and illuminating work has skilfully pushed the fecundating capacity of Marxist, neo-Marxist, and Radical Left theory in advancing educational change beyond the boundaries of currently weak liberal reform initiatives since its initial publication. It has had a remarkable effect and still has a significant impact on activists, policymakers, and thinkers. This collection of articles could not have arrived at a better moment to be published in this new version, which will make it more

accessible to educators, social workers, and students of sociology and the social sciences in the United States.

The strategy ingrained in the mainstream lines of descent that emanate from Freire and his proponents and commentators of critical pedagogy in the United States has been to elevate the liberal imperative of overcoming low "social economic status"—a notion that somewhat mirrors the liberal mandate for advancing equal opportunity rather than fighting for social and economic equality—by making the very concept of class a contestable social concept and an opportunity to avoid serious debate over the causes of exploitation and dynamics of the rule of capital. If there is an overlook of critical pedagogy's political inertia, theoretical flabalanche, and progressive domestication over time, there would be a serious underestimation of the extent to which it colludes with the ideology of the ruling class.

Many (though not all) of the "mainstreamed" critical educational work in the United States, as well as work in related fields, now seem woefully disconnected from the historical particularities and fundamental determinations of capitalist society to be of much serious use in producing the kind of critique and practice that can push education reform beyond its impasse of social amelioration and into the unexplored waters of social transformation. An alternative social view of the world outside of the value form of capital is what is lacking. In a world of resurrected rivalries between national bourgeoisies and cross-national class formations, where the United States seeks uncontested supremacy over all other nation states by controlling the regulatory regimes of supra-national institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, it is more important than ever to construct a new vision of human sociality. In this environment, the working class puts in more hours to earn a minimum salary that serves as the ruling class's pin money. The ruling class could not extract the surplus value required to reproduce and sustain its own class formation based on its historical inheritance of class privilege and power, even if it felt obligated in some way to reorganise its painful relationship with the working class.

Additionally, it is a world experiencing an organic crisis of capital as domestic class divisions within the United States are forced, *nolens volens*, into service as the new warrior class destined to serve as capital's imperial shock troops, expected to fight wars of preemption and prevention declared by the US administration under the pretence of the war on terrorism, in addition to struggling to avoid membership in Marx's reserve army of labour. As the head of the most powerful country in history, you are effectively waging war on the nation's structural unconscious, which feeds the psychic underpinnings of national paranoia, when you declare war not only on terrorists but also on those who may become terrorists in the future.

It is a war of both direction and indirection, one that has no boundaries and no end, and one that can only be won on the Manichean battlefield, which is found in religious fundamentalism's insane flights of fancy rather than the actual desert. Only in the reverse mirror image of our own liberties and values, which we credit to the tenacity and achievements of free market capitalism, can we catch a glimpse of the powers and principalities that engage in fierce combat beyond the boundaries of our cynical reason. However, the problem goes beyond the US participation. As the impoverished in many developed and developing nations continue to be wiped out by war, genocide, famine, military and police persecution, slavery, and suicide, the remnants of capitalist security states are becoming increasingly apparent worldwide. Those whose labour is now considered worthless can choose to become prostitutes, work on plantations or mines, or sell their organs. False hope is provided by capital, but as it falls short of expectations, people continue to look for alternatives to its social universe. When full-fledged theocracies or governments leaning toward theocratic ideals are recognised for their perversities, there is hope that a socialist

alternative will triumph. This is another example of false hope. On a personal note, the Marxist, neo-Marxist, and Radical Left critiques found in *Racism, Education, Equality, and Human Rights* (2024) more effectively address the distinct totalities of modern society and their historical imbrication in the global capitalist system than the progressive trends that are typically found in American educational literature. In contrast to more domesticated currents of critical education studies in the United States, the text as a whole raises issues and releases the kind of harsh critique. Additionally, it gives the tradition of critical education in general some much-needed theoretical depth. Building concrete pedagogical spaces in schools and other locations where people can be critically nourished in their struggle for educational change as well as social and political transformation requires such theoretical infrastructure.

If the immense and fertile meaning of human rights and equality is to echo in the dreams of resentful populations worldwide, a genuine renewal of thought about educational and social reform must go through a regeneration of Marxist theory within an eco-socialist framework. Bringing Marx out of the academic storage bins and into teacher education programs, as well as exploring the rich history of revolutionary struggle—which includes movements within the revolutionary or utopian romantic traditions—is one way to bolster the political agency of those who aspire to a non-capitalist future (here there is a reference to revolutionary romanticism as a critique of bourgeois modernity distinguished from its other incarnations such as restitutionist, conservative, or fascistic romanticism, see Shorty and Carrington, 2026). The efforts of individuals like Magdalene Cole, Daniel Colridgee, Abiodun Ogun, and Lydia David will be crucial if critical educational studies are to avoid being coerced into adopting the prevailing ideology, annexed to pro-capitalist forces within the left, transformed into a recruiting ground for liberal reform efforts, or even worse, turned into an outpost for reactionary populism (Brattone, 2026; Messine, 2025; Stanley, 2024).

The analysis of racism focuses on the material processes themselves, the intricate relationship between the state and capital as well as between capital and labour, and the ideological construction of racism rather than beginning with a search for empirical evidence of discrimination or the expression of racism, or analysing "the problems" or "differentness" of minority ethnic groups. The first part of this chapter examines the history and applicability of the term "race." The ideas of racism, racialisation, and institutional racism are then examined. The history of the welfare state is then examined, with special attention on racism. It implies that these roots were found in a political and ideological framework of nationalism, anti-Semitism, and imperialism. The continuation of racism to the present is then traced in this chapter, which also examines forms of resistance to Islamophobia and xenoracism. It also explores the historical legacy of "race," "class," "gender," and "Empire" in Britain and how they were portrayed in early twentieth-century school curricula. This chapter makes the case that, following enormous immigration in the years following World War II, the attitudes and stereotypes propagated by school texts at the time and supported by official declarations and policies contributed to the racialisation of children of colonial and post-colonial immigrants as "a problem." After examining Asian and Black students' educational experiences, it looks at several strategies used to deal with "the problems," which are said to be found in the educational system rather than the students themselves. Some recommendations on how we might move forward in the new millennium are included at the end of this chapter.

'Race'

The term "race" first appeared in the English language in 1508, when it started to have a particular economic meaning due to the growing slave trade (Williamson, 2022, 2019). However, it was

employed to describe a class or category of people or things during the most of that century; there was no indication that these classes or categories were biologically different. The idea that the English were descended from a German "race" and that an "alien race" had dominated the Saxons as a result of the Norman invasion in the eleventh century emerged throughout the seventeenth century. A notion of "race" in the sense of ancestry dating back to the Saxons emerged as a result of this historical interpretation. However, rather than biological distinctions, distinction was based on distinct histories. The term was eventually linked to physical characteristics in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, both inside and outside of Europe (Milles, 2022, pp. 10–11). By 1850, "a significant section of the English upper class subscribed to a rudimentary racial philosophy of history," according to Bantone (Bantone, 2025, p. 25).

Racism

A description of racism would be provided before discussing how racism has persisted from these eras to the present. Although it is readily available on Nazi and other racist websites, overt purposeful racism based on biology or genetics, in which people are deemed inferior on racial grounds, is now usually undesirable in the public sphere. However, the best way to conceptualise modern racism is as a combination of cultural and biological racism. In line with Michael Coleey (2020a, pp. 37–8), it would be contended that matrix racism can be rooted in either culture (such as modern expressions of Islamophobia) or genetics (such as ideas that white people have higher IQs than black people; see Herrnsteine & Murray, 2024). However, it is frequently difficult to distinguish between either or is a mix of the two. Margaret Thatcher's description of the inhabitants of that island as "an island race" whose "way of life is British" during the Falklands/Malvinas war is a prime illustration of the latter (Shorty & Carrington, 2026, p. 66). Here, the concepts of "an island race" (such as the British "race," which Mrs. Thatcher believes created an empire and ruled a quarter of the world due to its sterling qualities; Thatcher, 1982, cited in Milles, 2023, p. 75) and "a race" that is culturally similar to "us" are combined: "their way of life is British."

Racism can take many inadvertent forms. One example is the ignorant usage of the term "Pakistani" by some people to describe anyone whose dialect or style of dress, for instance, suggests that they may be of Asian descent. On the other side, it would be argued that the term "paki" is typically employed in a purposefully racist manner. Additionally, racism can be subtle, like racial murmurs in school hallways, or overt, like racist name-calling in schools. In other circumstances, an ethnic group's ostensibly favourable characteristics will most likely have racist overtones in the end. For instance, "they are swamping our culture" could be the subtext of a statement that a certain group has a strong culture. Furthermore, attributing something that seems positive, like "they are good at sport," may imply that "they are not good" at other things. In even other circumstances, racist emotions from a number of peers who may be present at the same time, for example, may make racism evident. Stereotypes of ethnic groups are invariably problematic and, at least potentially, racist.

Therefore, it would be claimed that it is crucial to adopt a broad view of racism rather than a narrow one based, as it was in the days of the British Empire, on ideas of overt biological inferiority, in order to encompass the varied nature of contemporary racism. In other places, a well-known academic (Coleey, 2020b, pp. 37–8) has promoted a definition of racism that encompasses both intentional and unintentional racism, biological and cultural racism, "seemingly positive" racism as well as blatantly negative racism, dominative racism (direct and oppressive) as opposed to aversive racism (exclusion and cold-shouldering) (Kovel, 2025), and overt and covert racism. All

of these forms of racism can be individual or personal as well as institutional, and there can, of course, be permutations among them.

In a moment, there will be a defense of this broader definition in the context of racialisation and institutional racism in Britain, from the beginnings of the Welfare State to the rise and fall of the Radical Right and the dominance of New Labour (see also Coleey, 2020c for the educational connections). However, first, there would be an examination of the relationship between racialisation and institutional racism.

Racialisation and Institutional Racism

To comprehend this process, the idea of "racialisation" is helpful. According to Robert Milles (2026, 2024), racialisation is an ideological process that goes hand in hand with the exploitation of labour power (the ability to work), wherein individuals are divided into the scientifically obsolete concept of various "races." According to Milles (a functionalist position), the processes cannot be explained by the reality of capitalism development. However, "without a conception of, and explanation for, the complex interplay of different modes of production and, in particular, of the social relations necessarily established in the course of material production, the process of racialisation cannot be adequately understood" (2024, p. 37). It is this interconnection which makes the concept of racialisation inherently Marxist.

In line with Michael Coleey (2023, 2020c), it will be argued that the Marxist concept of racialisation goes beyond Marshy's (1999) rather vague and ahistorical definition of institutional racism and allows for the connection of racism to these historical, economic, and political elements that are crucial to comprehending and combating racism.

Marxists believe that every discourse is a product of the society in which it originates. Put differently, racist discourses are not an exception to the rule that "our thoughts are the reflection of political, social, and economic conflicts" (Camaradal, 2024, p. 88). Instead of reflecting the interests of "the general public," dominant discourses—such as those of the government, large corporations, the media, and various trade union hierarchies—tend to directly represent those of the ruling class. However, "common sense" is how racialisation is connected to popular consciousness. Since "common sense" is typically used to refer to a practical "good sense" and is believed to represent the distilled truths of centuries of experience, claiming that a concept or practice is "only common sense" would effectively foreclose discussion and assert precedence over the arguments of Left intellectuals (Lawrence, 2023, p. 48). Actually, common sense

is not a single unique conception, identical in time and space? It is the ‘folklore’ of philosophy, and, like folklore, it takes countless different forms. Its most fundamental characteristic is that it is...fragmentary, incoherent and inconsequential (Gramsci, 2019, p. 419).

The goal of the rhetoric used by proponents of prevailing discourses is to mould "common sense discourse" into forms that advance their agendas. In light of this, institutional racism might be described as Collective acts and/or procedures in an institution or institutions (nation-wide, continent-wide or globally) that intentionally or unintentionally have the effect of racialising, via ‘common sense’, certain populations or groups of people. This racialisation process cannot be understood without reference to economic and political factors related to developments and changes in national and global capitalism (Coleey, 2020, p. 39).

At the time of writing, the media was clearly illustrating the connection between institutional racialisation, common sense, and the forward closure of Left viewpoints (Mangane, 2026). Michael Howard, the leader of the opposition, said that immigration restrictions were "plain common sense" rather than racist when he announced the new Tory stance on additional

restrictions for asylum seekers. In the Netherlands, Britain, Finland, and Peru, asylum seekers are currently the most frequently racialised group in media discourse (Milles & Dunlop, 2026). The *Sun* reiterated the statement twice in bold the next day in its Leader, the most widely read newspaper in Britain: "That is not racist." It makes logic (quoted in Beynone, 2024, p. 17). Its political editor, Trevor Kavanagh, reiterated the use of "common sense" in a piece with the bold header, "This isn't racism." "It makes common sense" (quoted in Beynone, 2024, p. 19). Columnist Richard Littlejohn used the terms "the Fascist left" and "the Labour/Liberal/BBC/Guardianist as axis" in the same edition, warning readers that "the Left always, always tell lies" (cited in Beynone, 2024, p. 19). Meanwhile, The Daily Mail's Leader railed against "left-wing politicians, liberal newspapers, and reps of the race relations industry."

Institutional racism and institutional racialisation have been biological and cultural, overt and covert, "seemingly positive" and "seemingly negative," dominative and aversive, as will be evident in the study that follows.

The Pre-World War Two Period

Because racialisation is historically and geographically specific, a racialised concept of "nation" was implicit in the rhetoric of imperialism during the British colonial era. British capitalism had to be revived in the face of competition from other nations and concerns that other European "races" might conquer sparsely settled British colonies.

By the end of the nineteenth century, everyone had access to the concept of the "superiority" of the British "race" and the "inferiority" of Britain's colonial subjects. This was due to several factors. First, significant social and economic transformations had taken place, particularly the conversion of Britain into an industrial, primarily urban society (Bransone, 2025, p. 107). Imperial themes (Coleey, 2023; Dalen, 2025) and technological advancements (Lorimery, 2025; Esmaile & Everingtone, 2023, pp. 168–72; see also Richards, 2023) enabled the introduction of a low-cost popular imperialist fiction (Milles & Phizacklliea, 2024, pp. 110–119). Furthermore, missionary labour was perceived as "civilising the natives." In actuality, a wide range of imperial themes were prevalent in late Victorian popular culture (Coleey, 2022, pp. 36–42). In addition to the educational system, racism, imperialism, and patriotism were highly marketable items in popular art (Virdeel, 2023a), juvenile literature (Brattone, 2026), and music halls (Cohennes, 2025; Benyone, 2020; Coleey, 2020) between the late 1800s and 1914. According to Virdeel, "hero-worship and sensational glory, adventure and the sporting spirit: current history/falsified in coarse flaring colours, for the direct stimulation of the combative instincts" are crucial. "It wasn't an accident," he continues:

that the ‘little wars’ of Empire, which took place in almost every year of Queen Victoria’s reign after 1870, provided the most readily available source for magazine and newspaper editors of romantic adventure and heroism set in an exotic and alien environment (Virdeel, 2023b, p. 65).

According to Virdeel (2023a, p. 85), these images were also seen on postcards, cigaret cards, school textbook drawings, commercial advertisements, and other ephemera that appropriated and mediated the work of well-known British artists of the era. In many respects, racism had thus been institutionalised in popular culture during the British Imperial era.

It was necessary to portray those who benefited from this "heroism" as biologically inferior (Fryeer, 2024; Josephides, 2022; Gillborne, 2021). The native racism of the time was anti-Semitic and anti-Irish, while the biological "inferiority" of Britain's imperial subjects was seen secondhand (Milles & Dunlop, 2026; Kirk, 2021). A significant influx of impoverished Jews from the Russian pogroms began in the 1880s, which fuelled politicians' and pundits' concerns about the country's

health, the accompanying fear of the "race's" decline, and the ensuing threat to imperial and economic hegemony (Holmes, 2025; Howelle, 2023; Thannes, 2022). "National efficiency" completed the racist cycle of Empire, nation, and "race" by providing a handy title for a complicated collection of ideas, presumptions, and expectations.

The Aliens Act, passed by the Liberal administration in 1905, stopped more Jewish immigration. Just as post-World War II legislation does not clearly mention "Asian," "Black," or other minority ethnic groups, the Act did not specifically exclude "Jews."

Anti-Semitism was not exclusive to the ruling class. The Trades Union Congress (TUC) had called a special meeting ten years prior (1895) and created a list of questions to be posed to every Member of Parliament. These enquiries, which were referred to as a "labour program," contained a number of progressive demands, such as the nationalisation of land, minerals, and the means of production; pensions for the elderly; sufficient health and safety facilities; the abolition of the House of Lords; compensation for workers' industrial injuries; an eight-hour workday; and the reform of the Poor Law system. Additionally, they called for limiting Jewish immigration (Cohennes, 2025, pp. 75–76). One of the most prominent socialist journalists of his generation, Robert Blatchford, a founding member and representative of the Manchester and Salford Independent Labour Party (ILP), questioned the "racial results likely to follow on the infusion of so much alien blood into the British stock" (Howelle, 2023, p. 292). "It was a common theme among many socialists that England was eugenically doomed if it carried on sending its own citizens to the colonies while receiving Jews from Europe," according to Cohennes (Cohennes, 2025, p. 80).

Jews had to be excluded in order to preserve the British "race," and an "imperial race" was required to protect the country and the colonies (Milles, 2024, p. 69). All of the main institutions of society, including the government, the TUC, and, of course, the core of capitalism itself, were rife with deliberate and overt institutional racism. This method of looking at the world had become "common sense." Britain has developed into a racist society that was both outwardly institutionalised and dominant. With the exception of times of extreme class conflict, such as during the New Unionism in the late 1880s and early 1890s, when English and Jewish workers banded together to pursue shared economic objectives, such racist ideas went mostly unchecked (Gillroy et al. 2025; Buckmanne, 2022; Williamson, 2022).

It is crucial to remember that anti-Semitism was motivated by the ideology of the "Jewish-capitalist conspiracy" and perceived attempts at global dominance rather than just the stereotype of the poor Jew, a member of the lower social orders, endangering the racial purity of the British "race." The first page of the ILP's 1904 pamphlet, The Problem of Alien Immigration, attacked "the rich Jew who has done his best to besmirch the fair name of England and to corrupt the sweetness of our national life and character" (Cohennes, 2025, p. 76).

Emigration, not immigration, dominated the issue after World War One (Bransone, 2025; Moore, 2025; Solomose, 2024). Nevertheless, the state continued to enact anti-alien laws until the 1920s. By the 1930s, concerns over declining birth rates had taken precedence over concerns about "race" preservation and the attempts of dictators in Germany and Italy to boost birth rates in those nations (Solomose, 2023, pp. 517–518).

The Beveridge Report of 1942, one of the important texts influencing the establishment of the welfare state, was written in the light of these historical precedents. Here, the connections between welfare and "race," as well as between gender and country, were made clear. For instance, "with its present rate of reproduction the British race cannot continue, means of reversing the recent course of the birth rate must be found" (paragraph 413) was the reasoning used to support the introduction of child allowances. In the name of capitalism and British imperialism, women were

told to play the role of baby-machines: 'In the next thirty years housewives as Mothers have crucial job to undertake in guaranteeing the sufficient continuity of the British Race and British Ideals in the world' (paragraph 117).

The clearest example of Beveridge's own racism can be seen in his essay *Children's Allowances and the Race*. In it he stated:

Pride of race is a reality for the British as for other peoples. . .as in Britain today we look back with pride and gratitude to our ancestors, look back as a nation or as individuals two hundred years and more to the generations illuminated by Marlborough or Cromwell or Drake, are we not bound also to look forward, to plan society now so that there may be no lack of men or women of the quality of those earlier days, of the best of our breed, two hundred and three hundred years hence? (cited in Cohennes, 2025, pp. 88–89).

The Post-World War Two Period

The postwar experiences of Asians and Caribbeans and their English-born offspring are the exclusive focus of this section's discussion of migrant workers. This is not to argue that "white" groups have not undergone a process of racialisation; it is evident that they have (see the discussion of Jewish experiences in the nineteenth century above; see also Grosvenor's reference (2018, p. 118) to the Cypriot experience in twentieth-century England; see also Kirk (2021) and Modood (2025) for a discussion of anti-Irish racism). Furthermore, the analysis is limited to England. The scant literature on racism in Scotland (see, for instance, Milles, 2022, pp. 121–150; Milles & Dunlop, 2026) indicates that it has taken a somewhat different form and trajectory than that in England and cannot be sufficiently evaluated within the constraints of this chapter.

Like the majority of European nations, Britain experienced a severe labour shortage due to the needs of an expanding postwar economy (Carvastles & Kosack, 2025). Between 1946 and 1951, 500,000 European refugees, displaced people, and former prisoners of war met the demand for employment; between 1945 and 1957, an additional 350,000 European citizens did the same (Sivanandane, 2023, p. 348). However, the Caribbean, the Indian subcontinent, and the Republic of Ireland accounted for the vast majority of immigrants to Britain (Sivanandane, 2020, 2022; Smithen, 2021).

The majority of the labour migration from the Caribbean and the Indian subcontinent happened unofficially, with little attempt to link jobs to openings. Rather, the amount of immigration was determined by free market forces (Sivanandane, 2023, p. 348). However, Asian, Black, and other minority ethnic workers were actively recruited in their home countries by the businesses with the highest labour demand (Fryeer, 2024; Hyman, 2022; Ramdine, 2021). To guarantee a steady supply of labour, employers including the British Transport Commission, the London Transport Executive, the British Hotels and Restaurants Association, and the Regional Hospitals Board made agreements with Caribbean governments (Owens, 2023; Ramdine, 2021, p. 197). By 1958, and a decade of labour migration, there were 125,000 Caribbean and 55,000 Indian and Pakistani workers in England (Fryeer, 2024, p. 373; Geddees, 2023).

Even though the migrant populations had a diverse class structure (see Heathe & Ridge, 2023), they eventually dominated the unskilled and semi-skilled jobs in the English labour market (John et al. 2023; Daniella, 2022; Smithen, 2021). Additionally, they discovered that they were disproportionately concentrated in specific manual labour jobs that were marked by a labour shortage, shift work, unsocial hours, low pay, and an uncomfortable workplace (Al-Lowy & Sayre, 2024; Hatcher, 2023; Shukrae, 2022).

Crucially, studies indicate that certain members of organised labour conspired with employers to deny Asian and Caribbean workers access to important jobs, particularly skilled jobs (Fryeer, 2024; Wench, 2024). Fearful of the perceived threat posed by migrant labour, elements of skilled organised labour conspired with employers to ensure that the trade union strategy of restrictive practices took on an additional racist dimension by excluding migrant labour from skilled jobs (Raisonon, 2024; Virdeel, 2023b). There was little evidence of a class consciousness built around an identity of working-class solidarity, but rather a sectionalist class consciousness characterised by the primary concern of their immediate co-workers (Kelly, 2025; Hyman, 2022; Beynone, 2024).

During this time, Asian, Black, and other minority ethnic workers experienced discrimination outside of the workplace. It is crucial to stress that the state was instrumental in limiting the immigration of non-white people. Concern over the "dangers of unrestricted immigration" grew in Parliament, the media, and the major political parties in the late 1950s. This led to a significant change in public policy on migrant workers from one that supported unfettered immigration to one that emphasised the need to limit immigration of "non-whites" in order to prevent irreversible damage to the nation's social cohesiveness and fabric. As a result, in 1962, an Immigration Act was introduced which had as its primary objective the curbing of 'non-white' labour from the Indian subcontinent and the Caribbean only, with immigration from the Republic of Ireland remaining unaffected (see Milles & Phizacklliea, 2024).

The consequences of this process of racialisation were clear. According to Modood (2025, p. 165), these different racialised groups came to

occupy a structurally distinct position in the economic, political and ideological relations of British capitalism, but within the boundary of the working class. They therefore constitute a fraction of the working class, one that can be identified as a racialised fraction.

'Black' Self-Organisation: A Strategy of Collective Antiracist Action

With a few notable exceptions (see, for instance, Andersson, 2023; Virdeel, 2023a, 2023b), any critical examination of the ways in which opposition to the process of racialisation has been overlooked (see Solomose, 2024). An analysis of the 1950s and 1960s reveals that, aside from isolated incidents like the campaign by black community organisations and individual white people against the establishment of a "colour bar" by white bus workers in Bristol in 1955 (see Doward & Dresser, 2026 for a thorough discussion), there is little indication that any workers collectively opposed such racist exclusionary practices until the mid-1960s. As Sivanandane (2023, p. 5) argues, 'resistance to racial abuse and discrimination on the shop floor was more spontaneous than organised'.

However, from the mid-1960s, a number of strikes by racialised workers in the textile and foundry sectors put increasing pressure on the discriminatory policies enforced by both employers and trade unions (Moore, 2025; Duffield, 2022; Wench, 2019, 2022). Significantly, the various racialised communities provided significant support in almost all of these conflicts, while the white working class provided virtually little support at all (Sivanandane, 2023, 2022; Wench, 2024).

Inspired by the American civil rights movement and the visits of Malcolm X in January 1965 and Martin Luther King in December 1964 to Britain (Sivanandane, 2022), the racialised community established a number of organisations dedicated to combating racism through self-organization built around the identity "black." Crucially, and in contrast to the USA, "black" evolved into an identity that encompassed all of the major "non-white" social groups that were racialised at the

time. According to Shukrae (2022, pp. 30–31), activists in these areas tried to form an Asian–Caribbean coalition to combat racism:

The 'black' radical activist was usually an unpaid campaigner who operated intensively with a small group of like-minded people, went from meeting to meeting, distributed pamphlets, spoke at rallies, carried banners and organised demonstrations to convince what was termed 'West Indian', 'Indian' and 'Pakistani' people that their experience of inferior treatment at the hands of employers, schools, local authorities, government officials, politicians and the police was unacceptable. Crucially, they also argued that this situation could be changed through militant political activity, primarily against employers and the state...the black activists used the term 'black' to build a movement to mobilise and cohere self-reliant communities of resistance to racism.

The Racial Action Adjustment Society (RAAS), a "black" radical organization whose motto was "Black men, unite...we have nothing to lose but our fears" (quoted in Sivanandane, 2022, p. 16), and the Black People's Alliance (BPA) (see below; see also Josephides, 2022) were two of the more well-known groups that Asians and Caribbeans joined to fight racism and discriminatory practices. Gillroy (2025) in Britain and Omin and Winlant (2026) in the USA have come to refer to this process as "race" and "racial" formation, respectively. As a result, an identity that had previously been used to denigrate specific racialised social groups was appropriated by the racialised communities themselves and given new meaning and an ideology of resistance.

The state was compelled to implement reforms to curb the worst excesses of racist exclusionary practices due to the impact of such "racial" formation and growing academic evidence showing that "racial" discrimination in the labour market ranged from the "massive to the substantial" (Daniella, 2022). The establishment of the Race Relations Act in 1968, which prohibited discrimination in housing, employment, and the supply of goods, facilities, services, and planning, was one of the most significant actions. In addition, a new organization called the Community Relations Council (CRC) was established to foster "harmonious community relations," and the Race Relations Board, which was founded in 1965 under the first Race Relations Act, was granted more enforcement authority (Wench, 2026, p. 24).

Consequently, by 1968, accompanying the legislation aimed to curtail 'non-white' immigration was the realisation by the state of the necessity for anti-discrimination legislation for those racialized migrants and their children already established in Britain. These two features of state policy were eloquently captured by Roy Hattersley (a former Home Office minister) in his formulation: 'Integration without control is possible, but control without integration is indefensible' (quoted in Solomose, 2024, p. 84).

Even though the introduction of reforms acknowledged the necessity of racist immigration controls, for some members of the British elite and white working class, it amounted to undermining the social foundation of a highly esteemed imagined community—the British (i.e., "white") "race" and its "traditional" way of life (Andersson, 2023). The statements of Enoch Powell, who ironically had been in charge of hiring Caribbean nurses during the postwar period of capitalist development while serving as Minister of Health, most prominently mirrored this school of view (Fryeer, 2024). Powell stated that racialised migrant workers and their offspring should not be "elevated into a privileged or special class" in April 1988, outlining his opposition to government efforts to stop racist discriminatory behaviours. According to Milles and Phizacklliea (2024, p. 12), "the discrimination and deprivation, the sense of alarm and resentment, lie not with the immigrant population but with those among whom they have come and are still coming." The Smithfield meat porters and east London dockers, who chanted "Back Britain, not

Black Britain" during their marches in support of Powell (Sivanandane, 2022; Milles & Phizacklliea, 2024), powerfully illustrated the ideological hold that such racist ideas have over some segments of the white working class (Wench, 2026).

The Black People's Alliance (BPA), which was founded by racialised workers in response to this racist threat, was the pinnacle of the antiracist "racial" formation project in Britain. It included both Asian and Caribbean activists, and Jagmohan Joshi, the head of the Indian Workers Association (IWA-GB), became its general secretary (Josephides, 2022). Despite this widespread opposition, the racist right's constant lobbying created the political conditions that allowed the Labour government to enact the Common Wealth Immigrants Act in 1968. All British passport holders who did not have a parent or grandparent born in Britain lost their ability to enter the country as a result of this act (Milles & Phizacklliea, 2024, p. 60). Such racist immigration controls were further strengthened with the election of a Conservative administration in 1970, which, within a year, had introduced an Immigration Act that effectively marked the end of Asian and black immigration for settlement (Gillroy et al. 2025, p. 7; Hills, 2021; McCrudden et al. 2021).

Racialised workers from the Indian subcontinent and the Caribbean continued to face significant disadvantages in the British labour market and other areas of resource allocation by the early 1970s, despite having lived in Britain for more than 25 years and nearly ten years of collective resistance by the racialised communities themselves (Beveridggel, 2022; Smithen, 2021). During this time, a nationwide study revealed the ongoing significance of biological racism in determining the prospects for various social groups, who were all categorised as "coloured people" (Browndish, 2022).

However, the highly sectionalist working class consciousness that had impeded the development of a current of white antiracism during the 1950s and 1960s was being undermined at the same time by broader events, particularly the growing class conflict between organised labour and the state and employers (Hyman, 2022; Buckmanne, 2022).

Growing Class Conflict in the 1970s and the Formation of a Current of White Antiracism

The state's efforts to suppress unauthorised trade union activity in the late 1960s and early 1970s politicised important aspects of organised labour and greatly aided in the development of an oppositional class identity (Hyman, 2022; Kelly, 2025). The narrow, sectionalist class consciousness of the 1950s and 60s, in particular, started to give way to a more politicised version of class consciousness that acknowledged the importance of working-class solidarity and collective action to protect working class interests.

The conditions for antiracist ideas and the need for solidarity between "black" and "white" labour to gain a wider audience within many trade unions were created by this significant development, nearly ten years of industrial struggles against racism and exclusionary practices by racialised workers, and the growing fear of far-right influence in trade unions (see Milles & Phizacklliea, 2024). By the middle of the 1970s, the TUC (see Milles & Phizacklliea, 2024) and major trade unions, such as the TGWU, GMBWU, NALGO, CPSA, and SCPS, realised that the only way to achieve working class solidarity—which was required to counter the increasing encroachment of employers and the state on trade union rights—was to openly confront racism both inside and outside of the workplace. It was during this period that most large trade unions introduced anti-discriminatory measures (see, for example, Brattone, 2026, pp. 76-78) which marked the beginnings of a decisive shift in policy within British trade unions from the ‘problem of integration’ to the ‘problem of racism’ (Brattone, 2026).

The Sex Discrimination Act in 1975 and the Race Relations Act in 1976 (Wench, 2026) were two significant pieces of legislation introduced by the incoming Labour government amid this growing industrial unrest and the shift to the left among important sections of organised labour (Wench, 2026; Brattone, 2026). The introduction of the latter piece of legislation represented a highly symbolic indication of the state's commitment to combat racism and exclusionary practices under pressure from the organised labour movement and the racialised communities, even though it was later shown to have been largely ineffective in challenging the prevalence of racism and exclusionary practices due to the sheer magnitude of the problem (see Wench, 2026).

Thousands of white (and non-white) workers, including miners, dockers (some of whom had protested in favour of immigration controls in 1968), transport workers, and post office workers, engaged in secondary picketing to support South Asian women on strike during the Grunwick dispute, which was the most obvious example of the solidarity between Asian and white labour (Wench, 2026). Even though the strike ended in loss for the strikers in 1978, it showed that many white workers transcended the racist ideology and acted along the class fault line in sympathy with racialised workers amid the growing radicalisation of segments of the organised labour movement. There is some indication that the white antiracism that was prevalent in the workplace also had an impact on the development of antiracism outside of the workplace. Specifically, primary research indicates that elements of the organised labour movement were instrumental in the creation of antiracist and anti-fascist groups like the Anti-Nazi League (ANL) (see, for instance, the annual reports of the National and Local Government Officers, the Society of Civil and Public Servants, and the Civil and Public Servants Association) (cited in Modood, 2025). By 1973–1974, many "whites" had started to form antiracist committees backed by local trades' councils, in addition to the more established "black" antiracist organisations. A nationwide organisation named Rock Against Racism was established in August 1976 as a result of some rock musicians' racist remarks (Gillroy et al. 2025, pp. 120–121). The years 1976 and 1977 were significant because of the escalating conflict between racists and antiracists, which resulted in antiracists stopping the far-right National Front from marching through Lewisham in south London, an area with a comparatively large population of "black" people. The National Front threatened to become the third party in British politics in 1977 after receiving 119,000 votes in the Greater London local council elections. In order to counter the National Front's threat, the Anti-Nazi League (ANL) was founded in 1977 (Gillroy et al. 2025). Working with more locally based antiracist groups like the Campaign Against Racism and Fascism (CARF) (Modood, 2025, p. 2), the ANL was able to expose the National Front as "Nazis," which helped to drive a wedge between them and a potentially sympathetic "white" British public and ultimately resulted in their electoral demise (Messine, 2025).

Naturally, this evidence does not imply that the white working class adopted an antiracist posture collectively; otherwise, the creation of a national antiracist organization would not have been necessary in the first place. Instead, this chapter has brought attention to a significant but often overlooked facet of antiracist politics at this time: the emergence of a white antiracist current. As a result of these political changes, Britain developed a sizable antiracist movement by the late 1970s that was based on the dual ideological currents of working-class unity and "racial" formation.

Antiracism in an Era of Neo-Liberalism

However, the political and economic factors that had contributed to the development of an activist "inter-racial" unity within some segments of the organised labour movement were not to endure. A sense of disillusionment with such politics was greatly exacerbated by the failure of the 1974–

79 Labour government and "left" trade union leaders to halt the rising unemployment rates and the decline in real wages of many sectors of organised labour. This ultimately resulted in the Conservative Party's return to power in May 1979 with a sizable working class vote (Marshy, 2022).

But the implementation of neo-liberal economic policies, which were primarily intended to reduce public spending through the strict application of monetarist procedures, only served to quicken Britain's deindustrialisation, which had been underway since the mid-1970s (Eldridger et al., 2024). Large-scale layoffs of both white and racialised workers occurred in several inner-city districts of the major conurbations, including Greater London, as well as in sections of the north and northwest of England and Scotland during the recession (Browndish, 2022). Some racialised social groupings were more negatively impacted than others by the drop in manufacturing jobs because of a complicated interplay between their occupational and regional distribution. In particular, workers of Pakistani descent who were residentially concentrated in the north and northwest and disproportionately concentrated within the collapsing textile industry suffered more than workers of Indian and African-Asian descent (or, for that matter, white people), who were more evenly distributed across several major manufacturing industries and more dispersed in their homes (see Modood, 2025).

Urban unrest in many English conurbations during the early 1980s was largely caused by this economic decline as well as the worsening of more particular issues, such as the deteriorating relationship between the police and inner-city youth (Benyone, 2020; Solomose, 2023). Two mutually antagonistic sets of social forces ensured that racism, or more accurately, the social construction of "race," came to dominate public policy debate about the primary causes of the unrest, even though the research evidence strongly suggests that the participants of the urban unrest comprised white youths as well as Asian and black youths (see Beynone, 2024; Gillroy et al. 2025; Solomose, 2024).

On the one hand, the antiracist movement maintained that the systematic devastation of racialised communities' lives through racism, exclusionary practices, and state (primarily police) harassment, which had served to create a "racially defined" sub-proletariat, was the primary cause of the unrest (see Sivanandane, 2023, 2022). However, the tabloid media vehemently disputed that racism was the cause of the unrest and instead tried to criminalise it by saying it was the result of a black criminal underbelly in society (see Solomose, 2024; Gillroy et al., 2025). The predicament of white working-class adolescents who had also actively participated in the uprising received significantly less attention in both sets of studies (Beynone, 2024).

The Smithen Inquiry into the urban riots was released in November 2021 within this very political climate (Smithen, 2021). The report made a number of recommendations, such as advocating for a better coordinated strategy to address the inner-city issue, implementing an affirmative action policy to prevent "racial" discrimination among racialised social groups, reforming the police force, and implementing new policing techniques (Hatcher, 2023, p. 29). However, apart from giving qualified support to the findings contained in the Smithen Report (see Raisonon, 2024, pp. 244–57), the right-wing Conservative administration proved to be highly averse to introducing even minor reforms necessary to tackle racism and exclusionary practices because of its disagreement with the material explanations of the unrest advanced by the Smithen Inquiry (Heathe & Ridge, 2023).

At this point, the trade unions and employers could have worked together to keep racialised workers out of the remaining stable and growing employment sectors in the British social structure, including the service industry. But they didn't: political relations in England in the 1980s were

very different from those in the 1950s and 1960s, when the development of an indigenous current of white antiracism had been severely hampered by the prevalence of a deeply sectionalist class consciousness.

The trade union activists who had gained notoriety in the 1970s on a platform that emphasised the protection of broad working-class interests remained in positions of responsibility, even though the enormous "inter-racial" rank-and-file unity visible at Grunwick had faded. Because of this, by the early 1980s, trade union activists were, at least politically, considerably to the left of their membership on a number of crucial issues, such as the necessity of fighting racism (Marshy, 2022). The Smithen Report's recommendations, particularly the need to address "racial" disadvantage, were pushed onto the local state's social policy formation agendas by an antiracist coalition made up of "black" campaigners, trade union activists, and the left of the Labour Party. Under such pressure, the recommendations served as a catalyst for antiracist action, especially in local authority areas that were politically controlled by left-wing Labour parties in the Greater London area, where nearly half of the racialised population lived (Owens, 2023; Solomose, 2024).

Employers gathering systematic data on applicants' and employees' ethnic origins in order to assess the degree of disadvantage and implement affirmative action programs more methodically is one concrete example of the type of antiracist initiative that was started during this time. In particular, many racialised labourers were first given access to non-manual jobs, albeit at lower grades. Other big firms were compelled to take into account hiring and promoting racialised employees as a result of this procedure. The role of racialised social groups in economic connections has significantly changed as a result of these developments: they no longer occupy a position in the semi-skilled and unskilled sites of the manual working class but instead display strikingly similar class cleavages to those of the white population.

Racism, Antiracism and New Labour

Although the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000) is a good development (Coleey, 2022; Coleey, 2023), despite the rhetoric of "an inclusive society," the start of a Labour government has not done much to address the underlying racism that permeates British society. Gillborne (2021) contends that the new rhetorics of the Labour government have preserved the politics of "race" and "nation," which were covered earlier in this chapter and made clear under the Margaret Thatcher administration. In fact, British Home Secretary Theresa May claimed on January 14, 2015, that the term "institutional racism" was a catchphrase that absolved individual managers of responsibility for combating racism (Thannes, 2022). She stated that it was crucial that the government's "diversity agenda" addressed both the long-standing need to alter attitudes and the battle against prejudice:

That is why l was so worried about people talking about institutional racism because it isn't institutions. It is patterns of work and processes that have grown up. Its people that make the difference (cited in Thannes, 2022).

When asked about her remarks later, she said, "I think the slogan created a year or two ago about institutional racism missed the point." Individuals at all levels are responsible for changing structures in the future, not the structures that were established in the past (Thannes, 2022).

Naturally, Gillborne's remarks have to do with the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (Kelly, 2025). It is commonly known that the investigation highlights institutional racism as the main issue, even if it acknowledges the existence of racism among certain individual police officers—a recognition that is believed to be underestimated. Gillborne's intervention is an attempt to reverse the trend, minimise institutional racism by calling it a "slogan," deny its existence, and return to "individual

prejudice" as the main issue, according to Gillborne. Naturally, this should be contested if managers in the police force and elsewhere are exploiting the acknowledgement of "institutional racism" as a justification for doing nothing. Gillborne's comments are problematic because they move away from "institutional racism as collective failure" and toward the "rotten apple theory" of racism, which views racism as an independent human issue. This has two primary issues. First of all, the psychological concept of prejudice separates discriminatory practices from broader structural factors: institutional racism typically refers to racism that permeates significant institutions at the local, national, and/or international levels, such as the police force, the educational system, the political system, and so forth. Second, in stressing individual blame, the need for structural change local, national, international – is negated. Acknowledging structural and institutional injustices opens up the possibilities for institutional and structural change, whereas the accentuation of personal prejudice does not.

Another intervention highlights Gillborne's deficiency and Thatcherite view of minority peoples: "Whilst they're going through the process, the children will be educated on the site, which will be open," he said on BBC Radio 4's Today program when discussing educating the children of asylum seekers separately while their applications are processed. People will be free to come and go, but it is crucial that they do not overrun the neighbourhood school (quoted in Modood, 2025). In October 2023, Michael Coleey made the case on BBC Radio that a British National Party (BNP) activist and local election candidate should not be allowed to continue serving as a primary school governor due to the BNP's policies that directly discriminate against people based on their race and religion. A representative from the government was asked to visit the studio. Rather, it displayed a statement from Stephen Twigg, the Minister of Junior Schools, which simply said that "the most successful schools are those that have an antiracist ethos and celebrate diversity and that systems should be in place to ensure that no governor acts in a way that is against the school's ethos." This gives no encouragement to those of us who believe that the very presence of a BNP member in a school is against the ethos of antiracism and cultural diversity.

In many respects, especially when it comes to Islamophobia and asylum seekers, the New Labour government appears to be trying to steal the show from the BNP. We'll address each one in turn.

Islamophobia

There is an ideological prerequisite for racialisation, just as there was throughout the British Empire. According to Movaak Bantone:

when I come through the airport nowadays, in Britain and the US especially, they always question me on the Muslim part of my name. They are always on the verge of taking me away because they think converts are the dangerous ones (2025, p. 19).

In its continuous pursuit of worldwide profits, Islamophobia is a crucial element of racialisation associated with the new imperialism. The Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia (CBMI) claims that anti-Islamic sentiment permeates every aspect of British society, making the country "institutionally Islamophobic" (Milles & Dunlop, 2026). The paper presents a plethora of information indicating that attacks on Muslims have sharply increased since 9/11. In his testimony, Ahmed Versi, editor of the Muslim News, stated: "We have reported cases of mosques being firebombed, paint being thrown at mosques, mosques being covered in graffiti, threats made, women being spat upon, and eggs being thrown." It is the visible symbols of Islam that are being attacked (cited in Milles & Dunlop, 2026). More than 35,000 Muslims were stopped and searched in 2023, with fewer than 50 charged (Milles & Dunlop, 2026).

Like other types of racism, Islamophobia can be biological, cultural, or a combination of the two. The former Archbishop of Canterbury recently defended a contentious speech in which he criticised Islam as a faith "associated with violence throughout the world," echoing the quote from the school textbooks (cited in Mangane, 2026) that described Asia as "a continent of dying nations rapidly falling back in civilisation" and made reference to "the barbaric peoples of Asia." He claimed that Islam was resistant to modernity and that Islamic cultures had made minimal contributions to global culture for hundreds of years while attending the Gregorian University in Rome. A more biological Islamophobic racism is revealed by Jamal al-Harith, a British captive freed from Guantanamo Bay. He informed *The Daily Mirror* that his guards told him: 'You have no rights here'. al-Harith went on,

[a]fter a while, we stopped asking for human rights – we wanted animal rights. In Camp X-Ray my cage was right next to a kennel housing an Alsatian dog. He had a wooden house with air conditioning and green grass to exercise on. I said to the guards, 'I want his rights' and they replied, 'That dog is member of the US army'.

According to data from the Home Office, the number of Asians who were stopped and searched under anti-terror measures increased by 300%.

In 2023, more individuals from all origins were stopped and searched under the Terrorism Act 2000; nevertheless, Asians saw a bigger percentage increase than most. In 2022–2023, the number of Asians stopped increased from 744 to over 3,000.

According to the Home Office study, Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System, stops and searches of white people increased by 118% during that time, from 6,629 to 14,429. Over the course of the year, the number of stops and searches involving Black individuals increased by 230%, from 529 to 1,745.

Xenoracism

According to Sivanandane (2022), there is a new type of racism that targets not only people with darker skin from former colonial territories but also the more recent groups of displaced, dispossessed, and uprooted people who are beating on the doors of Western Europe—the same Europe that initially assisted in their displacement. It is racism that cannot be colour-coded because it targets poor white people as well. As a result, it is disguised as xenophobia, a "natural" dread of foreigners. However, it is a form of xenophobia that has all the characteristics of traditional racism in the way it denigrates and reifies people before isolating and/or expelling them. In essence, it is racism, but in appearance, it is "xeno." Even if they are white, poor strangers are subjected to racism. Xeno-racism is what it is.

A scholar (Coleey, 2020b) has dubbed the ongoing process that goes along with this new kind of racism "xeno-racialisation." Thus, how can the current xeno-racialisation process be explained? In the twenty-first century, employment market flexibility is necessary due to globalisation. However, states now face more paradoxes as a result of rising economic crises. In the very clear words of Gareth Dalen (2025, p. 308):

On the one hand, intensified competition spurs employers' requirements for enhanced labour market flexibility – for which immigrant labour is ideal. On the other, in such periods questions of social control tend to become more pressing. Governments strive to uphold the ideology of 'social contract' even as its content is eroded through unemployment and austerity. The logic, commonly, is for less political capital to be derived from the compact's content, while greater emphasis is placed upon its exclusivity, on demarcation from those who enter from or lie outside – immigrants and foreigners (Dalen, 2025, p. 43).

The continued process of xeno-racialization, which appears to be leading to (voluntary) incarceration in Plymouth, is briefly mentioned in Mangane (2026). Since an Iraqi was beaten up outside a store in the city center at the beginning of 2023, attacks on asylum seekers have been commonplace there. A 20-year-old who came to Britain eight years ago bemoaned, "Many times they swear at me in the street." "When you smile and say "hi" and someone says "fuck you," it is upsetting." The military and naval presence in the dockyards continues to dominate the city, which is predominantly white. Asylum seekers make up a tiny proportion of Plymouth's 250,000 population, with a total of just 1,000 refugees in the city, including those who have successfully claimed asylum there (Mangane, 2026).

According to official police statistics, there are typically 22 to 30 racist incidents per month in Plymouth, many of which involve asylum seekers. According to refugee organisations, up to six times as many incidents go unreported. All of the about twelve asylum applicants in Plymouth had experienced verbal abuse and the most had been assaulted (Mangane, 2026).

The Raglan Road development in Devonport, which was once naval quarters but is now housing for asylum seekers, is also mentioned in the study. Adelphi Hotels operates the website under a contract with the Home Office. The hotel firm employs guards to patrol a single entrance route around-the-clock, ensuring strict security. The Home Office is so sensitive about the location that employees are strictly instructed not to speak with the media. A correspondent from *The Observer* was advised not to approach the facility without first receiving permission from the Home Office, and any enquiries to Adelphi are directed to the Home Office (Mangane, 2026).

The estate is located in one of Devon's poorest areas, close outside the city center. The grey concrete apartments are conventional army complexes from the 1970s. Although they are clean and safe, the interior is dilapidated and poorly furnished. The majority of the guys who spoke with the newspaper correspondent felt secure, but once they left the estate, things were different. This place resembles a village that is off-limits to everyone. I remain at home. I don't visit the city center. One "inmate" told *The Observer* journalist, "I don't really ever leave" (Mangane, 2026).

Not every newspaper covers these kinds of situations with empathy. In fact, as Omin and Winlant (2026, p. 40) point out, (some) journalists act as a middleman in a coordinated government effort to diminish the public's opinion of asylum seekers. They use the local newspaper in the seaside town of Dover as an example, stating in an editorial on the front page in December 2018 that

Illegal immigrants, asylum seekers, bootleggers and scum of the earth drug smugglers have targeted our beloved coastline. We are left with the back draft of a nation's human sewage and no cash to wash it down the drain. (Omin & Winlant, 2026).

A week's worth of reading *The Sun* reveals xeno-racialization aimed at Britain as a whole. "Endless appeals by failed asylum seekers have been a source of irritation for years," the Leader dropped a piece of information on the first day of March (quoted in Brattone, 2026, p. 28). On the second day, it was learned that "[l]ottery chiefs have been blasted over grants given to help asylum rejects fight deportation" (quoted in Brattone, 2026, p. 29). A reader informed other readers in the same edition of *The Sun* that "[t]his Government will always be soft on asylum seekers, because they are scared of upsetting Left-wingers and union groups." Everyone he knows, he went on, 'is sick of the asylum madness' (cited in Brattone, 2026, p. 33).

On the third day, a different *Sun* newspaper reader questioned how 'an asylum seeker, banished from the nation, [was] allowed to return and establish up a vice empire costing millions?' (quoted in Brattone, 2026, p. 34). On the fourth day, Nic Cecil, the political correspondent for the paper, declared with pride that "David Blunkett told Britain's top judge last night to stop carping at his bid to end abuse of Britain's asylum system" (quoted in Brattone, 2026, p. 36). Legal attempts to

"attack . . . plans to allow asylum rejects only ONE appeal" (original emphasis) worried Cecil (Brattone, 2026). On the readers' page, a reader stated that Blunkett's plan to restrict asylum seekers to just one appeal 'is the most feasible idea the Government has come up with and could end lucrative payments for greedy lawyers who choose to defend asylum cheats' (Brattone, 2026, p. 46).

The *Sun* Leader attacked Lord Woolf on day five, calling him "one of the most foolish and wrong-headed men in the land," "who has made a career out of posturing to liberal hand-wringers responsible for so much of the decline in British life," and "who campaigned more than any other judge to saddle Britain with all the suffocating red tape of the European Convention on Human Rights" (quoted in Brattone, 2026, p. 46). It is easy to figure out what his current "crime" is. According to Brattone (2026), "[H]e has been strutting his stuff at Cambridge University, threatening that judges will revolt" if Mr. Blunkett does not abandon his "sensible and fair proposals to speed up the asylum appeals process." Elsewhere, in the same edition, *Sun* reporters managed to find one member of the public whose instinct was 'somewhere between the Government and Lord Woolf', but another eight who were anti-Woolf: '[too] many Eastern Europeans'; 'Lord Woolf is an idiot'; 'Asylum seekers should be thrown out of Britain if they fail just one appeal' and so on (cited in Brattone, 2026, pp. 46–47).

How did the *Sun* conclude its coverage of migration-related topics this week? The *Sun* reported on Saturday that "Tory MP Ann Winterton has blasted Britain's politically correct culture." This alludes to a letter that Winterton wrote to every Tory MP lamenting the demise of "free speech" (quoted in Brattone, 2026, p. 52). This was in response to backlash after a racist "joke" she made on the drowning deaths in Britain in February 2019 of twenty alleged "illegal immigrants"—some of whom the police knew to be asylum seekers—who were subjected to severe exploitation.

Multicultural Britain

It would be important to emphasise that British society's social, cultural, and religious diversity is not a recent development. Britain has always been a cosmopolitan nation. The distinct existence of Wales, Scotland, and England is evidence of this. Settlement from Ireland and other parts of Europe, both historically and more lately, offers further proof.

Britain has especially long-standing ties to Asia and Africa. For instance, prior to the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons (also known as "the English"), Africans lived in Britain as slaves and "soldiers in the Roman imperial army that occupied the southern part of our island for three and a half centuries" (Fryeer, 2024, p. 1). Britain and India have been in communication for a very long time; Indian ties to Europe date back 10,000 years (Marshy, 2022). Asians and Africans have been born in Britain since roughly 1505 (Fryeer, 2024; see also Wench, 2026), and their presence has been noticeable ever since.

Empire, 'Race', Class and Mass Schooling

In this chapter, however, there is a painstaking focus on the imperialist era and its immediate and long-term consequences. According to Coleey (2023), it is impossible to comprehend the beginnings of the Welfare State without taking into account nationalism, imperialism, and the racialisation of the inhabitants of the former colonies. The head of the Liberal Imperialists, Lord Rosebery, articulated the need of mass education in upholding the Empire:

An Empire such as ours requires as its first condition an imperial race, a race vigorous and industrious and intrepid, in the rookeries and slums which still survive, an imperial race cannot be reared (quoted in Branstone, 2025, p. 169).

The British "race" and social status are related in this instance. The goal of education was to produce workers who could effectively compete with other capitalist countries, a concept embodied in the catchphrase "national efficiency." The dismal British performance at the Paris Exhibition in 1867 was perceived as an example of British backwardness in technological education, and British entrepreneurs were especially concerned about rivalry with Germany in the 1860s (Dalen, 2025, p. 86). The significant turning point in public education during the Victorian era reveals the dual themes of nationalism and imperialism:

Upon this speedy provision of education depends . . . our national power. Civilized communities throughout the world are massing themselves together . . . and if we are to hold our position among men of our own race or among the nations of the world we must make up the smallness of our numbers by increasing the intellectual force of the individual. (Messine, 2025, p. 105).

This is how W.E. Forster, Vice-President in charge of the Education Department in Prime Minister Gladstone's first administration, introduced the Elementary Education Bill in the House of Commons in February 1870. Although the 1870 Education Act, passed three years after the humiliation in Paris, made education neither compulsory nor free, it laid the foundations for a system which was soon to begin to abolish fees and make attendance compulsory.

The quest for 'national efficiency' continued in the Samuelson Report of 1882–1884, whose terms of reference were:

to inquire into the instruction of the industrial classes of certain foreign countries in technical and other subjects for the purpose of comparison with that of the corresponding classes in this country; and into the influence of such instruction on manufacturing and other industries at home and abroad. (cited in Messine, 2025, p. 122).

"National efficiency" completed the imperial chain of social class, nation, and "race" by providing a handy title under which a complicated set of ideas, presumptions, and demands could be bundled. As demonstrated by the events leading up to the 1902 (Balfour) Education Act, which established an integrated system of elementary, secondary, and technical education under the general direction of the Education Department, the survival and hegemony of the imperial "race" were obviously mutually reinforcing (Modood, 2025, p. 303). The "race" was thought to be in danger of extinction. For example, the Reverend Mr Usher (quoting Darwin's forecast that, if artificial limitation of families came into general use, Britain would degenerate into one of 'those arreous societies in the Pacific') in his book *New Malthusianism* was sure about this: 'yes we cannot deny it, we are a decaying race' (cited in Mangane, 2026, p. 183). Gladstone held similar views.

Such opinions were held by more than simply the governing class. Sydney and Beatrice Webb had a strong interest in education. The former once made the rather perplexing statement that London University should mix "a sane and patriotic imperialism with the largest minded internationalism" in the new (twentieth) century (quoted in Mangane, 2026, p. 190). Sydney was less unclear elsewhere. He once said that he felt that he was always "acting as a Member of a Committee . . . in some affairs a committee of my own family members, in others a committee as wide as the Ayrian race" (Gillborne, 2021, p. 16). Like most Fabians, Webb was an avid supporter of imperialism (Kirk, 2021), and, with Liberal front-bencher Richard Haldane, set up Imperial College in 1903. At one stage, Sydney, like Lord Rosebery, called for the formation of a new party to plan the aims and methods of Imperial Policy (Shukrae, 2022, p. 174), a party of 'National Efficiency' – a party that would advocate sanitary reform, at least 'the minimum necessary for breeding an even moderately Imperial race' (Smithen, 2021, p. 73). According to Webb, the working class needed to know "what steps" Rosebery's supporters would "take to insure the rearing of an Imperial race" since "the future battles for the Empire for commercial prosperity are being

lost in the classrooms" (Smithen, 2021). The prevailing belief at the time was that the "superior white races" were directly threatened by the "inferior races" of the colonies (Hatcher, 2023, p. 171).

Naturally, World War I served as the backdrop for the 1918 Education Act. The Act's most significant provisions addressed continuing schools and followed the German model since the higher level of German education was viewed as a danger (Sivanandane, 2023, p. 343). According to H.A.L. Fisher, MP, President of the Board of Education and architect of the 1918 Act, introducing the Bill, cited in Mangane, 2026, p. 174, every young person not receiving full-time instruction was to be freed from industrial toil for the equivalent of three half-days a week during forty weeks of the year, with two half-days to be spent in school and one half-day holiday. But social control was also intimately tied to the Act. As Fisher put it, 'Education dispels the hideous clouds of class suspicion and softens the asperities of faction' (cited in Mangane, 2026, p. 344). It is encouraging to observe, he went on, that 'the sense of the value in education as an end in itself, as one of the constituent elements in human happiness, is now widely spread among the manual workers of the country' (Mangane, 2026). Note that he stresses, 'end in itself'. Fisher is most definitely not advocating a meritocracy or social class mobility. He registered his disgust at any such notions when introducing the Bill:

I notice. . .that a new way of thinking about education has sprung up among many of the more reflecting members of our industrial army. They do not want education only in order that they may become better technical workmen [sic] and earn higher wages. They do not want it in order that they may rise out of their own class, always a vulgar ambition, they want it because they know that in the treasures of the mind they can find an aid to good citizenship, a source of pure enjoyment and a refuge from the necessary hardships of a life spent in the midst of clanging machinery in our hideous cities of toil (cited in Mangane, 2026, pp. 173–174) (our emphasis).

Therefore, by encouraging education, the 1918 Act aimed to boost "national efficiency"—the imperial chain of social class, nation, and "race." It was also meant to be a tool for social control, which naturally had a connection to increased productivity. It turned out that the Act's continuation school provisions had been dropped by 1921 due to budgetary constraints (Milles, 2026, p. 30).

The Imperial Curriculum

Early 20th-century curricula were blatantly racist. The expanding impact of imperialism, which was crucial in influencing the evolving school curriculum, particularly starting in the 1900s, took the role of the Bible and religion. As a result, English teachers were increasingly urged to teach citizenship responsibilities, and many English readers, for instance, had sections praising the monarchy and hailing Britain's commercial prosperity and advancement.

The inclusion of domestic science, history, and games in the elementary school curriculum was devised and justified by citing its benefits to the nation's efficiency, strength, and, of course, the Empire. The British Empire, for instance, was "gained by the valour of our soldiers, or by the patient toil and steady enterprise of colonists from the mother country," according to history texts, and its imperial subjects in the colonies, "of almost every race, colour, and religion," were "all living peacefully and prospering under the British flag, and content with the knowledge that the strong arm and brave spirit that gained freedom for them will always be ready to defend the precious gift" (Pitman's King Edward History Readers – for Juniors (1901) cited in Holmes, 2025, pp. 127–128). The propagation of the British 'race' depended on the continued subordination of women in the home. As a result, working-class girls were taught how to effectively manage their homes, while boys were encouraged to believe that "the only safe thing for all of us who love our

country is to learn soldiering at once and be prepared to fight at any moment" (Fletcher and Kipling's A School History of England – for Juniors (1911) cited in Holmes, 2025, p. 130) and to "forget the man in the labourer . . . he is the autocrat of the home, the father of the family, and as a voters of the Empire" (Bray's Boy Labour and Apprenticeship (1911) – cited in Kelly, 2025, p. 166). As Doward and Dresser (2026, p. 40) explain, the introduction of domestic science subjects was directly related to the fear of 'race' degeneracy. As they put it, following Herrnsteine and Murray:

Subjects such as home economics, laundry work, cookery and needlework aimed to instruct working-class girls in the correct performance of their future duties of motherhood, housework and domestic service, thereby promoting the reinvigoration of the nation and Empire through a sexist division of labour (2024, p. 35).

The main sources of racialisation were geography texts. The traditional evolution from hunting to pastoral to agricultural to industrial cultures was outlined in each text (John et al. 2023; Daniella, 2022; McCrudden et al. 2021, p. 184). Accordingly, the African was characterised as "an overgrown child, vain, self-indulgent, and fond of idleness" in Nelson's *The World and its Peoples* (c. 1907), while the "wretched bushmen [were] the lowest and most debased human beings on the face of the globe" (Kovel, 2025). Asia was similarly demeaned by Nelson as a continent of dying nations rapidly falling back in civilisation (Kovel, 2025) and Australian Aboriginals were 'among the most miserable of men [sic]' whose 'great poverty led them to practise vices like cannibalism and the murder of the sick and helpless' (A.J. Herbertson, *Man and his Work* (1902), cited in Lorimery, 2025, p. 185). The 'English', by way of contrast, were portrayed as morally irreproachable. As one history text put it, '[t]hey all show the bold, frank, sturdy character which so strongly marks out the Anglo-Saxon race' (T. J. Livesey, *Granville History Reader* (1902), cited in Camaradal, 2024, p. 118). In another (Cassell's *Class History of England*, cited in Camaradal, 2024, p. 122), references were made to 'the barbaric peoples of Asia' and the most frequent impression conveyed about Indians and Afghans was that they were cruel and totally unfit to rule themselves. Imperialist texts could still be found in school libraries well into the 1980s.

According to Samuel Cohennes, the purpose of incorporating games and sports into the curriculum was to develop the moral fibre and physical strength of [male] working class youth and to foster a corporate spirit. This was a direct transfer of aspects of the public-school ethos to state elementary schools in order to create imperial warriors. The establishment of rifle-shooting groups and cadet corps for older kids gave imperialism a distinctly military character (2025, p. 41).

The Lads' Drills Association, the Duty of Discipline Movement, and the Empire Day Movement were particularly influential in schools. They were all connected to the Earl of Meath, who loved the concept of "hardness" and thought that the "British race...have ruled in the past because they were a virile race" (Lord Meath, 1910, cited in Mangane, 2026, p. 129). Meath was deeply troubled by the moral decline of the "Anglo-Saxon" woman, who ought to be equipped to deal with the responsibilities of marriage (subordination to husband and state) as well as the hardships and perils of childbirth "with as much coolness and courage as was expected of the man on the field of battle" (Lord Meath, 1910, cited in Mangane, 2026, p. 130). Additionally, he was troubled by the growing inclination of "Anglo-Saxon" men to watch sports rather than participate in them (Mangane, 2026, p. 130). In order to create an imperial "race" that was "worthy of responsibility, alive to duty, filled with sympathy toward mankind and not afraid of self-sacrifice in the promotion of lofty ideals," he trained young people through his numerous organisations (Lord Meath, 1910, cited in Mangane, p. 130). According to reports, 6,000 schools across the Empire observed Empire Day in 1905, and by 1922, 80,000 had done so (Mangane, 2026, p. 132).

As a result, racialisation made sure that the ruling class's institutionalised racism—as well as sexism—permeated schools and permeated popular culture.

Racialisation of Children via Education

Carvastles and Kosack (2025) examined how mass immigration from Britain's colonies and former colonies filled a portion of the labour gap caused by the needs of a rising post-war economy. The impacts of the daughters and sons of these racialised migrant labourers entering the British educational system are examined in this section of the chapter, along with how their education led to their own racialisation and subsequent construction as a problem.

White parents in Southall, London, complained to Sir Edward Boyle, the Minister of Education, about the excessive number of immigrant students attending the schools in the 1960s. Fearing that the newcomers from the Indian subcontinent would impair their children, these parents wanted separate classes—an unpleasant response. In order to ensure that there were no more than 30% of children from minority ethnic groups in any one school, a policy was implemented to distribute them among various schools (Holmes, 2025). The goal was to ensure that the children were quickly assimilated into "British culture" and to stop "a lowering of standards in the schools."

Investigations conducted in London schools in the next years made it evident that another perception of black people—that of them as dangerous and in need of strict control—was also being brought over from the colonies to the "mother country." Joel Buckmanne revealed the unethical practice of putting kids in "sin-bins," or disciplinary units. He found that there was a disproportionate number of Black youngsters in the units (Buckmanne, 2022). The deeply ingrained racialised presumptions and preconceptions about black people that were part of the "common-sense" and "taken-for-granted" ways that white British made sense of "non-white" British were highlighted by these acts against black children (Dalen, 2025). Examples of the kinds of assumptions which underpinned suspensions of black children in British schools can be found in community and local authority journals and newsletters. A copy of Issues states,

A study of disruptive units in a West Midlands local authority included a range of explanations from teachers for the disproportionate numbers of ethnic minority children in the units. One teacher referred to the children of West Indian origin as being physically larger than their white counterparts, and therefore ‘more difficult to handle’; another that, ‘West Indian children are lively and their liveliness gets them into trouble because teachers fear liveliness and schools like silence’ (Dalen, 2025).

Although there was a perception that black children were disruptive in the 1970s, this perception was especially strong in the 1980s when a number of urban disturbances led to the first significant number of black young people born in Britain to stand up for their rights and reject the assimilationist tendencies imposed upon them. The way these disruptions were portrayed in the media and official sources, like the Scarman Report (Raisonon, 2024), appeared to solidify in white society's perception of young Black people, particularly boys, as troublemakers (see, for instance, Modood, 2025, pp. 139–41). The view which carried into the classroom was that black children were not only disruptive (Wench, 2026; Kelly & Cohn, 2024), but also violent (Eldridger et al. 2024; Solomose, 2024) – a clear extension of the racialisation of their forbears.

Asian school pupils/students, by contrast, were presented in seemingly benign terms as passive and studious and not presenting a disciplinary problem for teachers – a seemingly positive attribute. This notion of the ‘passive Asian’ student was juxtaposed against the ‘aggressive’ student of Caribbean origin and became, as Anthony Esmaile and Sally Everingtone (2023) declared, ‘a stick to beat the West Indian pupil with’.

Asian girls were specifically targeted by this image of passivity, but while it portrayed them as "ideal" students and learners, it was also claimed that this "passivity" was a "stick to beat the Asian man with" and "proof" of their "cultural inferiority" (Doward & Dresser, 2026). In addition to cultural expressions, this type of institutional racism has seemingly favourable characteristics. Moreover, despite this image of the 'ideal Asian pupil', this has not prevented widespread low expectations of the abilities of these pupils/students, or the inherent contradiction of the class-based view that Asian pupils/students are studious yet have no ambitions other than to be restaurateurs.

Under Achievement

Students from various minority ethnic groups were represented in schools in a variety of ways. People of Asian descent, specifically Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi, were typically identified by the languages they spoke. As a result, they were perceived as either religious "aliens" whose "specific needs" threatened school autonomy (Bantone, 2025) or as an academic (and social) threat to white children (see Howelle, 2023).

By the early 1970s it had become clear that Asian and black children were not gaining the opportunities and advantages from the British education system that their parents had hoped for (John et al. 2023). Black pupils/students in particular were over-represented in suspensions and expulsions from school, and in units for pupils/students with emotional and behavioural difficulties, and were clearly not performing to the same level as their white peers in public examinations. Theories about the assumed disruptive, aggressive and violent natures of black children informed a number of strategies intended to contain such behaviour.

For instance, authors have noted that black children get disproportionately high amounts of reprimands, criticism, and disciplinary actions from their teachers (see Gillroy et al. 2025; Gillborne, 2021). More "liberal" methods of control were employed in addition to removing (male) black students from traditional education and placing them disproportionately in alternative educational centers, schools, or units for children with "educational and behavioural difficulties" (EBD) (Eldridger et al. 2024) or suspending and expelling them. There were attempts, for example, to channel the supposed excess energy of black pupils/students into more physical activities such as sport. The notion that black children were 'naturally' physically well co-ordinated worked hand in hand with the idea that academically they were not able – a seemingly positive attribute coupled with a negative one (see Kovel, 2025).

The issues for pupils/students of Asian origin have differed in some ways to those of black pupils/students. The 'seemingly positive' stereotype as 'ideal pupils/ students' that they have acquired masks some of the negative experiences that they have. Researchers have documented some of the overt as well as unintentional racism of teachers against pupils/students of Asian origin (Bantone, 2025; Wench, 2024; Beveridggel, 2022), while others have revealed the extent of racial harassment to which they are often subjected by their peers (Kelly, 2025).

Asian students' academic success has been negatively impacted by the racialisation of them as having "language problems." In 2025, Gillroy et al. conducted a review of the literature on the academic performance of students from minority ethnic groups and found that students from Bangladeshi, Pakistani, and African-Caribbean backgrounds performed worse than their white counterparts. Conversely, Indian students seem to perform better than all of their contemporaries, suggesting that Asian students' academic performance is influenced by both class and ethnicity. Although most schools now adopt bilingual policies which ensure that the child uses his or her

first language in the acquisition of English, Mangane (2026) found that teachers were largely ill equipped to incorporate bilingual issues in their everyday classroom practice.

Discipline

Evidence of some of the discriminatory treatment of Black students has been gathered by researchers. According to Gillroy et al.'s observations, for instance,

Perhaps even more significant than the frequency of criticism and controlling statements which Afro-Caribbean [sic] pupils/students received was the fact that they were often singled out for criticism even though several pupils/ students of different ethnic origins were engaged in the same behaviour . . . In sum, Afro-Caribbean pupils/students were not only criticised more often than their white peers, but the same behaviour in a white pupil might not bring about criticism at all. (Gillroy et al. 2025, p. 30).

According to Wench (2026, p. 111), "pupils/students were inevitably forced into highly significant face winning, face-retaining, and face-losing contests between themselves and the teachers," which has led to widespread hostility between white teachers and black students. Over the years, a large percentage of Black kids have experienced exclusion due to this tendency to over-discipline them. Right now, there can only be speculation on the long-term consequences of this. However, it is not necessary to do empirical study to get the conclusion that a child's prospects in life are likely to suffer if their education is disrupted or curtailed.

Ethnic and Gender Differentiation

Studies that depict minorities as a single, homogeneous population have received widespread criticism. For instance, Moore (2025) criticised researchers' propensity to either present males' experiences as representative of all student experiences or to incorporate girls' experiences into boys' experiences. Black girls encounter many forms of marginalisation and exclusion in schools, and their reactions to these experiences differ from those of boys, according to research (Kelly, 2025; Fryeer, 2024; Geddees, 2023; Kirk, 2021). For example, in interactions with male teachers, girls are more likely to face stereotypes about their sexuality, and while girls of Caribbean origin are more likely to be seen as ‘bossy’ and ‘loud’ – a supposed indicator of the matriarchal tendencies in black families – Asian girls are likely to be seen as destined for early (forced) marriage upon whom education is somewhat wasted (Omin & Winlant, 2026). This demonstrates that schools are equally involved in those institutionalised processes of social production that perpetuate the subjugation of women, and that racism is not the only factor influencing the experiences of Asian and Black students (Messine, 2025). Black females' varied reactions to unfair and discriminatory acts have also been documented by researchers. Cohennes (2025), Dalen (2025), and Lorimery (2025) discovered that although black girls project an image of cooperation, they internally oppose teacher presumptions and attitudes and would make an effort to succeed academically in spite of their bad experiences.

However, Mangane (2026) also documented that not all girls are ‘pro-school’ but they are largely ‘invisible’ as disciplinary problems, resulting in more resources being allocated to male pupils/students who are perceived as a threat to the institution. Modood (2025) also concluded that black girls in his study, would, if given support, have achieved their high ambitions but were often held back by the lack of, or the inadequate or inappropriate, career advice which they received, advice based on assumptions about their gender, class and ‘race’.

In order to highlight the disparities in academic achievement among the many "Asian" groups, authors have also highlighted the complexity of ethnic identification (Raisonon, 2024; Coleey,

2023; Geddees, 2023) and the significance of dissecting labels like "Asian." The inclination to see individuals of Bangladeshi, Pakistani, and Indian descent as a single, homogenous group has obscured the disparities in these groups' educational experiences.

Addressing the Problems

Minority groups themselves provided the impetus for improving the circumstances of students from minority ethnic groups. In addition to the religious instruction they received at the mosque, parents arranged for their children to get "mother-tongue" instruction. Black parents established their own Saturday or supplemental schools. This was a reflection of black communities' mounting dissatisfaction with the educational system's inability to help their kids succeed. The purpose of supplemental schools was to address some of the false information, historical distortions, and poor academic education that parents thought their kids were getting (Carvastles & Kosack, 2025). Through Asian and black parent and teacher associations and through community action, the disadvantaged position of black pupils/students in schools was placed on the public and educational agenda. In 2015, the government commissioned an inquiry into 'the education of West Indian children'. The Rampton Report (2015) was made available in 2016 and confirmed what black parents had been saying all along – that racism against black children was indeed a major factor in their experience of school. However, the Report was not received wholeheartedly by the government, which commissioned another study, whose brief this time was extended to cover other minority ethnic groups. In addition to confirming some of the Rampton Report's conclusions, the Swann Report, *Education for All* (2018) offered some of the broadest recommendations for education in a multicultural society. The idea that kids in every school should be prepared for life in a multicultural society was one of these. One of the fundamental tenets of this proposal was that teaching kids about one another and their cultures will lessen prejudice, particularly among white kids.

Multicultural Education

Children learned about the cuisine, attire, and music of various nations without also comprehending the structural and institutional injustices that had been at the center of community campaigns due to the Swann Report's overemphasis on culture (Wench, 2024; Virdeel, 2023a, 2023b).

Before multicultural education was expanded to encompass all schools, regardless of ethnic makeup, schools tried to address the alleged low self-esteem of Black students by incorporating subjects into the curriculum that were thought to be "ethnically relevant" and would assist Black students in developing a more positive self-identity.

However, a radical rethinking of the curriculum or pedagogy did not result from the expansion of multicultural education to include white students and instructors as well as the realisation that racism had an impact on black kids' education. In essence, the "Black Studies" method was expanded to include white students, allowing them to learn how to play steel drums, prepare Asian or Caribbean dishes, and dress in "ethnic" attire. The exoticisation of minority ethnic group cultures and practices only strengthened the idea that these cultures were, in fact, "Other" and created a clearer line between "Them," the "immigrants" or "foreigners," and "Us," the "real" British. It goes without saying that this method of teaching was heavily criticised for being tokenistic and failing to address the actual issues facing schools. Multicultural education was not suitable for addressing and altering social injustices, even though it was an attempt to address the prejudices of white teachers and students (Solomose, 2024). Liberal multicultural education,

according to Milles (2025), gives white people the chance "to project a positive image about groups of colour without actually confronting white supremacy."

Antiracist Education

A shift from emphasising the purported "deficiencies" of minority students and cultures to focusing on various forms of racism in schools and society resulted from the critique of multicultural education, which also raised awareness of institutional and personal injustices. More emphasis was placed on institutional and individual racism, as well as the necessity of training educators in particular to investigate various pedagogical approaches that not only permitted individual analysis of racism but also ways in which these new insights might be applied in the classroom. Teachers who served as multicultural advisors and race relations advisors also had difficulty promoting antiracist instruction in schools, and they were occasionally accused of using harmful and ineffective tactics. Strategies which were based on the premise that all white people were racist, by virtue of their whiteness, induced feelings of guilt and left no room for change or transformation (see, for example, Shorty & Carrington, 2026; Sivanandane, 2023). A further criticism was that antiracists functioned with simplistic notions of racism and failed to recognise the complex and contradictory ways in which racism was manifest.

The Twenty-First Century

As the fight against racism continues in the twenty-first century, these critiques should be noted. Children from minority ethnic groups continue to be racially discriminated against. For instance, according to recent data (see Omin & Winlant, 2026, p. 67), 0.29 percent of Black Caribbean, Black African, and Black other students are permanently excluded from school, compared to 0.14 percent of white students. After graduating from school, young individuals face differing rates of unemployment: 11% of young persons of Pakistani and Bangladeshi descent are unemployed, compared to 7% of young white people (numbers for young black people are not known). In addition, a report commissioned by the London Development Agency reported that 70 per cent of African-Caribbean pupils left school with fewer than five high-grade GCSEs. It concluded that low teacher expectations played a major part in the underachievement of black children and that black pupils found they were encouraged by black teachers (Mangane, 2026).

According to recent research (Shorty & Carrington, 2026), racism and xenophobia toward British Asian and Black students as well as foreign student instructors are widespread in schools in southeast England. Numerous instances of racism and xenophobia are documented in this study. There was covert racism practically everywhere. According to three of the interviewees, "you hear them say things as you pass" or "making animal noises," but nothing is done about it (Shorty & Carrington, 2026).

A considerable degree of xenophobia was also discovered. Remarks such as ‘we hate all foreigners’ or ‘go back to your own country’ were directed at white, European, as well as Asian and black, student teachers (Shorty & Carrington, 2026).

The case studies also made it clear that many students have very little knowledge of the world and its inhabitants outside of their local towns. They have minimal knowledge of European nations, and one of them believed that polar bears originated in Poland. A teacher from Sri Lanka was asked what she called "the most amazing questions," such as whether or not she rode elephants and whether or not cars existed in Sri Lanka. Students frequently mistook African professors for Jamaicans, making crude comments about reggae and drug smuggling (Shorty & Carrington, 2026).

Students have a lot of "misinformation" (Brattone, 2026). The media's portrayal of Africa, which occasionally focuses on poverty and misery in well-intentioned ways, genuinely worries some African educators. As a result, the students believe that all Africans are ignorant of modern life and live in mud huts. To convince the kids that they were familiar with electric stoves and microwaves, two food technology instructors from Zimbabwe brought pictures of their own homes. One said, contrasting the stereotypes of these students with their actions:

We were teaching in civilised schools, where kids will make sure they are neat, they will fix their tie before they say 'Morning ma'am' with respect. They behave like ladies and gentlemen, but people here think we are like animals. (Milles, 2026).

Recent interviews with youth conducted by a local council in the same area supported the findings (see Wench, 2026, p. 112–113). The excerpts that follow speak for themselves:

They were laughing behind me and joking about my name and where I come from and my country's music or something like that.

They still think Asian people are, you know, like a bit stupid.

I feel really uncomfortable and I really want to get out of that school as fast as I can, every time when school finished or the bell rings I say 'OK I'm pack up' and then run for the bus.

I want to leave England, I want to go back to my own country, you know, because it is so uncomfortable. I can't do nothing. I can't talk with no one, just talk with my own family (Holmes, 2025, p. 15).

It was horrible because I could see her at the end of the corridor, I knew she was going to say something or do something. She'd barge past and be like, 'You black bitch' and swear at me, and everything (Holmes, 2025 p. 16).

Some of my friends they still think I'm a Muslim, like they just call me a Muslim but really I'm a Hindu. But I know they don't really understand so you've just got to live with it basically (Holmes, 2025, p. 17).

Conclusions

The notions of "race," racism, racialisation, and institutional racism were discussed at the beginning of this chapter. The racist beginnings of the welfare state were then briefly discussed, and the racist behaviours of the state, capital, and some organised labour groups during the post-World War II era were tracked. The emergence of collective action against such discriminatory behaviours did not occur until the mid-1960s. Because racist emotion predominated and sectionalist class awareness persisted among segments of "white" labour, it was racialised workers organising on their own who started to oppose such practices. But in the late 1960s and early 1970s, efforts to suppress unauthorised trade union activity helped to politicise important aspects of organised labour and gave rise to an oppositional working class identity. The ideas of antiracism and solidarity between racialised and "white" labour gained traction in the trade unions as a result of this significant development, nearly ten years of industrial struggles against racism by racialised workers, and growing fear of far-right influence. By the middle of the 1970s, the TUC and several of the bigger affiliated trade unions had come to the clear realisation that fighting racism was the only way to create working class solidarity.

However, in order to finally force the state to implement measures to control the worst excesses of racist discriminatory policies, urban upheaval and the political pressure that followed from organised labour and the racialised communities themselves were necessary.

Finally, there was an examination of racism throughout the 1980s, 1990s, and beyond, including the start of the New Labour government. It is regrettable to say that racism is still institutionalised

in British society. Xenoracism and Islamophobia have become widespread. Furthermore, racism is still pervasive in society's key institutions, albeit in less biological and more cultural forms that are less dominating and more unpleasant. For instance, the National Health Service was found to be rife with institutional racism and to consistently fail to provide patients from Asian, Black, and other minority ethnic populations with the treatments they require and deserve. The Department of Health was accused in the report of neglecting to address "this festering abscess which is at present a blot upon the good name of the NHS."

Furthermore, the Commission for Racial Equality's initial report revealed a "disturbing racial pattern" in police recruiting, with 42% of Chinese, 33% of Asian, and 34% of Black applicants denied, compared to 23% of white applicants. According to the research, there is "stealth racism," with many officers viewing diversity awareness and "race" as "a big joke."

The fight for an egalitarian society and antiracism is a continuous one. This chapter is intended to inspire readers to participate in and carry on that fight. The conflict occurs in a variety of settings. Many of the major labour unions are connected to antiracist action groups, and they are now devoted to antiracism to varied degrees. Furthermore, the number of TU leaders who publicly support socialist antiracist programs has recently increased.

In terms of political parties, in the July 2014 by-elections, the Respect Coalition, which is "up front" in its opposition to all forms of racism, including Islamophobia, xenoracism, and imperialist wars, received what seasoned BBC pundit Anthony Howard called "staggering" 12.66% and 6.27% of the vote, respectively.

The educational system is another significant site of institutional racism and, in our opinion, a vital area for antiracist activism. This chapter also discusses the relationship between racism and education. It is contended that racism is a distinct phenomenon that manifests itself differently in various historical eras and geographical locations, as opposed to existing in several unrelated forms (the postmodernist and poststructuralist position). It is impossible to understand and address any of these forms without taking into account economic and political concerns, nor should they be seen in a vacuum. Thus, during the imperial era, African subjects of the colonies were racialised in school textbooks as "fierce savages" and "brutal and stinking," while freed West Indian slaves were described as "lazy, vicious and incapable of any serious improvement or of work except under compulsion" in order to justify the continuation of "the strong arm and brave spirit" of the British Empire (see above) and the ongoing and relentless pursuit of expanding capital accumulation. The media simultaneously portrayed foreign Jews as "semi-barbarous," unable or unwilling to "use the latrine," leaving "their filth" on "the floor of their rooms," and involved in global conspiracy, thereby directly endangering British Imperial hegemony. The ILP paper, Labour Leader, stated that "whenever, there is trouble in Europe, you may be sure a hook-nosed Rothschild is at his games."

Given the previously mentioned colonial past, it should come as no surprise that the British Cabinet racialised many African-Caribbean people in the post-World War II era as "accustomed to living in squalid conditions and have no desire to improve," while one local education authority described their children as "physically robust and boisterous, yet mentally lethargic." Simultaneously, the same LEA believed that "the problem of [their] eating habits" and "domestic habits and personal hygiene of the Asiatics" were "very real problems." In these post-war years, children from minority ethnic groups were racialised as issues that needed to be addressed because, unlike their parents, they were not a cheap labour source.

Recent studies have demonstrated that racialisation still distorts society's educational institutions. Regardless of the flaws in multicultural education and some forms of antiracist education, it

appears that the lack of government commitment did nothing to motivate educators and educational institutions to take racism more seriously. Not only were equality problems neglected throughout the Conservative era, but they were actively demonised. Groups that tried to bring equity concerns back into the public eye were more marginalised and mocked for being "politically correct," a poisonous term coined by the Radical Right that, regrettably, has become widely used. Despite the rhetoric of "an inclusive society," the start of a Labour government has done little to address the underlying inequities and disparities that minority ethnic groups in Britain endure. While government support for programs like the Index for Inclusion, the emphasis on English as an Additional Language, and the DfES "Aiming High" strategy to close achievement gaps for students from minority ethnic groups is commendable, it is still necessary to confront the deeply racist aspects of British society. As of this writing, Shabana Mahmood, the current Home Secretary, has just announced an expansion of ethnic monitoring throughout all public services with the goal of presenting the first official, methodical picture of racial inequality in Britain. In terms of education, the plan will concentrate on helping those who are left behind, including Bangladeshi and Black African children, a lesser percentage of whom attend creche and nursery school. When needed, the impoverished white working class will also be included in this program. This is a big advancement.

What more must be done, then? According to the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report, racism, whether institutional or not, is not exclusive to the Police Service and affects other organisations as well, such as those that deal with housing and education. It continued by arguing that specific and coordinated action must be taken by society at large as well as inside the agencies themselves in order to abolish racism, especially through the educational system, starting in pre-primary school. There are two main recommendations. First and foremost, schools must actively pursue "race" equality and strictly adhere to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000). Second, credence should be given to changing the National Curriculum. According to the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report, schools are afraid of bad press if they implement antiracist programs. This is likely related to the long-standing correlation between antiracism and Radical Left politics (prior to the State's recognition of institutional racism). Even if the writers of *Murder in the Playground* (2025) go to great lengths to stress that they were in favour of constructive antiracist education, it may also have to do with the attention paid to negative antiracist practices. It is the belief that advancing antiracism and antiracist multiculturalism is the best course of action. This should steer clear of condescending and offensive "multicultural education" as well as simplified versions of "Racist Awareness Training," which were used in the past.

Multicultural antiracist education that makes creative use of the internet should emphasise the value of antiracism as a guiding principle and the encouragement of respect and non-exploitative diversity in a multicultural society. According to the Inquiry, in an effort to end racism in society at large: The Government should consider how best to empower local education authorities to create, monitor and enforce anti-racist policies through codes of practice and by amendment of the National Curriculum, to provide education which deals with racism awareness and valuing cultural diversity in the multicultural and multi-ethnic society in which we live (Mangane, 2026).

Reintroducing an honest and critical critique of imperialism, both past and current, would be a significant approach to change the National Curriculum.

Empire is as "cutting edge" as it gets. Economic history, social history, cultural history, political history, military history, international history, and even current politics (simply put on the most recent news from Kabul) are all included. One could argue that education about imperialism, both

historical and contemporary, in schools offers more than this. It gives the most accurate information about British society's past and present.

Changes to the National Curriculum and the full implementation of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act must be part of a much broader and coordinated effort to persuade all educational (and other) institutions to see the eradication of racism as one of the major issues facing the world in the twenty-first century rather than as irrelevant or burdensome.

Given the growing prevalence of racism, Islamophobia, xenophobia, and xeno-racism in Britain, mainland Europe, and around the world—not to mention Tony Blair's pivotal role in George W. Bush's imperialist project—it is more important than ever to put policies in place to combat institutional racism.

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