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Immigration, Race, and Local Media in the Midlands: 1960-1985

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Abstract

The passing of the Television Act in 1954 introduced commercial television to British screens for the first time; ITV was formed as a network of regional channels that broadcast content aimed specially at the regions they served. The arrival of regional television also coincided with mass immigration from Britain's former colonies, a significant proportion of which settled in the Midlands. Scholars of both twentieth-century British history and media history have tended to underplay regional variation. There is a growing but small field of historians who have examined race and media in the same frame but even they have generally not acknowledged the important role of local and regional media in shaping the public response to post-war immigration. This study addresses this absence by examining depictions of immigrants on ATV, ITV's regional Midlands channel, from 1960 to 1985, focusing primarily on ATV's news programme through a series of case studies, as well as the production of *Here and Now*, an ethnic minority arts and culture magazine programme broadcast by ATV (later Central Television) throughout the 1980s. It also examines the previously underexplored role of the local press in the formation of public responses to immigration, highlighting significant links between different forms of local and regional media in post-war Britain by arguing that ATV was, at times, influenced by local press reporting of immigration.

ATV and the local press played a crucial role in forming local responses to immigration within the region, one that differed at times to that of the national press, television news and current affairs programming. Unlike the national

television news, which reported immigration from a national perspective, ATV broadcast local content which focused specifically on local issues, for example the impact of immigration on local services, employment and housing. This content also crucially provided images of immigrants within the audience's towns, neighbourhoods and streets. Despite the large immigrant community in the Midlands during the period, ATV failed to properly represent black and Asian people. In doing so, ATV played an important role in defining the boundaries of exclusion and inclusion within Midlands communities. A comparison of regional and national television news and current affairs programming also indicates that ATV understood neutrality differently than the BBC and ITV, often resulting in far more negative representations of race and immigration. By examining the role of local and regional media in public responses to post-war immigration, this study adds depth to our existing understanding of the uneven development of race relations in post-war Britain.

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List of Abbreviations

ATV	Associated Television
BBC	British Broadcasting Agency
BBOHP	Birmingham Black Oral History Project
BICA	Birmingham Immigration Control Association
CARD	Campaign Against Racial Discrimination
CARF	Campaign Against Racism and fascism
IBA	Independent Broadcasting Authority
ITA	Independent Television Authority
ITN	Independent Television News
ITV	Independent Television
IWA	Indian Workers' Association
LWT	London Weekend Television
MACE	Media Archive for Central England
NF	National Front
RRB	Race Relations Board
SICA	Smethwick Immigration Control Association
TGWU	Transport and General Workers Union
UKC	United Kingdom and Commonwealth
WICA	Wolverhampton Immigration Control Association

Associated Television (ATV) Timeline

- **30 July 1954:** Television Act passed
- **22 September 1955:** ITV began broadcasting
- **22 September 1955:** ATV began broadcasting to London at weekends under the company name Associated Broadcasting Company (ABC)
- **October 1955:** ABC was renamed Associated Television Ltd (ATV)
- **17 February 1956:** ATV began weekday broadcasting to the Midlands from a converted cinema in Aston, Birmingham, named the Alpha Television Studios
- **7 May 1956:** *ATV Midlands News* first broadcast
- **1958:** *Midlands Montage* first broadcast
- **1962:** ATV purchased Elstree Studios in London
- **5 October 1964:** Features of *Midlands News* and *Midlands Montage* were combined, becoming *ATV Today*
- **1968:** ATV awarded full time licence for the Midlands
- **1968:** ATV hired its first female reporter, Sue Jay
- **30 July 1968:** ATV began seven day broadcasting to the Midlands. London weekend broadcasting was taken over by London Weekend Television
- **1968:** ATV created the 'ATV Centre' studios on Broad Street, Birmingham. Alpha Studios were closed
- **1969:** ATV began broadcasting in colour and moved to a new purpose built studio on Bridge Street, Birmingham
- **1969:** ATV hired its first black news reporter, Barbara Blake Hannah.
- **18 September 1980:** First episode of ethnic minority arts and cultural magazine programme, *Here and Now*, broadcast to the Midlands
- **1 January 1982-** ATV became Central Independent Television. First episode of *Central News* was aired. ATV Centre renamed Central House
- **September 1983:** East Midlands service began broadcasting
- **January 1984:** 'East Midlands Television Centre' opened on Lenton Lane, Nottingham
- **1984:** Elstree studios sold to the British Broadcasting Authority (BBC)
- **1990:** Central Independent Television taken over by Carlton

Introduction

On 25 March 1954, British MPs met to discuss a matter that was to have a far-reaching impact on society: the Television Bill, which proposed introducing television choice for British viewers, a controversial subject that caused intense debate in the House.¹ The outcome, to the dismay of those who regarded the bill as ‘an enemy of a reasonable culture’, was the 1954 Television Act.² One of the aims of the Act, which introduced commercial television and broke the BBC’s broadcasting monopoly, was to create ‘adequate competition’; this was to be achieved through Independent Television’s (ITV) regional broadcasting services, which would counteract the London-centric nature of the BBC.³ The Act also introduced the Independent Television Authority (ITA), set up to oversee commercial television, continuing the strong regulatory hand the state was to play in British broadcasting.⁴ During debates, MPs expressed concerns about multiple aspects of the Act, including advertising, the ITA’s powers, the breakup of the BBC monopoly, and the effect on the ‘character’ of the British audience, signifying the impact that commercial television was predicted to have on British culture and identity.⁵

One of the Act’s less controversial, but widely overlooked, aspects was the prospect of regional broadcasting. Despite failing to recommend the break-up of the BBC’s monopoly and warning of the dangers of commercial television, the

¹ Parliamentary Archives, London, HC/CL/CH/2/2/296, United Kingdom, Television Bill Second Reading Parliamentary Debate, London, 25 March 1954, c1434.

² Ibid, c1474.

³ Parliamentary Archives, HL/PO/PU/2/50, Television Act, 1954, 2 & 3 Eliz. 2, C. 55, 7.

⁴ Ibid, 3.

⁵ Television Bill Second Reading Parliamentary Debate, c1472.

Beveridge Report on Broadcasting, released in 1951, had criticised the London-centric nature of the BBC and called for an increase in regional broadcasting.⁶ The Act stressed the important role of regional broadcasting, noting services must contain ‘a suitable proportion of material calculated to appeal specially to the tastes and outlook of persons served by the station’.⁷ It was emphasised during debates that ‘national events’ that were ‘part of the British way of life’ should always be broadcast to the entire country, signifying the continuing role that television was expected to play in maintaining a sense of national unity, whilst at the same time providing a service that met the specific demands of each region.⁸

The arrival of commercial television, along with its regional structure, coincided with the beginning of mass immigration into various UK regions. By the 1980s, Britain would be home to over 2.1 million immigrants, originating primarily from the Indian sub-continent, the West Indies and East Africa.⁹ Driven, in part, by Britain’s need for foreign labour, this vast entry of immigrants from Britain’s former colonies was to have an unprecedented impact on British society over the decades to follow.¹⁰ Nonetheless, the topic of race remained absent from debates about the Act. This was mirrored in the Act itself, despite the significant role television was to play in the formation of public attitudes towards immigrants. Whilst the Act laid out that programming could not include content

⁶ Rob Turnock, *Television and Consumer Culture: Britain and the Transformation of Modernity* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 51.

⁷ Television Act 1954, 4.

⁸ Television Bill Second Reading Parliamentary Debate, c1446.

⁹ David Owen, *Ethnic Minorities in Great Britain: Patterns of Population Change, 1981-91 (1991 Census Statistical Paper No. 10)* (Warwick: Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, 1995), 3.

¹⁰ Randall Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Postwar Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 4.

that offended 'against good taste' or was 'likely to incite crime or to lead to disorder', race and immigration were overlooked completely.¹¹

Through the broadcasting of regional content, ITV's regional services would go on to play an important role in the formation of local identities and, as this study will demonstrate, responses to immigration.¹² In recent years, a growing but nonetheless small field of historians have examined race and media in the same frame.¹³ These scholars have, however, focused primarily on national media, overlooking the important role played by local media in public responses to post-war immigration. This study will redress this lack of attention by examining the role of the local media in shaping local responses to post-war immigration in the Midlands, from 1960 to 1985. It will examine how immigrants were depicted on ATV (Central after 1982), ITV's Midlands channel, as well as by the local press, arguing that this differed at times to national reporting in its framing of race. The purpose of ATV was to provide content that appealed to ordinary people living in the Midlands. Throughout this period, this included large numbers of immigrants, who, despite ATV's aims of reflecting the needs of the region, remained either largely unrepresented or represented in

¹¹ Television Act 1954, 4.

¹² Frances Eames, 'Normative Narratives: Everyday Identity in Regional Television News, 1960-1990' (Unpublished PhD Thesis: University of Nottingham, 2009); John Wallace, 'A Sense of Region? Independent Television in the Midlands, 1950-2000' (Unpublished PhD Thesis: University of Leicester, 2004), 2.

¹³ Darrell Newton, *Paving the Empire Road: BBC Television and Black Britons* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011); Gavin Schaffer, *The Vision of a Nation: Making Multiculturalism on British Television* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Jim Pines, *Black and White in Colour: Black People in British Television Since 1936* (London: BFI Publishing, 1992); Sarita Malik, *Representing Black Britain: Black and Asian Images on Television* (London: SAGE, 2002); Stephen Bourne, *Black in the British Frame: The Black Experience in British Film and Television* (London: Continuum, 2001); Wendy Webster, *Englishness and Empire, 1935-1965* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

problematic ways. By examining race, region, and media in the same frame, this study will contribute in new and important ways to our understanding of the uneven development of attitudes to race across the UK, adding depth to existing scholarship on post-war immigration and media, and furthering our understandings of the formation of post-war British national identity.

Race and Twentieth-Century British History

This thesis is part of a movement amongst historians to place race within twentieth-century British history, highlighting its centrality and removing it from its former position at the margins of other social categories. Race has been overlooked in foundational studies of twentieth-century Britain and Britishness, which have tended to focus on categories such as gender, sexuality, religion, and above all, class. Scholars such as Callum Brown, Matt Houlbrook, Kate Fisher, and Paul Ward focus primarily on gender and sexuality, while others such as Carolyn Steedman, Martin Wiener and Ross McKibbin have focused primarily on class.¹⁴ The relative absence of race within the field of twentieth-century British history was discussed in a roundtable on the ‘present state of twentieth-century British history’ published in the journal *Twentieth Century British History* in

¹⁴ Callum G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013); Carolyn Steedman, *Landscape for a Good Woman: A Story of Two Lives* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1987); James Vernon, *Distant Strangers: How Britain Became Modern* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2014); Jon Lawrence, *Electing our Masters: The Hustings in British Politics from Hogarth to Blair* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Judith Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 2013); Kate Fisher, *Birth Control, Sex and Marriage in Britain: 1918-1960* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Martin Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Matt Houlbrook, *Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957* (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Paul Ward, *Britishness Since 1870* (London: Routledge, 2004), 51; P. J Cain and A. G Hopkins, *British Imperialism: 1688-2015* (London: Routledge, 2016); Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England, 1918-1951* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Sally Alexander, *Becoming a Woman: And Other Essays in 19th and 20th Century Feminist History* (Manhattan, New York: New York University Press, 1995).

2010.¹⁵ James Vernon's contribution suggests that there has been an absence of work examining the impact of decolonisation and post-war immigration on Britain, noting that 'we still know very little about immigrant communities and how they shaped their lives'.¹⁶

This study builds upon the work of scholars such as Bill Schwartz, Camilla Schofield, Jordanna Bailkin, Kathleen Paul, Paul Gilroy and Wendy Webster, all of whom have worked to address the gap noted by Vernon in 2010 and who have brought to the forefront the centrality of race in Britain's national identity during the period.¹⁷ The mass immigration of commonwealth immigrants into Britain following decolonisation had a significant impact on concepts of British national identity. Webster's *Englishness and Empire* explores the impact of decolonisation on British identity and culture between 1939 and 1965, describing how 'Englishness' was redefined to invoke 'a quiet, private and domesticated identity'.¹⁸ Webster notes that post-war Englishness was constructed 'through reference to the small-scale and familiar- hearths, homes, families, streets, neighbourhoods', suggesting that the visibility of immigrants within local communities played a crucial role in the reformation of not only post-war British national identity but also local and regional identity.

¹⁵ 'Roundtable: Twentieth-Century British History in North America,' *Twentieth Century British History* 21, no. 3 (2010): 375-418.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 402.

¹⁷ Bill Schwarz, *The White Man's World: Memories of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Camilla Schofield, *Enoch Powell and the Making of Postcolonial Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Jordanna Bailkin, *The Afterlife of Empire* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2012); Kathleen Paul, *Race and Citizenship in the Postwar Era* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1997); Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't no Black in the Union Jack* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1987); Webster, *Englishness and Empire*.

¹⁸ Chris Waters, "'Dark Strangers' in our Midst: Discourses of Race and Nation in Britain, 1947-1964,' *Journal of British Studies* 36, no. 2 (1997): 207-232; Webster, *Englishness and Empire*, 8.

Post-war Englishness became synonymous with whiteness and defined against the non-white immigrant 'other'.¹⁹ As Gilroy notes, the black presence was 'a problem or threat against which a homogenous white, national 'we' could be unified'. Bill Schwartz suggests that whiteness 'played a critical role in empire, both in colony and metropole' and that 'with the coming of numbers of non-white migrants into Britain', whiteness became an 'intensely immediate phenomenon'.²⁰ Thus, it was only with the arrival of non-white immigrants that British people began to imagine themselves explicitly as white.²¹ Satnam Virdee and Tony Kushner both argue that white minority groups from outside of the empire also played a crucial role in 'making and remaking' British identity.²² This argument, however, overlooks the crucial role that race has played in local anxieties about post-war immigration. Boundaries of exclusion and inclusion within local communities were drawn along racial lines and white local identity was constructed in opposition to the visible presence of non-white immigrants within British communities.

This body of work examining race and post-war national identity has drawn significantly on Benedict Anderson's concept of 'Imagined Communities'.²³

Anderson describes the nation as an 'imagined political community' whose members never meet but are able to experience an imagined sense of

¹⁹ Edward Said, *Orientalism: Western Concepts of the Orient* (New York City, New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

²⁰ Schwarz, *The White Man's World*, 10.

²¹ *Ibid*, 12.

²² Tony Kushner, *We Europeans? Mass-Observation, Race and British Identity in Twentieth Century Britain* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016); Satnam Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 5.

²³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

community.²⁴ In post-war Britain, this imagined national community became exclusively and self-consciously white.²⁵ Despite the arrival of large numbers of non-white immigrants into Britain following decolonisation, white identity continued to be perceived as 'the norm'.²⁶ Tensions emerged at a local level in response to the impact of immigration on local housing, employment, crime, and the visibility of immigrants within local communities.

These tensions often fell along class, as well as racial lines. As Marcus Collins discusses, due to the nature of colonial rule, many of the immigrants who travelled to the UK in the mid-twentieth century had gained their knowledge of Britain from the UK's upper class.²⁷ For this reason, colonial immigrants often arrived with preconceptions about life in Britain that were shattered when they encountered the British working class for the first time.²⁸ The Britain that they had learnt about at school was vastly different from the Britain that they were met with.²⁹ Middle class West Indians, who expected to be mixing with middle class white Britons, found instead that they were viewed by white Britons to be at the same level of society as lower class West Indians.³⁰ Regardless of their own class backgrounds and despite their skills and education, immigrants were forced to take on low-paying, unskilled work and blackness became synonymous with working class.³¹ As Satnam Virdee notes, immigrants were

²⁴ Ibid, 6.

²⁵ Schwarz, *The White Man's World*; Waters, "'Dark Strangers' in our Midst"; Webster, *Englishness and Empire*, 8.

²⁶ Jodi Burkett, *Constructing Post-Imperial Britain: Britishness, 'Race' and the Radical Left in the 1960s* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 15.

²⁷ Marcus Collins, 'Pride and Prejudice: West Indian Men in Mid-Twentieth-Century Britain,' *Journal of British Studies* 40, no.3 (2002): 394.

²⁸ Jordanna Bailkin, *The Afterlife of Empire* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2012), 40.

²⁹ Pilkington, *Beyond the Mother Country: West Indians and the Notting Hill White Riots*, 11.

³⁰ Ibid, 63.

³¹ Collins, 'Pride and Prejudice: West Indian Men in Mid-Twentieth-Century Britain', 401.

represented as an economic threat to the white working class.³² Camilla Schofield suggests that the working class were 're-drawn as victims of a traitorous state' which put the needs of immigrants before those of native British people.³³ The white working-class were reluctant to acknowledge or allow immigrants into a broad category of working-class, which instead became highly racialised as white and British. This 'discovery' of the whiteness of the working-class in the postwar period is what Bill Schwarz describes as the 'Re-racialisation' of Britain.³⁴

Regional media, much like any form of media, had to navigate what Nira Yuval-Davis calls 'the politics of belonging', by catering to what were assumed to be ITV's largely white working-class audience through announcers and reporters that were largely middle-class.³⁵ What reporters, as well as those that they routinely interviewed, were seemingly happy to do, however, was to situate black and Asian subjects as both non-British and not easily part of the working-classes. As this study will show, local and regional media often presented immigrants as a competitive threat to white working-class communities, contributing to local concerns about immigration. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, both ATV and the local press, themselves populated by reporters from middle-class backgrounds, overlooked the class differences between immigrant groups, grouping all immigrants into one social class, despite their varied economic and cultural backgrounds. Efforts to maintain these

³² Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, 102.

³³ Schofield, *Enoch Powell and the Making of Postcolonial Britain*, 225.

³⁴ Schwarz, *The White Man's World*, 29.

³⁵ Nira Yuval-Davis, 'Belonging and the Politics of Belonging,' *Patterns of Prejudice* 40, no.3 (2006): 197-214.

distinctions between the white working-classes and non-white immigrants overrode the class and ethnic differences between different groups of immigrants, to affirm the white British 'politics of belonging' that regional media was particularly invested in articulating. During the 1980s this shifted as the Conservative government attempted to gain black and Asian support by constructing a vision of an inclusive nation that emphasised middle-class qualities such as business and home ownership as markers of Britishness.³⁶ ATV and the local press pivoted to emphasise both class and racial tensions that emerged in towns such as Handsworth between 'desirable' middle-class immigrants, which were primarily Asian business owners, and unemployed black youth, using class alongside race as a means of dividing black and Asian communities. This thesis will focus on visual markers of race, which were used by local media to identify difference.

Race played a central role in government responses to post-war immigration. Edward Pilkington, Jordanna Bailkin, Kathleen Paul and Laura Talbili all argue that the government actively encouraged public fears about immigration in order to legitimise increasingly stringent immigration controls that specifically targeted non-white immigrants.³⁷ For example, Paul argues that from 1954, Conservative Ministers sought to publicise the dangers of immigration, suggesting that colonial immigration posed a threat to the policy-making elites'

³⁶ Matthew Francis, 'Mrs Thatcher's Peacock Blue Sari: Ethnic Minorities, Electoral Politics and the Conservative Party, c. 1974-86,' *Contemporary British History* 21, no.2 (2017): 274-293.

³⁷ Edward Pilkington, *Beyond the Mother Country: West Indians and the Notting Hill White Riots* (London: I.B Taurus, 1988); Jordanna Bailkin, 'Leaving Home: The Politics of Deportation in Postwar Britain,' *Journal of British Studies* 47, no. 4 (2008): 852-882; Laura Tabili, 'The Construction of Racial Difference in Twentieth-Century Britain: The Special Restriction (Coloured Alien Seamen) Order, 1925,' *Journal of British Studies* 33, no. 1 (1994): 54-98; Paul, *Race and Citizenship in the Postwar Era*.

perception of British imperial national identity.³⁸ Others, such as Randell Hansen, have argued that politicians were more liberal than the public, using public opinion polls from the 1950s to make the case that the public wanted stricter immigration control.³⁹ Both sides of this on-going debate suggest that concerns about immigration stemmed specifically from skin colour, not the number of immigrants arriving. As Jodi Burkett notes, despite the largest immigrant group during the 1950s being the Irish, the term 'immigrant' became synonymous with blackness, demonstrating the centrality of race to both government and public concerns about post-war immigration.⁴⁰

Collective memories of empire played a significant role in public understanding of race in post-war Britain. Bill Schwarz discusses the significance of memories of Britain's colonial past, arguing that the arrival of non-white immigrants into Britain triggered 'new memories of empire', reinforcing a sense of white superiority.⁴¹ Immigration was perceived as a threat to this imagined racial superiority. Elizabeth Buettner suggests that the presence of immigrant customs, such as cooking smells, represented a threat that was rooted in pre-existing conceptions of colonial culture.⁴² Camilla Schofield's study of the Conservative politician, Enoch Powell, suggests that public responses to immigration in the 1960s were the result of collective memories of both empire and war.⁴³ Powell used memories of empire to exclude non-white immigrants

³⁸ Paul, *Race and Citizenship in the Postwar Era*, xxi.

³⁹ Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Post-War Britain*, 13.

⁴⁰ Burkett, *Constructing Post-Imperial Britain: Britishness*, 15.

⁴¹ Schwarz, *The White Man's World*, 9.

⁴² Elizabeth Buettner, "'Going for an Indian": South Asian Restaurants and the Limits of Multiculturalism,' *The Journal of Modern History* 80, no. 3 (2008): 865-901.

⁴³ Schofield, *Enoch Powell and the Making of Postcolonial Britain*.

from the nation and from his constituency of Wolverhampton.⁴⁴ Memories of 'heroic sacrifices' were used to present white working-class people, who were now experiencing significant social changes within their local areas, as victims of immigration.⁴⁵ The threat of immigration was most prevalent at a local level, where immigrant culture not only represented a threat to the nation, but as Webster suggests, as a more immediate threat to the neighbourhood and to the 'boundaries of the home'.⁴⁶ As Andy Wood notes in his discussion of social memory, 'in local contexts, autonomous social memories might be constructed that have little connection to dominant narratives'.⁴⁷ This study will argue that ATV's representation of race and immigration triggered collective memories of empire by showing cultural differences within the audience's local environment.

Regionality and Locality

Despite this significant body of research into post-war immigration, regions beyond London have been largely overlooked. Scholars have tended to underplay regional differences, while concentrating primarily on the capital; this London-centric approach, which fails to acknowledge regional variations, has left gaps in our understanding of twentieth-century British history, not least in the study of post-war immigration. This thesis forms part of an emerging body of work that demonstrates how the study of regionality can offer new insights into twentieth-century British history.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 5-8.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 19.

⁴⁶ Webster, *Englishness and Empire*, 8.

⁴⁷ Andy Wood, *Memory of the People: Customs and Popular Senses of the Past in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 25.

This study will use the terms 'local' and 'regional' interchangeably throughout as a means of establishing a smaller geographic lens than the national. The terms, however, are not always interchangeable. Region is an official designation for dividing Britain's geographic space and, in the case of the East and West Midlands, some cities and towns across the regions had very little in common aside from regional television viewing. Local identities, on the other hand, were rooted in local urban or village environments that fell within the regions. This study will argue that regional television played a significant role in the shaping of distinct local identities that fell within the Midlands. The term 'local' will also be used to describe further layers of identity such as that of particular neighbourhoods and streets. Both terms are used to signal a break with a prevailing national emphasis within the historiography of twentieth-century Britain.

A small number of scholars have noted the historic disparity between UK regions. Helen Jewell's work on the North-South divide charts the history of the division and Dave Russell's *Looking North* explores Northern identity and consciousness, noting that the North's 'isolation from the metropolitan centre' makes it feel like an altogether separate place.⁴⁸ Helen Smith's work on Northern sexual identity from 1895 to 1957, for example, argues that attitudes towards same sex desire in the North differed from attitudes within the capital. Like Jewell and Russell, Smith notes how those in the North have historically 'experienced life differently from those in the South'; what she highlights is that

⁴⁸ Dave Russell, *Looking North: Northern England and the National Imagination* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 3; Helen Jewell, *The North-South Divide* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), 2.

the unique conditions in London mean that historians of sexuality should not make assumptions about non-metropolitan men on the basis of evidence found in London.⁴⁹ This argument not only applied to studies of sex and sexuality but to all areas of twentieth-century British history.

The importance of locality is established in Daisy Payling's study of the politics of the left in 1980s Sheffield.⁵⁰ Payling highlights that the activities of the Left in local councils outside of London tell a story that has been overlooked by scholars locating examples within London.⁵¹ London's large ethnic minority population and middle-class demographic meant that mobilising around race and gender worked.⁵² However, Payling's study reveals that in Sheffield, which was predominantly white and working-class, political priorities were altogether different.⁵³ Both Payling and Smith demonstrate a healthy scepticism of claims made by scholars of twentieth century British history, based primarily on evidence found in London archives, as being representative of Britain as a whole.

Electoral studies of post-war Britain have tended to argue that there has been very limited regional variation in voting patterns, an argument based on the assertions of Butler and Stokes' *Political Change in Britain* (1969), in which they

⁴⁹ Helen Smith, *Masculinity, Class and Same-Sex Desire in Industrial England, 1895-1957* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 10.

⁵⁰ Daisy Payling, 'Socialist Republic of South Yorkshire': Grassroots Activism and Left-Wing Solidarity in 1980s Sheffield,' *Twentieth Century British History* 24, no.4 (2014): 602-627.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 603.

⁵² Nick Crawson and Mathew Hilton, 'Witness Seminar: The Voluntary Sector in 1980s Britain,' *Contemporary British History* 25 (2001): 504.

⁵³ Daisy Payling, "Socialist Republic of South Yorkshire," 609.

suggest that there has been a uniform swing.⁵⁴ As King and Wood note in their discussion of regional variation in voting patterns, 'a major theme that informs contemporary political analysis is that British society possesses a pattern of electoral behaviour without the sizeable wrinkles of the nineteenth-century'.⁵⁵ There has, however, been debate regarding interregional variation, for example King and Wood argue that although this is true to a large extent, it is nonetheless 'easy to underestimate differences' between regions.⁵⁶ King and Wood note that there are 'patterns of support between regions, even when the class composition of the respective regions are allowed for'.⁵⁷ Johnson and Jones' investigation of trends in support for the three main parties over the period 1950 to 2001 supports this argument, concluding that 'different constituencies with different socio-demographic characteristics and located in different regions have experienced different trajectories of party support'.⁵⁸ This study will argue that anti-immigrant politicians were able to draw upon cross class antagonisms that hinged on local anxieties about immigration. What this so crucially highlights is the importance of examining twentieth-century British history in the context of the regional and the local, to gain a more complete understanding of developments across the country and of the complexity of identity.

⁵⁴ Ron Johnson and Kelvyn Jones, 'Regional Variations in Voting at British General Elections, 1950-2001: Group-Based Latent Trajectory Analysis,' *Environment and Planning* 41 (2009): 598.

⁵⁵ Robert King and Michael Wood, 'The Support for Enoch Powell,' in *The Politics of Race*, ed. Ivor Crewe (London: Croom Helm, 1975), 250.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 251.

⁵⁸ Johnson and Jones, 'Regional Variations in Voting at British General Elections,' 615.

It has been suggested by Peter Mandler that during times of national crisis, 'national consciousness is so intense that it can trump all others'; studies of regional and local identity during times of national crisis, however, indicate that allegiance to the nation intersected with a strong, and at times prevailing, sense of local identity.⁵⁹ For example, Brad Beaven investigates the growing importance of civic identity during the Boer War, arguing that the local press helped create local imperial pride, and that working-class patriotism prioritised local identification with the imperial project over national pride.⁶⁰ Likewise, Jo Fox's work on regional accents in British Second World War cinema, suggests that during World War Two, propagandists used regional accents in their films to create a more realistic and relatable image of the population.⁶¹ She notes that the use of regional accents in propaganda films helped create national unity by giving audiences the impression that it was 'our war' and not 'their war'.⁶²

These scholars all note the multiplicity of identity, emphasising that individuals can at once identify with the local, the regional, and the national. Fox suggests that 'cinemagoers could associate with local, regional, national, social, class, ethnic religious and gender identities... and yet hold common British affiliation'.⁶³ Beavan notes how the 'class, gender and local identity' of an

⁵⁹ Peter Mandler, 'What is "National Identity"? Definitions and Applications in Modern British Historiography,' *Modern Intellectual History* 3, no. 2 (2006): 80.

⁶⁰ Brad Beaven, 'The Provincial Press, Civic Ceremony and the Citizen-Soldier During the Boer War, 1899-1902: A Study of Local Patriotism,' *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 37, no. 2 (2009): 207-228.

⁶¹ Jo Fox, 'Millions Like Us? Accented Language and the 'Ordinary' in British Films of the Second World War,' *Journal of British Studies* 45, no. 4 (2006): 819.

⁶² *Ibid*, 825.

⁶³ *Ibid*, 823.

individual 'coexist and themselves influence national patriotism'.⁶⁴ Paul Ward suggests that regional identities do not necessarily disrupt British identity, but instead have played an important role in incorporating the working class into the nation.⁶⁵ He goes on to say that at times, regional identities are constructed in opposition to the centre, whilst at others they become part of a wider national identity, thus providing 'the building blocks for national identity'.⁶⁶ This signifies the importance of examining locality and regionality, to gain a fuller understanding of how experiences of national identity may have been shaped and defined at a regional or local level.

Race must be approached through this prism. Both race and region are of significant importance to the study of twentieth-century British history and the relationship between the two needs to be understood. In recent years, scholars such as Kenetta Hammond Perry and Marc Matera have examined responses to post-war immigration and the experiences of immigrants specifically in London.⁶⁷ Matera's *Black London* examines the political activism of black intellectuals in London from the 1920s to the 1950s, describing London during this period as a 'locus of resistance to empire' and a 'site of African diasporic formation, intellectual production, and political organisation'.⁶⁸ Hammond Perry's work explores the experiences of Caribbean immigrants and their responses to post-war racism in London, discussing the organisational

⁶⁴ Beaven, 'The Provincial Press, Civic Ceremony and the Citizen-Soldier During the Boer War,' 211.

⁶⁵ Ward, *Britishness Since 1870*, 55.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 68.

⁶⁷ Collins, 'Pride and Prejudice,' 391-418; Matera, *Black London*; Perry, *London is the Place for Me*; Waters, "'Dark Strangers" in our Midst.'

⁶⁸ Matera, *Black London*, 2-4.

strategies of black Britons, who insisted that London was ‘where they rightfully belonged’.⁶⁹ Both scholars make suggestions about race and identity by citing examples from within London, such as the African Press Union (APU), the Union of Students of African Descent (USAD), the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD), and the activities of Claudia Jones.⁷⁰ In doing so, they overlook the ways in which the black experience outside of London differed from the capital and how distinct local and regional identities formed in response to post-war immigration.

The failure of scholars to acknowledge local and regional differences in public responses to post-war immigration has left the local unexplored as a means of claiming identities rooted in space, place, family, and also race. Diane Frost’s study of West African seamen in Liverpool, from the 1880s to the 1960s, reveals how regional identity can, at times, exclude black and Asian immigrants; she discusses how notions of ‘Scouseness’ were reserved for the white working class.⁷¹ My own study puts region back into identity through an examination of race and local media. For many, the local is a fiercely protected site of continuity in the twentieth-century. For this reason, this study’s exploration of local responses to post-war immigration is of vital importance for our understanding of the uneven development of race relations across the UK.

This lack of focus on specific regions outside of London has been addressed by a very small number of scholars; this includes Joanna Herbert’s examination of

⁶⁹ Perry, *London is the Place for Me*, 5.

⁷⁰ Matera, *Black London*, 23; Perry, *London is the Place for Me*, 9.

⁷¹ Diane Frost, ‘Racism, Work and Unemployment: West African Seamen in Liverpool, 1880s-1960s,’ *Immigrants & Minorities* 13, no. 2-3 (1994): 22-33.

public responses to post-war immigration in Leicester.⁷² In her book *Negotiating Boundaries in the City*, Herbert focuses on boundaries, both racial and gendered, between native Britons and South Asian immigrants in post-war Leicester. Her use of interviews with both South Asian and white Leicester residents provides a valuable insight into the experiences of immigrants living in Leicester during the period, as well as responses of Leicester's white community, offering a greater understanding of how race relations operated at a local level. Lorna Chessum has also examined race outside of London in her work on the development of the African-Caribbean community in Leicester from 1945 to 1981, using interviews with black people who moved to Leicester in the 1950s and 1960s, as well as the local press.⁷³ Shirin Hirsch's forthcoming book *In the Shadow of Powell: Race, Locality and Resistance* uses interviews and archival sources to examine Powell's speech from a local perspective, uncovering responses from within Wolverhampton.⁷⁴ These are, however, the only studies of post-war Britain to address in detail race in a region outside of London, and the discussion of broader concepts and deployment of the small and the local across Britain are limited. This thesis engages in original and important work by examining experiences of and attitudes towards race at a local level for ordinary Britons of all races. It differs from other case studies of the local by using the local and regional, not just as a case study, but as a broader framework for how identity was developed, defined and discussed

⁷² Joanna Herbert, *Negotiating Boundaries in the City: Migration, Ethnicity, and Gender in Britain* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

⁷³ Lorna Chessum, *From Immigrants to Ethnic Minorities: Making Black Community in Britain* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000).

⁷⁴ Shirin Hirsch, *In the Shadow of Powell: Race, Locality and Resistance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018).

across Britain, in regions outside London. It does so through an examination of the Midlands.

Occupying a space that falls in between the north and south divide, the Midlands is notoriously difficult to define. Clear stereotypes of the North and South leave the Midlands falling somewhere indistinct between the two. Jewell suggests that the North-South divide falls within the Midlands, emphasising the region's diversity.⁷⁵ Officially, the UK is divided into nine regions for statistical, administrative and government purposes.⁷⁶ The regions were formed from the 1940s to the 1970s through a gradual administrative process, beginning with the Barlow Report of 1940, implemented after the Second World War, which 'envisaged a regional dimension to the new spatial planning regime', creating the regional boundaries on which the current UK regions are based.⁷⁷ The Midlands is made up of two regions: the East and the West. The East Midlands consists of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Rutland; the West Midlands is made up of Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire and the West Midlands County.⁷⁸

The Midlands is not only large geographically, but also contains towns and countryside with very little in common, making it difficult to define a distinct

⁷⁵ Jewell, *The North-South Divide*.

⁷⁶ 'England,' Office for National Statistics, Accessed 5 January 2017, www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/geography/ukgeographies/administrativegeography/England
⁷⁷ Paul Benneworth, 'The 'Rise' of the Region: The English Context to Raging Academic Debates,' in *The Rise of the English Regions*, ed. Irene Hardill, Paul Benneworth, Mark Baker, Leslie Budd (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), 46.

⁷⁸ 'The East Midlands,' in *The Rough Guide to Britain*, ed. Matthew Teller (London: Rough Guides, 2004), 533; 'The West Midlands and the Peak District,' in *The Rough Guide to Britain*, ed. Matthew Teller (London: Rough Guides, 2004), 479.

Midlands identity.⁷⁹ J. V. Beckett describes the Midlands as being ‘too vague’ and having no obvious boundaries and a lack of a unifying identity.⁸⁰ This difficulty in pinpointing what ‘midlandsness’ is, perhaps explains why the Midlands has been the subject of less scholarly attention than the North, particularly in discussions about regional identity. However, it is this lack of a distinct Midlands identity, and the local differences that fall within the regions, that makes the Midlands so complex and worthy of study. In his book on the East Midlands, J. V. Beckett notes that the twentieth-century ‘has witnessed a trend towards town-based sub-regions within the East Midlands’ which have their own local identities and very little in common.⁸¹ This study examines multiple layers of identity, from the regional identity of the Midlands, the local identities of the towns and cities that fall within it, to the smaller scale identities of particular streets and neighbourhoods. There are many strong identities that fall within the Midlands; for example the Black Country, an area in the West Midlands, has a ‘unique character’, along with local traditions, humour, food, dialogue and industry.⁸² The Midlands contain a number of cities, such as Leicester, Birmingham and Wolverhampton, all of which had, and continue to have, large concentrations of immigrants and visible anti-immigrant campaigns, some of which focused on the impact of immigration on particular areas and even specific streets. As this study will show, post-war immigration shaped their economies and cultures and helped define distinct local identities.

⁷⁹ Natalie Braber, ‘The Concept of Identity in the East Midlands of England: Investigating Feelings of Identity in East Midlands Adolescents,’ *English Today* 20, no. 2 (2014): 3.

⁸⁰ J. V. Beckett, ‘Trends in Regional History,’ *Midland History* 34, no. 2 (2009): 250.

⁸¹ J.V. Beckett, *East Midlands from AD 1000* (London: Longman, 1998), 304.

⁸² Julie E. Robinson, ‘Gi’ It Some ‘Ommer: ITV Regional Programming and Performance in the Black Country,’ in *Regional Aesthetic: Mapping UK Media Cultures*, ed. Ieuan Franklin, Hugh Chignell and Kristin Skoog (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 145.

The Midlands was a key area of industrial growth in the nineteenth-century, making it a destination of choice for many immigrants seeking employment in the post-war period.⁸³ Approximately 15 per cent of Commonwealth immigrants settled in the West Midlands, and 6.5 per cent in the East Midlands.⁸⁴ This means that immigration had a significant impact on the identities of those living in the region during this period. Unlike studies of the North that have painted a positive image of life in regions outside of London, for example Smith's narrative of increased tolerance towards male homosexuality, this study will reveal the increased racial tension that existed at a local level, outside of the capital.⁸⁵ It will place region back into identity through an examination of race and regional media, a topic that has been previously overlooked by historians of twentieth-century Britain.

TV and Media History

The emergence of commercial television coincided with the arrival of mass immigration into Britain; this study will examine how these two developments interacted. Television has undoubtedly been one of the most significant changes in the day-to-day lives of British people since World War Two.⁸⁶ Its rapid growth led to 'moral panic' about its impact on audience behaviour, moral

⁸³ Urszula Clark and Esther Asprey, *West Midlands English: Birmingham and the Black Country* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 11.

⁸⁴ Martin MacEwen, *Housing Race and Law: The British Experience* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1991).

⁸⁵ Smith, *Masculinity, Class and Same-Sex Desire in Industrial England*.

⁸⁶ Jack Williams, *Entertaining the Nation: A Social History of British Television* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2004), 1.

values and political views.⁸⁷ The arrival of advertising caused fears that British television would become Americanised, 'degrade the decencies of family life'⁸⁸ and erode class barriers.⁸⁹ These fears culminated in the 1962 Pilkington report, which claimed that television could have 'profound and far reaching effects' on viewers.⁹⁰ Its actual impact has, however, been debated by scholars. For example, Marxist scholars, such as Theodor Adorno, argued that mass media has significant power over the masses and could, therefore, reinforce social norms.⁹¹ This view was opposed by the liberal pluralist argument of scholars such as Halloran, that individuals derive different meaning from the same content and therefore television has a limited ability to shape attitudes or behaviour.⁹² Both of these approaches met with criticism, for example D.L LeMahieu argues that neither producers nor consumers of mass media have complete sovereignty as commercial mass media is driven by profit from consumption and therefore it must meet the demands of its audiences.⁹³ Research suggests that individuals interpret mass media in selective ways, which align with how they already think; however, mass media plays an important role both in informing what people think about, sometimes referred

⁸⁷ J. Milland, 'Courting Malvolio: The Background to the Pilkington Committee on Broadcasting, 1960-2,' *Contemporary British History* 18, no.2 (2004): 76-102.

⁸⁸ Sean Nixon, *Hard Sell: Advertising, Affluence and Transatlantic Relations, c1951-69* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 99.

⁸⁹ Malik, *Representing Black Britain*, 164.

⁹⁰ Schaffer, *The Vision of a Nation*, 3.

⁹¹ Theodor W. Adorno 'Culture Industry Reconsidered,' in *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture*, ed. Theodor Adorno (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005).

⁹² David Morley and Charlotte Brunson, *The Nationwide Television Studies* (London: Routledge, 1999), 126.

⁹³ D. L. LeMahieu, *A Culture For Democracy: Mass Communication and the Cultivated Mind in Britain Between the Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 18.

to as 'agenda setting' and also in influencing 'frameworks of public understanding'.⁹⁴

Scholars such as Asa Briggs, Jack Williams, James Curran and Jean Seaton have informed this study through their focus on the broader impact of mass media on British society, culture and politics.⁹⁵ The history of British broadcasting has been explored most thoroughly in Asa Briggs' five volume series, which charts the history of the BBC from 1922 to 1972, noting its political and social impact.⁹⁶ Curran and Seaton's *Power Without Responsibility*, provides a social and political history of broadcasting from its creation to the present day.⁹⁷ Jack Williams' *Entertaining the Nation* explores the role of British television in popular culture, suggesting that, whilst we cannot be certain what impact television has had on the attitudes of individuals, its broader impact on British cultural and social institutions is undeniable.⁹⁸

One of the major debates amongst scholars of twentieth-century media has been the extent to which it has contributed to notions of British national identity. Thomas Hajkowski's study of British broadcasting from 1922 to 1953, argues that the BBC's radio service played a significant role in shaping British national identity during the period, through its promotion of both the empire

⁹⁴ James Curran, Ivor Gaber and Julian Petley, *Culture Wars: The Media & the British Left* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), 303.

⁹⁵ Asa Briggs, *The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom*, 5 vols (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995); James Curran and Jean Seaton, *Power Without Responsibility: The Press, Broadcasting and the Internet in Britain* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1981); Williams, *Entertaining the Nation*.

⁹⁶ Briggs, *The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom*.

⁹⁷ Curran and Seaton, *Power Without Responsibility*.

⁹⁸ Williams, *Entertaining the Nation*, 13.

and monarchy.⁹⁹ John Mackenzie also suggests that the BBC's positive projection of empire and monarchy helped to create 'a political climate in which the British public would not tolerate any party which was anti-monarchical or which seemed to attack Britain's complacent sense of superiority'.¹⁰⁰ Curran and Seaton note that the BBC's annual Christmas message from the monarch, which began during the 1930s, and was often followed by an empire programme, helped the BBC to shape 'a new domestic and populist image of the monarch'.¹⁰¹ The BBC clearly played a significant role in the creation of national symbols and traditions.

Others have examined the role of the British media in changing concepts of British national identity following decolonisation. Wendy Webster's *Englishness and Empire* explores popular narratives of empire and nation told through the BBC and British cinema, from 1939 to 1965.¹⁰² She examines the reinforcing of popular narratives, arguing that the media cast themselves in a key role in the formation of national identity.¹⁰³ Hajkowski and Webster's work shows how Anderson's concept of 'imagined communities', which he argues were reinforced by the creation of print journalism, can also be applied to television, radio and film. This study will explore how regional and local media played a crucial role in strengthening local identities by drawing upon familiar local images and traditions, and the role of race in this process.

⁹⁹ Thomas Hajkowski, *The BBC and National Identity in Britain, 1922-53* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).

¹⁰⁰ John MacKenzie, 'In Touch with the Infinite: The BBC and the Empire, 1923-53,' in *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, ed. John MacKenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), 187.

¹⁰¹ Curran and Seaton, *Power Without Responsibility*, 116.

¹⁰² Webster, *Englishness and Empire*.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, 13.

There has been a small amount of work on media and region, however this is very limited and often overlooks ITV's regional channels. Whilst providing a uniting British network, the BBC has also made efforts to provide content for Scotland, Wales, England and Northern Ireland.¹⁰⁴ The difficulties in doing so is discussed by Hajkowski, who disputes argument made by scholars such as Briggs, that the BBC was a 'form of cultural hegemony emanating from London', suggesting that 'imagined communities' were created, reinforcing notions of Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish identity.¹⁰⁵ For example, he argues that viewers identified with the monarchy in distinct ways.¹⁰⁶ As Natasha Vall notes, attitudes towards national institutions varied between regions, for example one BBC executive commented that: 'the chief concern [in the North east]... is not whether the transmitter will be ready in time for the Coronation, but whether it will be working in time for them to see the cup final'.¹⁰⁷ Hajkowski draws upon Linda Colley's argument that 'identities are not like hats. Human beings can and do put on several at a time', arguing that local and regional identity could coexist with national identity.¹⁰⁸ He also draws on Paul Ward's argument, that Britishness has remained a resilient identity, able to coexist with others, arguing that the BBC was able to both represent a unified Britishness, reinforcing national identity, whilst also recognising the distinct identities of the British

¹⁰⁴ Hajkowski, *The BBC and National Identity in Britain*, 2.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 14.

¹⁰⁷ Natasha Vall, *Cultural Region: North East England, 1945-2000* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 39.

¹⁰⁸ Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1838* (London: Yale University Press, 2003), 6.

isles.¹⁰⁹ This suggests that mass media can create distinct regional and local identities whilst also contributing to broader notions of 'Englishness'.

The lack of scholarly focus on regional media is also addressed in Ieuan Franklin's edited collection *Regional Aesthetics: Mapping UK Media Cultures*, which, like this study, seeks to address the absence of focus on 'space and geography in relation to UK media', caused by an interest in 'national or globalised- rather than regional- identity through (typically centralised) mass media'.¹¹⁰ It does so through a number of studies, all of which discuss different UK instances that reveal the role of regional media in the formation of local and regional identity. These fourteen studies have a broad range and include an examination of post-war BBC regional radio, post-war local radio for Leicester's Asian community, and the portrayal of Northern Irish Identity in Ulster Television's school output during the 1970s. John Corner has criticised the book for its absence of broader connections, for its lack of attention to the 'play off between the regional as a site of media production and as a site of media consumption' and for not fully addressing questions of race, class and gender in relation to regional and local identity. This study will redress these absences, using regional media as a broader framework for how local identity was constructed in response to post-war immigration in regions outside of London.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Ward, *Britishness Since 1870*.

¹¹⁰ Ieuan Franklin, 'Introduction,' in *Regional Aesthetics: Mapping UK Media Cultures*, ed. Ieuan Franklin, Hugh Chignell and Kristin Skoog (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 1.

¹¹¹ John Corner, review of *Regional Aesthetics: Mapping UK Media Cultures*, ed. Ieuan Franklin, Kristin Skoog and Hugh Chignell, *Journal of British Cinema and Television* 13, no. 2 (2016): 342.

Less has been written about ITV. There are examples of official histories of ITV, most notably Jeremy Potter's six volume collection which charts its history, and overviews have been provided in broad histories of broadcasting, such as Curran and Seaton's work.¹¹² There has been, however, relatively little work that looks at ITV as an institution, in comparison to that of the BBC. There are numerous reasons why this may be the case. Firstly, the BBC has been most readily associated with Reithian values, and ITV, on the other hand, as a 'moment of rupture' contributing to the breakdown of British culture, therefore the BBC has been regarded as playing a more central role in the creation of British national identity.¹¹³ Secondly and perhaps more crucially, it is difficult to access archive material, partially as a result of its regional structure.¹¹⁴ Catherine Johnson and Rob Turnock's edited collection seeks to address this absence and 'establish commercial television as a legitimate object of future enquiry'.¹¹⁵ They note that the issues that make ITV unattractive to scholars, notably its regional structure, are what make ITV so interesting and important. This highlights the need for studies such as this one, which examine ITV's regional programming and its role in shaping both regional and national identity.

¹¹² Bernard Sendall, *Independent Television in Britain: Origin and Foundation 1946-62* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1982); Catherine Johnson and Rob Turnock, 'Introduction: Approaching the Histories of ITV,' in *ITV Cultures: Independent Television Over Fifty Years*, ed. Catherine Johnson and Rob Turnock (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2005); Curran and Seaton, *Power Without Responsibility*; Andrew Crisell, *An Introductory History of British Broadcasting* (London: Routledge, 1997); Jamie Medhurst, *A History of Independent Television in Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2010); Jeremy Potter, *Independent Television in Britain: Companies and Programmes, 1968-80* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990); M. Darlow, *The Independents Struggle: The Programme Makers Who Took On the TV Establishment* (London: Quartet Books, 2004); Paul Bonner and Lesley Aston, *Independent Television in Britain: ITV and IBA, 1981-92: The Old Relationship Changes* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998); Tony Currie, *A Concise History of British Television, 1930-2000* (Tiverton: Kelly Publications, 2000).

¹¹³ Johnson and Turnock, 'Introduction,' 2.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, 5.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, 7.

This lack of focus on ITV means a lack of attention on regional history. ITV's regional broadcasting has been addressed in a limited number of studies, including John Wallace's PhD thesis, which examines the role of ATV in the creation of regional identities, arguing that 'the ITV system is undoubtedly the best example of English regional identity in the twentieth-century'.¹¹⁶ ATV is also explored in Julie Robinson's chapter on regional programming in the Black Country, in Ieuan Franklin's edited collection.¹¹⁷ Robinson discusses how ATV represented the Black Country by borrowing from its 'strong oral and folk traditions', noting the important role played by regional media in the construction of local identity. These studies deal with race only very briefly, if at all.

Race and ethnicity are explored by Frances Eames in her PhD thesis, *Normative Narratives: Everyday Identity in Regional Television News, 1960-1980*, which examines ATV's role in creating regional identity in the Midlands, focusing on representations of the travelling community and dealing briefly with the topic of Commonwealth immigration.¹¹⁸ Eames has also examined ITV and the 1972 Ugandan Migration, comparing the coverage of the arrival of Ugandan refugees on ITV and ATV, arguing that their framing of the arrival was markedly different.¹¹⁹ Unlike Eames' work, which takes a media studies approach,

¹¹⁶ Wallace, 'A Sense of Region,' 2.

¹¹⁷ Robinson, 'Gi' It Some 'Ommer: ITV Regional Programming and Performance in the Black Country,' 141-156.

¹¹⁸ Frances Eames, 'Normative Narratives: Everyday Identity in Regional Television News, 1960-1990' (Unpublished PhD Thesis: University of Nottingham, 2009).

¹¹⁹ Frances Eames, 'ITV and the 1972 Ugandan Migration: A Historiography of Regional/National News Archives,' *Media History* 15, no. 4 (2009): 453-469.

focusing on news values, this study examines local media representations of race from a historical perspective. This allows the study to read the absence of media over a much longer time period that points to the historic treatment of race by media, as well as to pay attention to agency in front of the camera. This study will expand on this work by exploring what Eames indicates as existing in a brief period and place as a consistent trend in regional reporting throughout the post-war period. It will take the recent focus on regional media in an important new direction by examining it in relation to post-war immigration, something that has previously been relatively unexplored.

As well as focusing on regional television news, this study will also explore links between different forms of local and regional media. It will address media history's lack of attention to the intersectionality of different forms of media by examining not only ITV's regional television but also the local press. The local press had an important role within local communities, expressing a common experience 'of living in a particular place, sharing certain local needs and interests, facing certain local problems'.¹²⁰ It acted as a 'provider of information, as a champion of the community, as a watchdog and as a forum for public debate'.¹²¹ Letters to the editor often demonstrate this sense of identification by expressing local concerns and engaging with local news stories.¹²² There are numerous examples of institutional histories of local press, such as Harold Whates' history of the *Birmingham Mail and Post*, Peter Rhodes' history of the *Wolverhampton Express & Star*, and Steve England's history of the *Leicester*

¹²⁰ Ian Jackson, *The Provincial Press and the Community* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1971), 1.

¹²¹ Mick Temple, *The British Press* (Berkshire: Open University Press, 1996), 106.

¹²² *Ibid*, 152.

Mercury.¹²³ These studies however, are generally institutional histories, which overlook the interaction between different forms of local and regional media. This thesis will argue for the continued importance of examining the local press by highlighting its links with television, something which has previously been overlooked and which contributes to our understanding of the impact of media on concepts of local, regional and national identity in Britain.

Just as regional television has been overlooked, so too has the local press. Aside from these institutional histories, very little has been written about the local press in post-war Britain. Adrian Bingham explores the role of the national press in twentieth-century British society and culture, arguing that the popular press has included political content with the potential to influence readers on specific political issues, including immigration.¹²⁴ Bingham provides a valuable insight into the role of the national press in twentieth-century Britain, but nonetheless overlooks the role played by the local press. Race in this context has been even more marginalised. An exception to this is Lorna Chessum's work on the development of the African-Caribbean community in Leicester, from 1945 to 1981, which includes a chapter on race and immigration in Leicester's local press between 1945 and 1962.¹²⁵ Chessum argues for the importance of examining the local press in relation to immigration, noting that the local press is an important expression of public attitudes as it 'gave voice to opinion

¹²³ Harold Whates, *The Birmingham Post, 1857-1957* (Birmingham: Birmingham Post & Mail, 1957); Peter Rhodes, *The Loaded Hour: A History of the Express & Star* (Worcester: S. P. A Ltd, 1991); Steve England, *Magnificent Mercury: A History of a Regional Newspaper* (Leicester: Kairos Press, 1999).

¹²⁴ Adrian Bingham, 'Ignoring the First Draft of History? Searching for the Popular Press in Studies of Twentieth-Century Britain,' *Media History* 18, no. 3-4 (2012): 311-326.

¹²⁵ Chessum, *From Immigrants to Ethnic Minorities*, 69.

expressed by local people'.¹²⁶ She argues that letters to the local press about immigrants were 'organised within an interpretive framework which presented a contrasting view of black and white people as mutually exclusive groups with particular characteristics'.¹²⁷ The local press played an important and overlooked role in the construction of both black and white identities in the post-war period.

Studies of the impact of media on British national identity have all tended to be institutional histories of the BBC or ITV, or of particular newspapers, with very few examining the contribution of regional media. The preoccupation with the media's contribution to national identity in the age of mass media has overlooked the role of local media in contributing to local actions and attitudes which have, as this thesis will demonstrate, at times resisted broader national trends, whilst at others conformed to them. At a time when 'people wanted to resume their normal lives', regional broadcasting reflected traditional, familiar local life, shaping and strengthening local identity by encouraging listeners to recognise 'shared elements of culture'.¹²⁸ As Simon Cottle notes, local news provides 'in depth and extensive coverage' of issues facing specific communities, unlike national news, which provides 'at best, a fleeting and fragmentary response'.¹²⁹ Ieuan Franklin and Frances Eames are part of a new trend to move

¹²⁶ Ibid, 70

¹²⁷ Ibid, 70.

¹²⁸ Ieuan Franklin, 'A region in Microcosm: Brandon Acton-Bond's Post-War BBC Radio Features', in *Regional Aesthetics: Mapping UK Media Cultures*, ed, Ieuan Franklin, Hugh Chignell and Kristin Skoog (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 127-139.

¹²⁹ Simon Cottle, *TV News, Urban Conflict and the Inner City* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1993), 104.

away from this institutional, national, and BBC centred focus; this study takes this trend in a new direction by focusing specifically on local media and race.

Race and Media

In recent years, scholars such as Sarita Malik, Stephen Bourne, Gavin Schaffer, Wendy Webster and Darrell Newton have examined the role played by Britain's national media in shaping public responses to post-war immigration.¹³⁰ These scholars have informed this study through their examination of how multiculturalism was reflected on British television. Malik's *Representing Black Britain* explores representations of race on a range of genres, arguing that television did more than simply reflect what was happening, but also shaped public attitudes towards immigrants.¹³¹ Schaffer's *The Vision of a Nation* examines television's response to multiculturalism, from 1960 to 1980, noting that television offered a 'manufactured model of multiculturalism', which had a wide and enduring impact on public attitudes.¹³² Darell Newton focuses on the role of the BBC in shaping public attitudes towards immigration, noting that the BBC's programming, however well meaning, emphasised racial difference.¹³³ All of these studies demonstrate the centrality of television in the formation of public attitudes towards race.

Stephen Bourne's *Black in the British Frame* examines the absence of black and Asian people from British television, for example the lack of black actors in

¹³⁰ Malik, *Representing Black Britain*; Bourne, *Black in the British Frame*; Newton, *Paving the Empire Road*; Schaffer, *The Vision of a Nation*; Webster, *Englishness and Empire*; Pines, *Black and White in Colour*.

¹³¹ Malik, *Representing Black Britain*; Bourne, *Black in the British Frame*.

¹³² Schaffer, *The Vision of a Nation*, 2.

¹³³ Newton, *Paving the Empire Road*.

British soaps and the use of black face.¹³⁴ Newton explores BBC policies and practices used to 'assist white Britons in understanding the impact of African-Caribbeans, and their assimilation into constructs of Britishness', arguing that programmes were directed exclusively at a white audience and thus alienated West Indian viewers.¹³⁵ Webster discusses how the use of the term 'colour problem', and questions such as 'would you let your daughter marry a negro?', used by the British media from the mid-1950s, presented immigration as a threat to domestic order.¹³⁶ Mass media she argues, defined who was excluded from the nation; during the second half of the century, a sense of unity and familiarity with the colonies transformed into fear of the immigrant 'other'.¹³⁷

All of these scholars find that larger organisations displayed efforts to address prejudice within their programming. Newton notes that the BBC attempted to help white Britons to understand issues surrounding immigration.¹³⁸ Schaffer suggests that ITV and the BBC's television coverage of immigration was 'often well meaning, with producers attempting to explain race relations, multiculturalism and immigration in a sympathetic and liberal manner'.¹³⁹ He argues that news and current affairs programmes felt obliged to provide balanced coverage of extremist groups, such as the extreme right political party, the National Front (NF), but that ITV in particular sought to challenge racist ideas through its current affairs programming.¹⁴⁰ This study will argue that this

¹³⁴ Bourne, *Black in the British Frame*, 1-6, 168-182.

¹³⁵ Newton, *Paving the Empire Road*.

¹³⁶ Webster, *Englishness and Empire*, 14.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ Newton, *Paving the Empire Road*, 4.

¹³⁹ Schaffer, *The Vision of a Nation*, 6.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 274.

was not always the case with ATV; for example *ATV Today's* coverage of the NF provided unbalanced reporting in the party's favour.

During the 1960s and 1970s scholars such as Stuart Hall began to question the impartiality of television news reporting, examining negative representations of black and Asian immigrants.¹⁴¹ Studies of television news indicate that, despite its appearance of impartiality, it has played a crucial role in the formation of negative public attitudes towards race. Malik notes that television news 'presents reality mimetically', arguing that television news produces images of race that are removed from their context, resulting in the acceptance of racist thought.¹⁴² Schaffer's discussion of national news suggests that both the BBC and ITV attempted to provide balanced coverage of immigration, but nonetheless consistently presented the presence of immigrants as a problem.¹⁴³ This study compares ATV's regional news reporting of race and immigration with that of the BBC and ITV News (ITN), arguing that ATV understood balance and impartiality differently to national television news producers. ATV placed greater emphasis on the importance of representing the white communities they worked among and which were their primary audience. Because of this, ATV often presented the presence of immigrants as a threat to the audience's local area. Both the BBC and ITV also produced current affairs documentaries focusing on race and immigration. Schaffer argues that during the 1960s and 1970s, these documentaries were often 'determinately anti-racist', going on to discuss how ITV set the tone of 'punchy political documentaries' that was

¹⁴¹ Stuart Hall Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clarke and Brian Roberts, *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1978).

¹⁴² Malik, *Representing Black Britain*; Bourne, *Black in the British Frame*, 78.

¹⁴³ Schaffer, *The Vision of a Nation*, 67-88.

mimicked by the BBC.¹⁴⁴ ATV, on the other hand, did not produce current affairs programming which challenged racist ideas, meaning that this kind of programming was absent at a regional level.

Much like the rest of the scholarship on twentieth-century mass media, these studies are largely institutional histories, which, aside from Schaffer's, do not include ITV. Most of these studies suggest that television at least attempted to address racial prejudice. Schaffer notes that both the ITA and the BBC 'were motivated by law and convention to strive for objectivity and impartiality in news and current affairs coverage'.¹⁴⁵ ITV, however, made less effort than the BBC to provide programming specifically targeting black and Asian viewers due to fears that this would not provide adequate advertising revenue.¹⁴⁶ By looking beyond the BBC and ITV, Wendy Webster highlights the difficulties faced by film and television in promoting multiculturalism as being a central element of British national identity.¹⁴⁷ None of these studies have examined the role of regional media and its unique position of working on the fringes of the institutions they discuss, whilst at the same time remaining central for their viewers. This is what this study will do; through an examination of ITV's Midlands broadcasting, this study will demonstrate that regional television played a significant role in shaping public responses to post-war immigration, one that must not be overlooked.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 77-79.

¹⁴⁵ Schaffer, *The Vision of a Nation*, 101.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 35.

¹⁴⁷ Webster, *Englishness and Empire*.

ITV and ATV

In September 1955, ITV began broadcasting, marking an end to the BBC's monopoly.¹⁴⁸ The 1954 Television Act, which introduced commercial broadcasting, used similar language to the BBC; for example the requirement for the new broadcasting services to 'inform, educate and entertain'.¹⁴⁹ There were, however, marked differences in ITV's broadcasting style. Described by the BBC's first Director General, Lord Reith, as being 'the cultural equivalent of the bubonic plague', ITV introduced Americanised programming, including quiz shows, which were broadcast during peak hours, as well as imported programmes.¹⁵⁰ ITV positioned itself as 'the people's channel', quickly becoming associated with working-class viewers, whilst the BBC remained the channel associated with middle-class audiences.¹⁵¹ As well as in their entertainment programming, ITV's differing approach to broadcasting was apparent in their national news service, ITN, which had more focus on entertainment than BBC News, helping to win audiences.¹⁵² ITN drew on the American news model, which, unlike the BBC, used two newscasters, creating pace and allowing them to project more personality into their reporting.¹⁵³

One of the justifications for the introduction of commercial television, despite the government's rejection of the recommendation in the 1951 Beveridge

¹⁴⁸ Johnson and Turnock, 'Introduction,' 1.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Mick Temple, 'Citizen or Consumer? Representation of Class in Post-War British Media,' in *The Routledge Companion to British Media History*, ed. Martin Conboy and John Steel (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), 105.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Martin Conboy, *Journalism in Britain: A Historical Introduction* (London: SAGE, 2011), 33.

report, was the report's criticism of the London-centric structure of the BBC.¹⁵⁴ ITV had a regional structure, with the ITA issuing licenses to initially four regional franchises: Associated Re-diffusion, contractor for London; Associated Television (ATV), initially broadcasting to London on weekends and the Midlands on week days; Granada Television, broadcasting to the North; Associated British Corporation Television (ABC), broadcasting to both the Midlands and the North on weekends. By 1962, ITV had a total of fifteen regional programme companies in order to better reflect regions, an aim motivated, in part, by the belief that regionalisation could help target advertising towards the needs of specific localities.¹⁵⁵ The BBC, on the other hand, continued to place a strong emphasis on the 'concept of nation', which, as John Wallace noted in his study of regional television:

evolved into a narrow interpretation of national culture as a bond that brought people together in a shared experience, which rendered differences in locality, class and ethnicity redundant.¹⁵⁶

The BBC began broadcasting a regional news bulletin to the Midlands in 1964, however, until the 1990s ITV's regional structure meant that it remained 'the dominant player in regional broadcasting'.¹⁵⁷

In February 1956, ATV was first broadcast across the Midlands.¹⁵⁸ As an area with an affluent working-class population, the Midlands was the first area

¹⁵⁴ Catherine Johnson and Rob Turnock, 'From Start-Up to Consolidation: Institutions, Regions and Regulation Over the History of ITV,' in *ITV Cultures: Independent Television Over Fifty Years*, ed. Catherine Johnson and Rob Turnock (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2005), 19.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Wallace, 'A Sense of Region,' 57.

¹⁵⁷ Conboy, *Journalism in Britain*, 184.

¹⁵⁸ 'From 'ATVLand' in Colour,' Directed by Peter Raven (Birmingham: ATVLand Production, 2011), DVD.

outside of London to have regional broadcasting.¹⁵⁹ The station used the ITA's new 405 line transmitter, their first transmitter to be built outside of London, in Lichfield.¹⁶⁰ By the end of March, approximately 400,000 Midlands homes were receiving transmissions.¹⁶¹ By 1963 the Director General estimated the population which could 'receive good coverage' at 7,930,000, 'with another million in the fringe area'.¹⁶²

The Midlands area, as described by the Director General in 1963, stretched:

from Matlock Spa in the north to Cheltenham Spa in the south: from Much Wenlock and parts of the Houseman Country in the west to Melton Mowbray and Market Harborough in the east.¹⁶³

As well as being a large geographical area, the Midlands had the highest proportion of television sets in the country; according to a note on 'Independent Television in the Midlands', written by the Director General in 1963, approximately 85 per cent of Midlands households owned a TV by the early 1960s, meaning an estimated television audience of around six million.¹⁶⁴ During its initial years, the company provided content to the Midlands from Monday to Friday and to the London area at weekends.¹⁶⁵ Due to technical restrictions on broadcasting frequencies, during Saturday and Sunday, ABC

¹⁵⁹ Gillian Murray, 'Women and the Work of Cultural Production in ATV's Regional Television News, 1956-1968' (Unpublished PhD Thesis: University of Leicester, 2013), 637.

¹⁶⁰ IBA Archives Bournemouth, 154, 'Second Annual Report of the ITA,' 1956, 4.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁶² IBA Archives, Bournemouth, A/X/0004/9, Director General, 'Independent Television in the Midlands,' 7 March 1963.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ 'From 'ATVLand' in Colour.'

Weekend (Associated Broadcasting Company) broadcast to the Midlands and ATV broadcast to London.¹⁶⁶

In 1967, the ITA advertised new contracts for broadcasting licenses, which would be changed to single contract areas, leading to the creation of a new license area, covering Yorkshire.¹⁶⁷ The Midlands became a single license area, with ATV being given the contract to broadcast seven days a week.¹⁶⁸ Following this change, ATV moved to a new television centre in Birmingham.¹⁶⁹ In February 1982, ATV became Central Independent Television, a name that was felt by the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA), which had taken over from the ITA in 1972, to better reflect the region.¹⁷⁰ This change came as a result of a new set of contractual obligations released by the IBA, which required the Midlands broadcaster to be split into two regions: East and West Midlands.¹⁷¹ The IBA felt that the East Midlands was not being properly represented by the network, and that ATV was 'neglecting its regional commitment'.¹⁷² Before the change to Central, ATV's programming was broadcast from a studio in Aston, Birmingham and Elstree studios in London; Elstree was closed in December 1982 due to the IBA's policy that 'a region should be served from within the region'.¹⁷³ Following the change to Central, a

¹⁶⁶ Robinson, 'Gi' it Some' Ommer,' 143.

¹⁶⁷ 'From 'ATVLand' in Colour.'

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ IBA Archives, Bournemouth, A/E/0201/11, Lady Plowden, Letter to Lord Windlesham, 28 December 1980.

¹⁷¹ IBA Archives, Bournemouth, A/X/004/1, Collin Campbell, Letter to the company's Regional Officer, 30 December 1981,

¹⁷² Lee Bannister, 'The Story of ATV,' ATVLand, Accessed 21 December, 2016, www.atvland.net/guides/the-story-of-atv/

¹⁷³ IBA Archives, Bournemouth, A/E/0201/11, Cecil Parkinson MP, Letter to Lord Minifieth, Chairman of the IBA, 2 September 1981.

new studio was built in 1982 in Nottingham, to help the network better represent the East Midlands.¹⁷⁴

This thesis draws in part on the testimony of former reporters and crew at ATV, captured in a series of interviews that were conducted as part of the production of two DVDs: 'From Headlines to Tightlines: The Story of ATV Today' (2012), which explores the story of *ATV Today* from 1964 to 1981; and 'From ATVLand in Colour' (2011), which tells the story of the ATV Centre in Birmingham, from its opening, to its closure in 1997.¹⁷⁵ Both DVDs were produced by ATVLand Productions for the Media Archive for Central England (MACE).¹⁷⁶ The two DVDs give an uncritical representation of its history, nonetheless, the interviews with former presenters and members of ATV's production team provide a valuable insight into the inner workings of the company. For example, ATV reporter, Reg Harcourt, remembers how the change from ATV to Central was gradual, but there was a notable increase in focus on more political stories and disputes, marking a move away from the light hearted human-interest stories that ATV preferred.¹⁷⁷ Central television came to an end in 1990, when mergers within the network resulted in the takeover by British media company, Carlton Television.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁴ IBA Archives, Bournemouth, A/E/0201/11, 'IBA Chairman Lays Stone for Nottingham Studio,' IBA News Release, 23 February 1982.

¹⁷⁵ 'From 'ATVLand' in Colour'; 'From Headlines to "Tight-Lines": The Story of ATV Today,' Directed by Peter Raven (Birmingham: ATVLand, 2012), DVD.

¹⁷⁶ 'From 'ATVLand' in Colour'; 'From Headlines to "Tight-Lines".'

¹⁷⁷ 'From 'ATVLand' in Colour.'

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

ATV Today

In comparison with ITV's national broadcasting and with the BBC, ATV, described as 'the song and dance station of the network', took a very relaxed and informal approach.¹⁷⁹ ATV's style also differed from ITV's other regional networks, such as Granada, broadcast to the north of England, which produced more factual programmes.¹⁸⁰ The network looked at 'the quirky side' of Midlands life, on programmes such as *Midlands Montage*, an 'eccentric and interesting' weekly magazine programme.¹⁸¹ From 1956, ATV broadcast *Midlands News*, the country's first regional news programme, a Monday-Friday, ten-minute long programme that was largely studio based.¹⁸² In 1956 the *Midlands News* bulletin was praised by the Deputy Director General as 'being well received' by Midlands audiences and providing a 'useful local touch to their programmes'.¹⁸³ *ATV Today*, which began in 1964, combined elements of *Midlands Montage* and *Midlands News* into a twenty-minute long programme, which included news stories as well as feature items.¹⁸⁴

Each company area outside of London had a regional officer to represent the IBA at a regional level.¹⁸⁵ One of their roles was to ensure that the companies were broadcasting adequate regional content. In 1970, the Midlands Regional Officer described *ATV Today* as being 'better than it has ever been and at least as

¹⁷⁹ Banister, 'The Story of ATV.'

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ 'From Headlines to "Tight-Lines".'

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ IBA Archives, Bournemouth, A/X/0001/4, Mr. Brownsdon, 'Independent Television- the Midlands Programmes.'

¹⁸⁴ 'From Headlines to "Tight-Lines".'

¹⁸⁵ Peter M. Lewis, *Whose Media? The Annan Report and After: A Citizens Guide to Radio and Television* (London: Consumers' Association, 1978), 47.

good as any local magazine programme which I have ever seen'.¹⁸⁶ In his interview for 'From Headlines to Tightlines', Reg Harcourt, described the 'great strength of *ATV Today*' as being the mix of hard news, 'not done every day but when required', and more light-hearted topics, such as garden, sports and celebrity gossip.¹⁸⁷

ATV Today, which had a regular audience of around 3 million viewers, included many humorous news stories, some of which were designed purely for entertainment.¹⁸⁸ Reporters remember the drinking culture that existed at ATV studios, most of which took place at the 'ATV bar'; for example, 'Chris Tarrant used to come back after drinking and chuck women secretaries in the bin and think it was funny'.¹⁸⁹ This was remembered fondly by former ATV reporter, Mike Warman, who told interviewers: 'you'd have a queue down the road of industrial tribunals in this day and age'.¹⁹⁰ This is suggestive of ATV's attitude towards women.¹⁹¹ Most of ATV's reporters were men. Sue Jay, who joined the team in 1968, remembers how she was sent out to do a story on the birth of septuplets because nobody else wanted to do it, highlighting the network's approach towards female employees.¹⁹²

A study on television viewing, 'The 'Nationwide' Audience', conducted by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies and published in 1980, examined

¹⁸⁶ IBA Archives, Bournemouth, 3095/4/3, Midlands Regional Officer, Letter to Director General, 'Midlands Monthly Report for Midlands January/ February 1970.'

¹⁸⁷ 'From Headlines to "Tight-Lines".'

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Ibid.

audience responses to BBC's current affairs programme *Nationwide*, which included a twenty-minute section of local news.¹⁹³ Working-class respondents said that they preferred ATV, as it was 'more in tune their interests' as opposed to the 'middle-class', serious nature of *Nationwide*.¹⁹⁴ They went on to note that ATV offered a more relatable and realistic style of programming: 'you sort of associated yourself with the interviewer as though you were talking to them'.¹⁹⁵ One of the ways that ATV gained this response was through their use of vox pops, short for *vox populi*, meaning 'the voice of the people'. Reporters used vox pops to interview people on the street, providing the views of the community and allowing viewers to hear their own regional accents on television for the first time.¹⁹⁶ ATV was one of the first networks to use vox pops, creating a more familiar and informal style. They were used to address local issues, helping to fulfil ATV's regional remit. This informal style caused viewers to associate ATV with trustworthiness and familiarity, as opposed to national broadcasting, particularly that of the BBC, which came across as more distant and rehearsed.¹⁹⁷

ATV Today focused on aspects of Midlands life which differentiated the region from others.¹⁹⁸ David Morrison defines regionality as 'an awareness of belonging to an area which has some characteristics distinct from others' and

¹⁹³ Brunson and Morley, *The Nationwide Television Studies*.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 181.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 171.

¹⁹⁶ David Stephenson, *How to Succeed in Newspaper Journalism* (London: Kegan Page, 1998), 34.

¹⁹⁷ Brunson and Morley, *The Nationwide Television Studies*, 171.

¹⁹⁸ 'From Headlines to "Tight-Lines".'

thus 'the regional becomes a focal point of self-identity'.¹⁹⁹ Frances Eames describes how the 'narrative of everyday life' presented on *ATV Today* 'functioned to outline particular ideas which construct an imagined community' by showing viewers 'what behaviour is considered acceptable or deviant in the local community'.²⁰⁰ Regional news was able to define normal and acceptable attitudes towards race and immigration within communities. Eames draws upon Anderson's argument, that imagined national communities are created by mass media, but argues instead that rather than strengthening national identity, regional content, which draws upon familiar, local images and traditions, can also strengthen individuals' sense of belonging to a local community.

Simon Cottle suggests that the value of regional news programmes lies in their ability to 'attract and engage audiences' due to their emphasis on local issues and human interest stories, 'conveyed through the "familiar friend" image of the studio presenters' and 'comfortable visual scenes from the audience's region'.²⁰¹ Former ATV presenter, Chris Tarrant, discusses the use of this 'familiar friend' approach: 'we had a good time and it came across. They [the audience] knew you as their mates'.²⁰² Viewers claimed that the reporters were one of the reasons why they watched ATV news, noting that the network appeared less false, because reporters came across as 'more human' and appeared to have 'a good laugh'.²⁰³

¹⁹⁹ Bob Franklin, *Making the Local News: Local Journalism in Context* (London: Routledge, 1998), 39.

²⁰⁰ Eames, 'Normative Narratives,' 13.

²⁰¹ Franklin, *Making the Local News*, 37.

²⁰² 'From 'ATVLand' in Colour.'

²⁰³ Brunsdon and Morley, *The Nationwide Television Studies*, 181.

Presenters Chris Tarrant and John Swallow generally reported on the light-hearted, humorous stories that ATV was best known for.²⁰⁴ In an article written for the entertainment section of the *Daily Mail* in 1972, journalist Peter Back criticised Swallow's approach to broadcasting, saying he stuck rigidly to his belief that 'if it gets a laugh it's a good formula', resulting in television that was 'embarrassing, even hateful to watch'.²⁰⁵ Swallow was the reporter of choice for numerous reports about immigrant culture during the 1970s. He used his usual humorous approach, reflecting his attitude towards immigration. The decision by production staff to select Swallow for these reports is also reflective of the attitude of ATV more generally towards their coverage of race; immigrants were, at times, treated as a joke.

Reg Harcourt, described by Tarrant as 'the sensible one', usually presented more serious, political reports.²⁰⁶ Looking back on the representation of race in a report presented by himself, in which he interviewed immigrants on the street, Reg Harcourt described it as 'extraordinary', going on to say: 'looking back at it now, I'm just flabbergasted at how we went about it. But that was life as it was then'.²⁰⁷ In 1968, Barbara Blake Hannah became the first black news reporter in the UK, and ATV's second female reporter.²⁰⁸ In a letter to *The Guardian* in 2008, she detailed some of the discrimination she faced during her time working for ATV. She describes how production staff would ask questions

²⁰⁴ 'From Headlines to "Tight-Lines".'

²⁰⁵ Peter Back, 'Entertainment,' *Daily Mail*, 5 June 1972, 19.

²⁰⁶ 'From Headlines to "Tight-Lines".'

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Barbara Blake Hannah, 'It Wasn't Trevor or Moira- I Was the First Black British TV Presenter,' *The Guardian*, 23 October 2008, accessed 5 October 2016, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2008/oct/23/television-raceandreligion

such as: ‘what wog story are we doing today?’ and how a story which required her to swim in a pool, was turned into a story about how ‘black people don’t swim as well as whites because they won’t put their head under water’.²⁰⁹ Racism within the production team was seemingly common and immigrants were not perceived as part of the local community. This was reflected in ATV’s programming, which was made primarily both by, and for, white people.

The region had a large black and Asian population but it was not until the start of the 1980s when discussions about ATV’s relationship with black and Asian communities began to take place. In an interview conducted in 2002 for John Wallace’s PhD thesis, which discussed the role of ATV in the creation of regional identity, Claire Mulholland, Regional Officer from 1977 to 1982, told him:

I felt from day one that it did not reflect the whole multi-racial nature [of the region], and that is my main observation, never mind criticism. My main observation was that, if you lived in any one of the Midlands cities and you looked at the population, and you looked on screen, you didn’t see that reflected in local programmes, and I told ATV that early on in our relationship.²¹⁰

In their application in 1980, for the Independent Television contract for the dual- region, ATV wrote:

A broadcaster’s aim is to reflect the needs and aspirations of the whole of the community. Paradoxically this is not always possible to achieve through programmes designed with general appeal.²¹¹

ATV was granted the contract, under the condition that they met certain contractual requirements relating to their coverage of local interests. In a

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Wallace, ‘A Sense of Region,’ 180.

²¹¹ IBA Archives, Bournemouth, 61/1/C/1, ‘Application by ATV Midlands for Independent Television Contract C, East and West Midlands,’ May 1980.

meeting with ATV to discuss these requirements, it was noted that *Here and Now*, an ethnic minority arts and culture magazine programme, would be introduced to better reflect the 'multi-racial community' in the region.²¹² This suggests that by 1980s, ATV was itself aware of the important impact it was having on attitudes towards race within the region. The final chapter of this thesis will chart how its coverage developed in response to this.

All of the ATV news film inserts and the majority of the *Here and Now* episodes are currently held by MACE, situated at the University of Lincoln. MACE is the screen archive for the Midlands, holding 13,000 reels of news items broadcast to the Midlands by ITV's regional channel, making it the biggest collection of regional news material in the UK, providing a rich and previously overlooked source of regional history.²¹³ ATV's news coverage provides a record of working-class responses to immigration, documenting how key moments of tension were understood at a regional level. It also includes the voices of black and Asian people, documented through vox pops and interviews with ATV reporters. This thesis will reveal the need for more regional studies of television, stressing the centrality of local media for understanding public responses to race.

Other Sources Used

As well as examining regional television, this study will also examine a number of local newspapers from within the Midlands area, arguing that local press

²¹² IBA Archives, Bournemouth, 61/1/C/1, 'Minutes of a Meeting with ATV Network on Local Interest/ Orientation Contractual Requirement,' 29 May 1981.

²¹³ Murray, 'Women and the Work of Cultural Production in ATV's Regional Television News,' 77.

reporting heavily influenced ATV's framing of race. ATV had strong links with the local press; some of the reporters had previously been employed by Midlands newspapers, for example, Sue Jay, who joined the team in 1968, had previously worked on the *Leicester Mercury* and presenter Bob Warman began his career at the *Birmingham Mail*.²¹⁴ In his interview for 'From Headlines to Tightlines', Reg Harcourt noted that ATV's newsgatherers used to read local newspapers to get ideas for reports.²¹⁵ In a note marked confidential, written by the ITA's chairman in 1956, the chairman expressed concern about links between local press and ATV:

What was perhaps not seen was that the material for a regional news bulletin would almost certainly have to be supplemented by a local newspaper, for only a local newspaper would have the necessary news gathering resources.²¹⁶

He went on to note that the *Birmingham Post* and *Birmingham Mail*, owned by former Conservative MP, Lord Edward Iliffe, were both shareholders in ATV and that the *Birmingham Gazette*, which merged into the *Birmingham Post* in 1956, supplied news material for bulletins.²¹⁷ This indicates that regional television news was not providing an alternative representation to the local press, but rather often operating in conjunction with it and were also subject to the platforms of interested politicians.

²¹⁴ 'From Headlines to "Tight-Lines"; 'TV News Hosts Nick Owen and Bob Warman Back at School,' *BBC*, 28 September 2015, accessed 15 January 2017, www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-shropshire-34380944

²¹⁵ 'From Headlines to "Tight-Lines".'

²¹⁶ IBA Archives, Bournemouth, A/X/0002/4, ITA Chairman, 'Regional News in the Midlands,' 20 April 1956.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*

A number of ATV's staff went on to work on national television; the most notable examples being Chris Tarrant, and David Mannion, who worked on *ATV Today* in the 1970s before he eventually became the Editor in Chief of ITN.²¹⁸ This suggests that, at least for some, working in local television acted as a springboard to a career in national television. This study will examine a number of national media forms in order to show that local and national media were at times framing race and immigration in different ways. It will examine both ITN and BBC News programming in order to provide a full analysis of national television news during the period. Unlike ATV, both the BBC and ITV also produced numerous documentaries about race and immigration during the period, such as BBC's *Panorama* and ITV's *This Week*, which provided a type of in depth investigative journalism of immigration not seen at a regional level. This study will also examine how national current affairs documentaries provided a different representation of issues surrounding race and immigration to ATV. It will also compare national and local press coverage, examining two national newspapers, one tabloid and one broadsheet: *The Times* and the *Daily Mail*, two of the most widely read national newspapers during the period.²¹⁹

There is, by default, a difference in the scope of local and national media: local media focused on the specific issues that affected their audiences, reporting on these issues from a local perspective and representing the views of their local white communities. It was for this reason that there were often huge discrepancies between reporting of race within different localities, as well as

²¹⁸ Jonathan Bignell and Jeremy Orlebar, *The Television Handbook* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), 146.

²¹⁹ Adrian Bingham, *Family Newspapers? Sex, Private Life, and the British Popular Press, 1918-1978* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

between local and national reporting of race. It is important to bear in mind that audiences of local media within the midlands were also consumers of national media, which, as this study will show, often provided different and conflicting representations of immigrants to ATV and the local press. As this study will demonstrate, this reinforced the perception within local communities that those on the outside did not know or understand the impact that immigration was having on their towns, neighbourhoods and streets.

Broad archival work is required for understanding the local; this study makes extensive use of material located in numerous archives throughout the Midlands. The Wolfston Centre for Archival Research, situated within Birmingham Library, holds a vast collection of material documenting post-war race relations throughout the Midlands. The Birmingham Library contains microfilm copies of the *Birmingham Mail* and *Birmingham Post*. Sandwell Community Archives, in Smethwick, holds Smethwick's local newspaper the *Smethwick Telephone*, as well as documents relating to the 1964 General Election. The Marett collection at Leicester Record Office hold the *Leicester Mercury*, and material relating to racism, ethnicity and identity in Leicester. The Wolverhampton County Archives holds the *Wolverhampton Express & Star* as well as documents relating to Enoch Powell. A number of archives outside of the Midlands were also used, including the People's History Museum Archive and Study Centre in Manchester, the Black Cultural Archives in Brixton, the Churchill Archives in Cambridge, the National Archives in Kew, and the British Library sound and moving image catalogue. The IBA archives, in Bournemouth,

informed the study's understanding of the institutional history of ATV and ITV, through documents relating to the structure of ATV.

Chapter Outline

This thesis uses a case studies approach; the first three case studies examine how local media continuously framed immigration as a threat to the local area. Unlike the national media, which focused on broader national issues and demonstrated commitment to balanced reporting of immigration, ATV's reporting was more unbalanced against immigrants. It continuously showed the impact of immigration on local issues, such as housing and education, and emphasised the visibility of immigrants in the local area. This suggests that neutrality meant something different to ATV than it did to national broadcasters; as a regional channel, ATV's representation of race and immigration was thought to represent the views of its regional audience, who were imagined wholly as white. Anti-immigrant politicians were able to utilise this to gain substantial local support. The fourth case study differs from the first three as it provides an example of how, during the 1980s, other forms of regional media, produced by black and Asian people, for Black and Asian viewers, were able to push back against this racist regional reporting by creating their own narrative about race and immigration.

The key focus of this study is the white lens of regional television. ATV represented local black and Asian immigrants from a white perspective, providing a valuable insight into local responses towards immigration. This study provides a close analysis of numerous ATV reports, comparing, for

example, interview questions and filming techniques used with black and Asian interviewees, against those used when interviewing white local people. For example, black and Asian people were often asked far more challenging questions than white interviewees.

This study also examines how black and Asian people responded to the camera's 'white gaze'. Feminist film theorist Laura Mulvey used the term 'male gaze' to describe how the prevalence of men in control of cameras led to the objectification of women in films.²²⁰ Mulvey argues that this resulted in women in films being 'simultaneously looked at and displayed'.²²¹ This study will use the term 'white gaze' to discuss the way in which ATV's white producers and camera operators captured immigrants from a white perspective. ATV's news footage is a unique source as it gives us access to black and Asian voices on screen; there is a constant visible discomfort with the camera, which suggests both that ATV often filmed immigrants without consent and that immigrants increasingly understood the particular perspective of regional television.

Language about race evolves over time; at the time of writing this study, the terms 'Black Asian and Minority Ethnic' (BAME) and 'People of Colour' are widely used in discussions of race to refer to anyone who is not white. Both terms, however, have come under criticism for grouping a diverse range of racial groups under one heading. I have made a conscious choice not to use these two terms due to their problematic nature. Any term that presents

²²⁰ Laura Mulvey, *Visual and other Pleasures* (New York City, New York: Springer, 1989), 19.

²²¹ *Ibid.*

whiteness as the norm is highly problematic, however, for the purpose of this study, particularly in discussions of how ATV provided a wholly white perspective of immigration, it is necessary at times to make this distinction. For this reason, I have used the term 'non-white' a number of times, as it reflects the way in which white British people, and ATV, viewed immigrants during the period of study. When using the terms 'immigrants' or 'immigration' this study will refer to black and Asian immigrants from Britain's former colonies, reflecting its use at the time of study. The term 'Asian' will be used to refer specifically to those of South Asian origin or descent, and 'East African Asian' to refer to Asian refugees arriving in Britain from Uganda in the 1970s. I will use the term 'black' to refer to those of West Indian origin or descent.

The first chapter explores local media representations of immigrants in Smethwick, before and in the immediate aftermath of the 1964 general election. In 1964, Conservative candidate Peter Griffiths won a seat in Smethwick, following a fiercely anti-immigrant campaign. This chapter will argue that the local newspaper, *The Smethwick Telephone* provided extensive and hostile coverage of immigration, focusing on issues that specifically impacted the local area, such as housing and disease. ATV used the *Telephone* as a source of information and reinforced this message through a visual medium. Both the *Telephone* and ATV were supportive of Griffiths and later his plans to prevent the sale of houses on Marshall Street, Smethwick, to immigrants.

Chapter two examines the role of local media in the popularity of anti-immigrant Conservative MP, Enoch Powell, in Wolverhampton. It argues that his

famous 'Rivers of Blood' speech, delivered in 1968, successfully drew upon local fears that had been fuelled by both the *Express & Star* and ATV. Powell's speech took place in the midst of two local disputes, both of which were reported on extensively by local media: a local authority campaign for more government money to deal with the rising number of immigrant children in local schools, and a campaign to allow Sikh bus workers to wear beards and turbans to work. The chapter will also explore local media responses to his speech, arguing that unlike the national media, both the *Express & Star* and ATV were biased in his favour. Finally, the chapter will argue that Enoch Powell's speech had an enduring impact on ATV's reporting of race throughout the following decade.

The third chapter examines the role of local media in the rise in popularity of the NF in Leicester during the 1970s. The NF's popularity varied dramatically across the country; their best result in the 1976 local elections was in Leicester, where they gained 18 per cent of the total vote and 29 per cent of the vote in two wards.²²² The chapter will examine this in the context of local media responses to the arrival of Ugandan Asian immigrants in 1972, and the 1974 Leicester Imperial Typewriter factory strike. It will argue that, influenced by the racist reporting in the *Leicester Mercury*, ATV depicted Ugandan Asians as a threat to the local area, and Asian strikers as violent troublemakers, contributing to the climate of racial tension that allowed the NF to gain increasing support. It will also discuss the way in which the *Leicester Mercury* and ATV covered the NF. Unlike the national media, both the *Mercury* and ATV

²²² Rafaela M Dancygier, *Immigration and Conflict in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 209.

presented the NF as a viable political alternative to the mainstream political parties, contributing to their rise in popularity within the city.

The final case study moves away from focusing solely on ATV news, examining the representation of race on ATV's (Central after 1982) *Here and Now*, an ethnic minority arts and culture television magazine, which was broadcast to the Midlands throughout the 1980s. When rioting broke out in Handsworth in 1985, local media depicted young West Indians as violent criminals, whilst depicting Asian business owners as innocent victims, dividing black and Asian communities along class as well as racial lines. Like the previous three case studies, local media focused on the immediate threat posed to the local area, through local issues such as employment and crime, and the visibility of West Indians on the streets of Handsworth. This case study will argue that despite both programmes being produced by ATV (Central after 1982), *Here and Now* offered a far more positive representation of the black community. *Here and Now* is an important example of how alternative voices within local media were able to push back against reporting that consistently cast ethnic minorities in a negative light.

It is impossible to say for certain what impact ATV had on public perceptions of immigrants in the Midlands. The lack of documented evidence of audience responses to media is an issue widely encountered by historians; consideration of audience responses is, nonetheless, of great importance to social historians, who seek to understand the experiences of ordinary people in the past.

Audience responses to national television can be located in a number of places:

for example through Mass Observation, the national press and through audience response studies located at the IBA Archive. Locating regional responses, however, presents an added challenge, due to comparative lack of documentation. What evidence is available is generally anecdotal; for example, interviews with local residents and sociological studies, therefore this will not be the primary focus of this study.²²³

The central aim of this study is first and foremost to explore representations of race in overlooked regional content. What this thesis will do is examine how local and regional media both shaped and responded to local attitudes towards race and immigration, constructing local identities that excluded non-white viewers and defining the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion within local communities. In doing so, this study will expand our existing understanding of the uneven development of race relations in post-war Britain.

²²³ People's History Museum Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, CP/LON RACE/01/07, Bob Smyth, 'The People,' *ISIS*, No. 1477, November 1964, 15; N. Mould, *White Attitudes to Coloured Immigrants in Spon Lane, Smethwick, 1964* (Aberdeen: St Macher Micro-Politics Papers, 1973), 3.

Chapter One

Race, Politics and Local Media: Smethwick and the 1964 General Election

Introduction

In 1964, a small industrial town on the outskirts of the Black Country, once considered nothing more than a 'little dot on the map of Great Britain', became famous worldwide.²²⁴ This was due in part to the result of the fiercely anti-immigrant election campaign and subsequent victory of Conservative candidate and local man, Peter Griffiths. Not only did Labour's Shadow Foreign Secretary, Patrick Gordon Walker, lose the seat that he had held in Smethwick since 1945, but Griffiths' win reflected a 7.2 per cent swing to the Conservatives, the biggest of any constituency in the country.²²⁵ This result was completely out of step with the national swing of 3.5 per cent to Labour.²²⁶ The following year, Smethwick hit the national headlines once again following local plans to buy all of the available houses on Marshall Street to prevent their sale to immigrants. As a result of negative national attention, Smethwick had gained a reputation as 'a symbol of racialism and colour prejudice'.²²⁷ This chapter will argue that the cause of this reputation was more than simply a response to the high level of immigration in the town; from the start of the decade, Smethwick's local newspaper, the *Smethwick Telephone*, continuously played upon concerns about the perceived threat posed by immigration to the local area, particularly in regards to local housing and disease. ATV used the local press as a source of

²²⁴ Dhani Prem, *The Parliamentary Leper: A History of Colour Prejudice in Britain* (Aligarh: Metric Publications, 1965), 1.

²²⁵ Erik Bleich, *Race Politics in Britain and France: Ideas and Policymaking Since the 1960s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 48.

²²⁶ Birmingham Library, 'How the Votes Swung,' *Birmingham Post*, 16 October 1964, 1.

²²⁷ Prem, *The Parliamentary Leper*, 1.

news, thus the *Telephone* framed ATV's response to immigration in Smethwick. This chapter will argue that racial tension in Smethwick was, in part, the result of strong links between local politics and local media, which working together were able to successfully exploit local concerns about the impact of immigration on neighbourhoods and streets.

In 1964, the black and Asian population of Smethwick stood at approximately 4000 out of a total population of around 68,000.²²⁸ The size of this immigrant population was not at odds with that of other Midlands towns; other Midlands constituencies, such as Nottingham, Dudley and Wolverhampton all had a higher percentage immigrant population.²²⁹ Despite this, Labour managed to retain seats in all of these areas.²³⁰ In Nottingham Central, part of a city famous for its race riots in 1958, Labour candidate, Jack Dunnett, gained a seat from the Conservatives.²³¹ This indicates that it was more than simply personal, day-to-day interactions with immigrants that created this hostile, anti-immigrant environment in Smethwick on the eve of the General Election.

The 1964 General Election signified a pivotal moment in British political history, as it was the first time in which immigration had played such a significant role in an election campaign. Griffiths' win had far reaching implications; it demonstrated the potential success of an anti-immigrant campaign, placing

²²⁸ David Steel, *No Entry: The Background and Implications of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act, 1968* (London: C. Huret, 1969), 81; Paul Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics* (London: Penguin, 1965), 10.

²²⁹ People's History Museum and Study Centre, Manchester, CP/LON RACE/01/07, Leslie Stone, 'What Happened in Smethwick?', *Socialist Commentary*, 1965, 5.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*

²³¹ Daniel Lawrence, *Black Migrants: White Natives: A Study of Race Relations in Nottingham* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 133.

immigration 'at the centre of the party political stage'.²³² So, what was it that caused immigration and politics to become so 'dangerously interwoven' in Smethwick?²³³ The 'threat' of immigration was felt particularly strongly in a local context, where local politicians were able to exploit local working-class concerns about the impact of immigration on local housing, and the immediate impact and the visibility of immigrants on neighbourhoods and streets.

Smethwick is an example of the crucial role of local media, which spoke directly to the concerns of local people. The distribution of anti-immigrant propaganda in Smethwick did not begin in 1964, but can be traced back many years in the pages of Smethwick's weekly newspaper, the *Smethwick Telephone*. In the years leading up to the election, the Conservative party used the newspaper to fuel fears and emotional responses to immigration and to create the impression within Smethwick that immigration was a far greater issue in the town than it was in the rest of the country. The perceived threat presented in news stories played on a multitude of anxieties about local and national identity, housing, and health.

The arrival of large numbers of immigrants inevitably had some impact on Smethwick, suggesting that some initial level of racial tension was predictable. However, as a pamphlet published by the CARD highlighted, a 'persistent campaign was waged in Smethwick for a number of years with the sole intent of convincing residents that all of Smethwick's problems were caused by

²³² Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics*, 79.

²³³ Prem, *The Parliamentary Leper*, 112.

immigrants'.²³⁴ Leslie Stone, the Labour Party Press Officer in Smethwick during the election campaign, claimed that the *Telephone* had fostered much of the 'sense of separate identity and victimisation' that developed in the town.²³⁵ Griffiths was able to exploit anti-immigrant feelings created by the local press by convincing the people of Smethwick that he was the town's only hope of stopping immigration.

The *Telephone* was founded in 1884 and in 1888 was sold to James Billingsley, the only reporter employed by the newspaper at the time.²³⁶ Following his death in 1943, the newspaper was both edited and owned by his daughter, Kate Billingsley, an outspoken member of the Conservative party.²³⁷ After her death in 1962, the newspaper was sold to the West Midlands Press, who also owned the *Warley Courier* and was a subsidiary of the Birmingham Post and Mail Group Ltd, the largest press company in the West Midlands, owned by the Conservative Iliffe family.²³⁸ The chairman of the Post and Mail group, Sir Eric Clayson, was a director of ATV.²³⁹ A CARD publication, published in 1964, reported that an investigation by a Midlands correspondent at *The Times* found that in 1963 alone, the newspaper included more than 1650 column inches on the subject of immigration. He also found that the subject came up repeatedly in

²³⁴ People's History Museum Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, CP/LON RACE/01/07, 'Smethwick- Integration or Racialism?', CARD Publication, 1964, 6.

²³⁵ Stone, 'What Happened in Smethwick,' 6.

²³⁶ William Page, *The Victoria History of County of Stafford* (London: BiblioBazaar, 2010), 135.

²³⁷ Prem, *The Parliamentary Leper*, 32.

²³⁸ Chas Critcher, Margaret Parker and Ranjit Sondhi, 'Race in the Provincial Press: A Case Study of Five West Midlands Newspapers,' in *Ethnicity and the Media: An Analysis of Media Reporting in the United Kingdom, Canada and Ireland*, ed. UNESCO (Paris: UNESCO, 1977), 52.

²³⁹ Bernard Sendall, *Independent Television in Britain: Volume 2 Expansion and Change, 1958-68* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1983), 219.

the letters columns.²⁴⁰ The *Telephone* had a circulation of around 20,000, reaching a significant proportion of Smethwick's 22,240 households, indicating its potential impact on public opinion.²⁴¹

This chapter will provide an analysis of the *Telephone* from 1960 to 1965, including an evaluation of a number of letters to the editor as well as the news pages and the weekly political column published in the run up to the election. Unlike the national press, the *Telephone* framed immigration as a direct threat to the local community. It focused specifically on issues that concerned local people, such as housing, disease and the degradation of the local area, and presented immigrants as outsiders and incompatible with the local way of life.

The *Telephone's* role in the 1964 election has been acknowledged by a number of scholars including Paul Foot, Alice Ritscherle, A. W. Singham and Elizabeth Buettner.²⁴² What is equally notable, but nonetheless has been overlooked, is the role played by ATV, who used the local press as a source of news, reinforcing this framing of immigration through a visual medium. In the years preceding the election, ATV reported on a number of issues surrounding immigration in Smethwick. Whilst appearing sympathetic towards immigrants, these reports nonetheless presented their presence as a problem and depicted immigrants as

²⁴⁰ 'Smethwick- Integration or Racialism?', 6.

²⁴¹ Michael Hartley-Brewer, 'Smethwick,' in *Colour and the British Electorate, 1964*, ed. Nicholas Deakin (London: Pall Mall Press, 1965), 90.

²⁴² Alice Ritscherle, *Opting Out of Utopia: Race and Working-Class Political Culture in Britain During the Age of Decolonization, 1948-1968* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2005), 201; Elizabeth Buettner, 'This is Staffordshire Not Alabama': Racial Geographies of Commonwealth Immigration in Early 1960s Britain,' *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 42, no. 4 (2014): 715; Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics*, 41; W. A. Singham, 'Appendix III: Immigration and the Election,' in *The British General Election of 1964*, by D. E. Butler and Anthony King (London: Macmillan, 1964), 362.

outsiders. There is no remaining evidence of any mention of either Griffiths or his election campaign before the election on any of the ATV news items. This does not mean to say that this coverage did not exist. Half of each *Midlands News* programme was studio based and when *ATV Today* began in October 1964, the episodes were largely studio based during the first few months; it is therefore likely that the campaign was covered in the studio. MACE does not hold any of the in studio material from *Midlands News* or *ATV Today*; this material no longer exists due to issues regarding storage, reflecting a broad absence of studio-based broadcasts in archives.²⁴³

MACE does, however, hold numerous ATV news reports from after the election that are indicative of ATV's attitude towards Griffiths and the programme's priorities when it came to covering immigration, including vox pops with local residents and an interview with the town's Mayor, Alderman Clarence Williams. The Marshall Street campaign was also the subject of a number of ATV reports, including interviews with the housewives who organised it. This chapter will investigate the way in which ATV represented immigration in Smethwick in the years leading up to the election and in its aftermath. It will argue that ATV portrayed Griffiths and the Marshall Street plan favourably, reinforcing the perception that the presence of immigrants was problematic and legitimising racism within the town.

²⁴³ IBA Archives, Bournemouth, 7073/2, ATV Network Ltd, Letter to SD Murphey, Television Programme Officer, 29 September 1981.

The Build-up of Racial Tension in Smethwick: 1960 to 1964

Smethwick, a small industrial town situated a few miles West of Birmingham, has an industrial history that dates back to 1872.²⁴⁴ By 1965 there were over ninety factories within the five square mile town, its main industries being metal, glass, and the manufacturing of car components.²⁴⁵ For this reason, it was a popular destination for immigrants in search of work in the local manufacturing industry.²⁴⁶ Immigrants began to arrive in the town at the beginning of the 1950s, when an economic boom meant that Smethwick's factories were in desperate need of foreign labour.²⁴⁷ In 1953, job vacancies were being advertised in India, Pakistan, and the West Indies.²⁴⁸ By 1964, the immigrant population stood at approximately 4,000: 54 per cent Indian, 37 per cent West Indian, and the remainder Pakistani.²⁴⁹ Throughout the 1950s and 1960s there were periodic recessions in Smethwick; by 1961 around 10 per cent of all immigrants in Smethwick were unemployed.²⁵⁰ However, by 1964 the economy had moved into its fourth 'post-war pre-election boom' and employment figures rose.²⁵¹ At the time of the 1964 General Election the town was predominantly working-class, with only 18.6 per cent of occupied or retired males identifying as professional workers, employers and managers, and non-manual workers in the 1961 census.²⁵² From 1935 to 1964, Labour had control

²⁴⁴ Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics*, 10.

²⁴⁵ Page, *The History of County of Stafford*, 112.

²⁴⁶ Les Back and John Solomos, *Race, Politics and Social Change* (London: Routledge, 2002).

²⁴⁷ Steel, *No Entry*, 81.

²⁴⁸ Prem, *The Parliamentary Leper*, 9.

²⁴⁹ Steel, *No Entry*, 81.

²⁵⁰ Jeanette Money, *Fences and Neighbours: The Political Geography of Immigration Control* (London: Cornell University Press, 1999).

²⁵¹ Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics*, 17.

²⁵² Hartley-Brewer, 'Smethwick,' 78.

of Smethwick's council, however the Conservatives took control in the Local Election of May 1964.²⁵³

Griffiths, who had been a Conservative councillor in Smethwick since 1955, first unsuccessfully stood for parliamentary election in 1959. Griffiths drew upon local patriotism in the same way as he did in 1964, emphasising that he was a local man and using phrases such as: 'A Smethwick man for Smethwick'.²⁵⁴ He did not ignore immigration entirely in 1959, but it was by no means the focus of his campaign.²⁵⁵ Paul Foot argues that although Griffiths did not use immigration in his 1959 campaign, he 'instinctively favoured immigration control before the issue dominated Smethwick politics'.²⁵⁶ In 1959, despite the racial violence that had happened the previous year in Nottingham and Notting Hill, he did not believe that there were votes to be gained by an anti-immigrant campaign.²⁵⁷ Between 1959 and 1964 there had been a significant rise in anti-immigrant feeling amongst the Smethwick electorate, created in part by Griffiths himself.

What took place in Smethwick was by no means confined to the town.²⁵⁸ The 1962 Immigration Act, which was opposed by both Labour and the Liberal Parties, indicated the potential for immigration to feature more prominently as

²⁵³ Prem, *The Parliamentary Leper*, 116.

²⁵⁴ Bill Schwarz, "Shivering in the Noonday Sun': The British World and the Dynamics of 'Nativisation', in *Britishness Abroad: Transnational Movements and Imperial Cultures*, ed. Kate Darian-Smith, Patricia Grimshaw and Stuart Macintyre (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2007), 33.

²⁵⁵ Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics*, 31.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 30.

²⁵⁷ Colin Holmes, *A Tolerant Country? Immigrants, Refugees and Minorities* (London: Faber & Faber, 1991), 56.

²⁵⁸ Back and Solomos, *Race, Politics and Social Change*, 53.

an election issue in 1964 than it had in 1959.²⁵⁹ Although the Conservative manifesto featured only a brief mention of the issue, a small number of Conservatives were unhappy with this.²⁶⁰ Six out of eight Birmingham Conservative MPs attended a meeting called for Birmingham Conservative members to discuss the issue.²⁶¹ In Birmingham Perry Bar, the Conservative candidate distributed a leaflet claiming that if Labour won, another 300,000 immigrants would enter the country.²⁶² But immigration only featured as an issue in a very small number of constituencies and even in those constituencies it did not have the same impact as it did in Smethwick. For example, in Perry Bar, described by Foot as the 'closest parallel to Smethwick' in terms of the way in which local politicians exploited anti-immigrant sentiments, the Conservative candidate won only by 'a handful of votes' and this win was most likely aided by the Liberal candidate standing down.²⁶³ The swing of 1.6 per cent to Labour in the West Midlands may have been below the national average, however the 7.2 per cent swing to the Conservatives in Smethwick suggests that what happened in Smethwick was not simply part of a regional trend.²⁶⁴ For example, in the neighbouring district of Selly Oak, which had a higher percentage immigrant population than Smethwick, the swing to Labour was 3 per cent, in line with national trends.²⁶⁵ Labour also succeeded in winning seats in Birmingham All Saints, with a swing of only 0.8 per cent, and Sparkbrook, with a swing of 3.2 per

²⁵⁹ Steel, *No Entry*, 66.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 67.

²⁶¹ *Ibid*, 67.

²⁶² Stuart Ball and Ian Holliday, 'Mass Conservatism: An Introduction,' in *Mass Conservatism: The Conservatives and the Public Since the 1880s*, ed. Stuart Ball and Ian Holliday (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013).

²⁶³ D. E. Butler and Anthony King, *The British General Election of 1964* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1964), 320; Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics*, 79.

²⁶⁴ Butler and King, *The British General Election of 1964*, 307.

²⁶⁵ Prem, *The Parliamentary Leper*, 107.

cent, two constituencies with equally high immigrant populations.²⁶⁶ This variation in swings indicates that there were local differences in voting patterns; however the significant Conservative swing in Smethwick marks the town out. This difference was the result of an anti-immigrant campaign and its support from local media.

Immigration had a significant impact on the West Midlands and evidence of rising racial tension can be seen across the region. In October 1960 the Birmingham Immigration Control Association (BICA) was formed with the intention of reducing immigration into the area.²⁶⁷ Branches were subsequently formed in Smethwick, Wolverhampton and Oldbury. It was, however, only in Smethwick that the group had any significant political impact.²⁶⁸ In 1961, local engineer Donald Finney, infuriated by the news that a church in Smethwick had been converted into a Sikh temple, set up the Smethwick Immigration Control Association (SICA), a branch of the Birmingham group.²⁶⁹ Laurence Rieper, a retired bank official, who had previously sent numerous anti-immigrant letters to the *Telephone*, including one in which he expressed disgust at the thought of 'a fine race committing suicide by blood poisoning', a reference to inter-racial reproduction, was made Vice Chair.²⁷⁰ The SICA called for a ban on immigrants for the next five years, referring specifically to those who were not white.²⁷¹

²⁶⁶ Butler and King, *The British General Election of 1964*, 320.

²⁶⁷ Randall Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Post-War Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 96.

²⁶⁸ Christopher T Husbands, *Racial Exclusionism and the City: The Urban Support of the National Front* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1983), 67.

²⁶⁹ Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics*, 34.

²⁷⁰ Sandwell Community Archives, Smethwick, L Rieper, 'Coloured Influx,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 22 July 1960, 3.

²⁷¹ Sandwell Community Archives, Smethwick, 301.45, James Bryne, 'Smethwick by Another Name,' Institute of Race Relations, 2.

Neither the BICA or the SICA were mentioned in *The Times* or the *Daily Mail*, suggesting a reluctance to report on extreme-right groups; the *Telephone*, however, printed a letter from Finney explaining their aims and claiming that all they wanted was 'equal immigration laws with the rest of the commonwealth'.²⁷² Within three weeks, membership of the committee was reported to be over one thousand, demonstrating the power of the local media.²⁷³

The *Telephone* continued to provide Finney and the SICA with a platform. Finney wrote to the *Telephone* referencing reports of 'knife crime and other offenses between black people' regularly printed in the newspaper, arguing that the SICA was crucial for its prevention.²⁷⁴ In June, he wrote again to the newspaper, saying that all the committee wanted was equal rights for all members of the Commonwealth.²⁷⁵ This implied that immigrants were receiving preferential treatment and that the rights of white British citizens required defending. Other attempts to legitimise the committee included a letter to the editor, which stated that the SICA was 'not against colour', but the issue was with the number of immigrants in the country.²⁷⁶ This was typical of media representations of immigrants in the early 1960s, which were often concerned with the number of immigrants arriving into Britain.²⁷⁷ This attitude gave the

²⁷² Donald Finney, 'Committee to Control Immigration,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 2 March 1961, 7.

²⁷³ People's History Museum Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, CP/LON RACE/01/07, Michael Harloe, '1958-1963,' *Isis*, No. 1477, November 1964, 10.

²⁷⁴ Donald Finney, 'Immigration Control,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 21 April 1961, 7.

²⁷⁵ Donald Finney, 'Same Rights for All,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 30 June 1961, 7.

²⁷⁶ Charles Collett, "'We're Not Against Colour" Says Councillor Collett,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 21 April 1961, 7.

²⁷⁷ Barry Troyna, *Introduction to Race Relations* (Basingstoke: The Falmer Press, 1990), 80.

impression that it was possible to manage cultural differences as long as the current 'influx' of immigrants was not allowed to continue at its present rate.

In 1962, the already tense situation in Smethwick was intensified with the introduction of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act. Many immigrants responded to the threat of tighter control by telling their families to come to Britain while they had the chance, resulting in the immigrant population in Smethwick almost doubling.²⁷⁸ In the same year, Donald Finney, a man whose name was already associated with anti-immigrant campaigning through his association with the SICA and his letters to the *Telephone*, became linked with the Tories. Griffiths, who had been a Conservative councillor since 1955, approached Finney, suggesting that his work 'could be more effective' if he was a councillor.²⁷⁹ Later that year Finney was elected to the town's council with the biggest Conservative majority Spon Lane ward had seen since World War Two.²⁸⁰ Before this, the anti-immigrant activity in Smethwick 'had more to do with the activities of men of the racist right than Griffiths' or the Conservative party.²⁸¹ At this point, the activities of anti-immigrant individuals began to be absorbed into mainstream party politics.

Both the *Telephone* and ATV continued to fuel local concerns about immigration.

In 1963, Griffiths claimed to have seen white girls entering homes owned by

²⁷⁸ Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics*, 16.

²⁷⁹ Steel, *No Entry*, 83.

²⁸⁰ Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics*, 16.

²⁸¹ Andy Brown, *Political Languages of Race and the Politics of Exclusion* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 143.

Indians.²⁸² The belief that black men were inherently sexually predatory and violent was a common misconception during the period, leading to anxieties about the threat of inter-racial sex.²⁸³ As Wendy Webster notes, there was significant national media interest in inter-racial sex and marriages between white women and black men; for example ITV's 'Mixed Marriages' (1958) and 'Black Marries White: The Last Barrier' (1964), and films such as 'Flame in the Streets' (1961) all focused on the topic, and questions such as 'would you let your daughter marry a negro' became the ultimate test of liberalism.²⁸⁴ But unlike these national television documentaries, both the *Telephone* and ATV fuelled fears about the more immediate threat posed by black men to local white women and girls and presented black men as sexually predatory.

In May 1963, the *Telephone* printed a front-page article stating that vigilante patrols would be touring the Spon Lane area of Smethwick, following suggestions by Councillor Finney that young girls were 'frequenting the district for the purpose of associating with coloured men'.²⁸⁵ The article claimed that an investigation by the *Telephone* found little evidence of vice in the area, however it went on to say that tenants were keen to tell them that they had witnessed young girls being chased by 'gangs of coloured men'.²⁸⁶ The article did nothing to overcome fears or challenge perceptions of West Indian men, but instead continued to use language that presented them as sexually predatory and

²⁸² Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics*, 44.

²⁸³ Lucy Bland, 'White Women and Men of Colour: Miscegenation Fears in Britain after the Great War,' *Gender & History* 17, no. 1 (2005): 33.

²⁸⁴ Webster, *Englishness and Empire*, 157.

²⁸⁵ 'That Was the Vice That Was: But Vigilantes Will Tour Spon Lane Just in Case,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 10 May 1961, 1.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

dangerous, for example the phrase: 'The coloured men quickly vanished into the darkness of the night.'²⁸⁷

Less than a week after the article was published, ATV reporter, Tony Holmes, interviewed Finney and a local vicar in regards to the vigilantes that were patrolling Smethwick, indicating that ATV was following the lead of the *Telephone* in its selection of stories.²⁸⁸ The Vicar told Holmes that the word vigilante 'smells of American racialism' going on to say that he did not want 'our Birmingham to become another Birmingham Alabama', playing upon the idea that Britain was a more tolerant nation than America.²⁸⁹ As the vicar spoke, the camera closed in on his face, helping the audience better engage with his sense of despair. The following interview, however, went on to discredit his message. Holmes repeated the Vicar's concerns to Finney, who told him that this was 'silly'.²⁹⁰ He began by saying that the problem was not a racial issue, but an issue with prostitution; however he went on to refer directly to race when claiming that he had seen white girls walking up and down the street, being 'taken off in vans by coloured people'.²⁹¹ Finney was not interrogated further about these claims, allowing this message to go unquestioned. Despite initially providing a positive depiction of immigrants, this report went on to give Finney the opportunity to air his racist views and discredit the vicar as the final message of the broadcast.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Smethwick Vice Vigilante,' first broadcast on 16 May 1963, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-16051963-smethwick-vice-vigilantes

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

Local Housing and Public Health

It was competition for housing, rather than for jobs, that was the root of racial tension in Smethwick. Although the population decreased from 84,406 in 1931 to 68,390 in 1961, Smethwick remained one of the most densely populated areas in the country.²⁹² Smethwick experienced social problems before mass immigration into Britain, however immigrants provided a place for local white working-class people to lay the blame.²⁹³ In 1945, around 6,000 out of Smethwick's 21,400 homes were substandard.²⁹⁴ In 1958 the council began a process of slum clearance, which took place throughout the 1960s.²⁹⁵ This put a strain on council housing as the council was obliged to re-house all of those living in clearance areas.²⁹⁶ In 1961 there were 4,000 people on the council house waiting list; with a population density of 27.4 persons per acre there was very limited space to build more homes.²⁹⁷ Old Victorian houses, which were large, damp and difficult to heat, were often the only houses available for immigrants to live in, as immigrant families struggled to borrow money and were charged extortionate rates of rent.²⁹⁸ Avtar Johal, General Secretary of the Indian Workers' Association (IWA), who moved from the Punjab in 1958, describes how there were around sixteen Indians living in his first home on

²⁹² Page, *The Victoria History of County of Stafford*, 88.

²⁹³ Wal Hannington, *The Problem of the Distressed Areas: Volume 25* (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1937).

²⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 120.

²⁹⁵ Joanna Bourke, *Working Class Cultures in Britain, 1890-1960: Gender, Class and Ethnicity* (London: Routledge, 2008), 168.

²⁹⁶ Prem, *The Parliamentary Leper*, 129.

²⁹⁷ Hartley-Brewer, 'Smethwick,' 78.

²⁹⁸ John Davis, 'Rents and Race in 1960s London: New Light on Rachmanism,' *Twentieth Century British History* 12, no. 1 (2001): 78.

Oxford Road, Smethwick, with multiple double beds in both bedrooms and the living room.²⁹⁹

Efforts were made by organisations such as the CARD to educate people about the realities of the housing problem. For example a pamphlet titled ‘Smethwick- Integration or racialism?’ attempted to explain that the issues with housing in Smethwick were economic and political and could not be blamed on immigrants.³⁰⁰ However, it was impossible for such organisations to counteract the opposing messages being distributed by the local press. The view that immigrants were to blame for overcrowding and other housing issues was continuously spread in the *Telephone*. For example, a report about overcrowding, published in the *Telephone* on 9 June 1961, had the headline: ‘The Telephone and the Colour Problem’, again associating the housing problem with race.³⁰¹ The article referred to letters sent in by members of the public regarding the ‘shockingly overcrowded conditions’ which many immigrants were living in.³⁰² The writer urged those who lived in areas ‘in which immigrants congregate’ to write to them providing evidence of any house which was overcrowded or unsanitary.³⁰³ After referring to the town’s housing problem as a ‘colour problem’, the article went on to claim that the newspaper had no colour prejudice.³⁰⁴ This was a common way for the media and politicians to approach race during this period; both very rarely admitted to

²⁹⁹ Avtar Jouhl, ‘The Land of Money? Transcription of Cassette 1 Side A,’ Accessed 5 May 2015, www.bbohp.org.uk/bbohp-transcripts.pdf

³⁰⁰ ‘Smethwick- Integration or Racialism?’, 2.

³⁰¹ ‘The Telephone and the Colour Problem,’ *Smethwick Telephone*, 9 June 1961, 7.

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

racial prejudice and Britain was perceived as being far more racially tolerant than America.³⁰⁵ As Kenetta Hammond Perry notes, the media spectacle of race riots in America was often used by many as a 'counterpoint to define the virtues of the British nation'.³⁰⁶ By approaching immigration in this way, the media was able to express a sense of unity against an 'alien threat' whilst maintaining Britain's image as a tolerant society.³⁰⁷

This call for evidence gave rise to heated responses from the people of Smethwick. On 16 June 1961, the newspaper printed an article with the headline '10 Rooms- 34 people: This is Overcrowding Says White Lodger in Indian House'.³⁰⁸ This headline once again linked overcrowding with race. The article discussed a disabled Korean War veteran who lived with his wife and two children in an overcrowded and unsanitary ten bedroomed house.³⁰⁹ Numerous letters expressing outrage at the housing situation followed this. Some of the most overtly negative representations of immigrants can be found in the newspaper's letters pages. As Elizabeth Buettner notes, letters to the editor provided a 'public outlet' to local people who otherwise 'lacked a means of expression', creating a local community by allowing individuals to connect to those with similar views.³¹⁰ For example, one letter suggested that Smethwick was 'swamped' with 'coloured' people, which were said to cause bad smells and

³⁰⁵ Kenetta Hammond Perry, "'Little Rock' in Britain: Jim Crow's Transatlantic Topographies,' *Journal of British Studies* 51, no. 1 (2012): 158; Webster, *Englishness and Empire*, 51.

³⁰⁶ Hammond Perry, "'Little Rock' in Britain,' 158.

³⁰⁷ Andrew Pilkington, *Race Relations in Britain* (Slough: University Tutorial Press Limited, 1984), 157.

³⁰⁸ '10 Rooms- 34 People: This Is Overcrowding Says White Lodger in Indian House,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 16 June 1961, 1.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ Buettner, "This is Staffordshire Not Alabama,' 710.

the deterioration of the local area.³¹¹ The smell of curry, which was representative of cultural difference, was one of the most common complaints about Asians and the cause of deep resentment.³¹² This is another example of what Herbert describes as the 'white national fantasy', the imagined nation in which whites are superior.³¹³ White British people did not easily accept the rapid changes that were taking place in their local areas. As Bill Schwartz discusses, the arrival of black and Asian immigrants into Britain following decolonisation led to fears about the loss of 'white authority'.³¹⁴ This was felt most strongly within local communities, such as Smethwick, where the arrival of large numbers of immigrants was having a visible impact.

The newspaper used words such as 'ghetto' in order to convey meaning to readers without much need for explanation.³¹⁵ The article 'Sikh Ghetto warning', printed in July 1961, claimed that Oldbury Road may become a Sikh ghetto and suggested that Sikhs were happier living in their own communities.³¹⁶ This created the impression that immigrants did not want to integrate into the local community while also referencing American urban centres as a sort of racial spectre.³¹⁷

³¹¹ 'But They Are Not Immigrants,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 7 July 1961, 7; 'Why Not Offer Them Shelter?,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 25 August 1961, 7.

³¹² Elizabeth Buettner, "'Going for an Indian": South Asian Restaurants and the Limits of Multiculturalism," *The Journal of Modern History* 80, no. 3 (2008): 875.

³¹³ Joanna Herbert, *Negotiating Boundaries in the City: Migration, Ethnicity, and Gender in Britain* (London: Routledge, 2008), 33.

³¹⁴ Bill Schwarz, *The White Man's World: Memories of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 11.

³¹⁵ David Machin and Andrea Mayr, *How to Do Critical Discourse Analysis* (London: SAGE, 2012), 32.

³¹⁶ 'Sikh Ghetto Warning,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 1 June 1962, 5.

³¹⁷ Hammond Perry, "'Little Rock" in Britain,' 158

Issues around immigration and housing were by no means confined to Smethwick. Like the *Telephone*, the national press reported on the overcrowded conditions that immigrants often occupied in various towns and cities across the UK.³¹⁸ Much like the *Telephone*, the national press also made claims that immigrants were causing the degradation of British streets.³¹⁹ Unlike the *Telephone*, however, the national press did go some way to explaining the reason why immigrants lived in poor conditions. For example, an article published in *The Times* in June 1960, stated that immigrants were 'too poor to buy a house outright, not rich enough to qualify for mortgages or pay high rent' and that more needed to be done by local councils to rehouse immigrants.³²⁰ The *Telephone* was also, unlike the national press, consistently reporting on the impact of overcrowding within the local area and on specific streets, creating a sense of a far more immediate threat.

In July 1961, one month after the *Telephone* had appealed to local people to share their negative experiences of living near immigrants, Smethwick's housing committee awarded Pakistani man, Mr Sardar Mohammed, and his family a council house on Price Street, after their home was demolished as part of the slum clearance.³²¹ Despite the council's legal obligation to rehouse him, this angered many white residents, resulting in a number of the council tenants conducting a rent strike.³²² ATV's reporting of the strike on 24 July opened with a shot of the slum clearance area, showing run down houses with missing

³¹⁸ 'Immigration from 25 Countries Sets Bedford a Big Problem,' *The Times*, 27 December 1962, 4.

³¹⁹ Ibid.

³²⁰ 'Immigrants Put Out New Roots,' *The Times*, 3 June 1960, 7.

³²¹ Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics*, 38.

³²² Prem, *The Parliamentary Leper*, 129.

windows and holes in their roofs.³²³ This was contrasted by the following shots of Price Street. A close up shot of the houses showed their neat and tidy curtains, creating the impression that the white local residents who currently lived there were clean, tidy, and respectful: traits associated with Englishness, not just by the media but by sociologists examining immigration in the period, as Chris Waters has argued.³²⁴ This reflected the way in which immigrants had been represented in the local press in the months before, suggesting that the *Telephone* was influencing the way in which ATV reported on race. It was feared that this Englishness was under direct threat from immigrants, whose cultural differences were believed to prevent them from treating their homes according to British standards. This not only represented a threat to Englishness, but more crucially to local standards and traditions. Whilst news stories such as this often used visual imagery to draw upon well-known stereotypes that required no explanation, such as the shot of the window, they very rarely provided contextual information, such as the reasons why immigrants lived in poor housing conditions. As Malik quite rightly suggests, this lack of context can be highly problematic.³²⁵

³²³ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Rent Strike Threatened at Smethwick,' first broadcast on 24 July 1961, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-24071961-rent-strike-threatened-at-smethwick

³²⁴ Chris Waters, "Dark Strangers" in our Midst: Discourses of Race and Nation in Britain, 1947-1964,' *Journal of British Studies* 36, no. 2 (1997): 224.

³²⁵ Sarita Malik, *Representing Black Britain: Black and Asian Images on Television* (London: SAGE, 2002), 78.



Shot of flats on Price Street, Smethwick. MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Rent Strike Threatened at Smethwick,' first broadcast on 24 July, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-24071961-rent-strike-threatened-at-smethwick

Further shots showed a group of white women standing outside one of the houses, followed by the Asian family standing separately. By showing Asian and white residents in separate shots, this report emphasised the divide between the Pakistani family and the white working-class residents, presenting them as a competitive threat. Schaffer argues that television coverage of immigrants was often 'well meaning' and intended to 'explain multiculturalism and immigration in a sympathetic manner', but that at the same time it highlighted perceived differences and implied that their presence and behaviour were the cause of hostility.³²⁶ The latter was evident in this report. Whilst the opening shots displayed sympathy towards the family, the overall message was negative and the Asian family were depicted as being the cause of the rent strike.

³²⁶ Gavin Schaffer, *The Vision of a Nation: Making Multiculturalism on British Television*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 6.



Shots of Price Street residents standing on balcony. MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Rent Strike Threatened at Smethwick,' first broadcast on 24 July 1961, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-24071961-rent-strike-threatened-at-smethwick

The sense of frustration that arose from the perception that the Labour Party was unfairly assisting immigrants before local white people, was exemplified in a letter sent to the *Telephone* the following month, which noted that British 'human beings' have been waiting years for council houses and it was unfair to give one to a Pakistani family.³²⁷ Joanna Herbert refers to this type of response as a feeling of 'white defeat': a perception that white power and privilege had

³²⁷ F. J. Capewell, 'Britons Are Humans Too,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 11 August 1961, 5.

been lost.³²⁸ She attributes this to negative reactions to anything felt to give colonial immigrants an advantage, such as the awarding of council houses.³²⁹

Fears about overcrowding and unsanitary housing conditions contributed to concerns about the threat of disease in Smethwick. As Roberta Bivins notes: 'while the impact of 'coloured' immigration on housing and employment featured most strongly in popular expressions of discontent, health was not far behind'.³³⁰ Immigrants had long been heavily associated with mental defects and disease, which were perceived as a threat to social order, public health, and racial purity.³³¹ In his book, Griffiths claimed that a 'reduction of public health standards' was one of the biggest concerns about immigration, as 'the commonwealth countries standards of public health are way below ours'.³³² The 1960s saw a rise in TB and according to the *Telephone*, Smethwick had the highest rate in the country.³³³ Thirty-five out of thirty-six new cases of TB in Smethwick in 1962 were immigrants, a figure that is perhaps unsurprising when considering the overcrowded conditions in which immigrants were forced to live.³³⁴

The town's public health department maintained that immigrants were not causing any serious threat to public health, however the local press and some

³²⁸ Herbert, *Negotiating Boundaries in the City*, 39.

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Roberta Bivins, 'Picturing Race in the British National Health Service, 1948-1988,' *Twentieth Century British History* 28, no. 1 (2017): 84.

³³¹ Mark Jackson, 'Changing Depictions of Disease: Race, Representation and the History of 'Mongolism'', in *Race, Science and Medicine, 1700-1960*, ed. Waltraud Ernst and Bernard Harris (London: Routledge, 1999), 166.

³³² Peter Griffiths, *A Question of Colour* (London: Frewin, 1966), 143.

³³³ 'Tuberculosis- Enemy in Retreat,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 10 June 1960, 5.

³³⁴ Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics*, 15.

local politicians played upon local concerns, suggesting that overcrowded housing was causing health problems in the town.³³⁵ An article in the *Telephone*, headlined: 'Tuberculosis- Enemy in Retreat' published in 1960, linked the high TB rate in Smethwick to the large immigrant population, writing: 'Smethwick has a large immigrant multi-racial population constantly on the move, many of them living in far from ideal conditions. Such conditions favour the spread of tuberculosis among all social classes.'³³⁶ Another article suggested that the health authorities treated immigrants too leniently, reporting that Tory Councillor C. Lee believed that the town's health department was allowing immigrants to flout health laws.³³⁷ Public attitudes towards disease in Smethwick reflected this press coverage; for instance when Oxford students interviewed residents in 1964, a female respondent said that immigrants had 'all got T.B and they give it to us'.³³⁸ Similarly in 1965 when Reg Harcourt interviewed a Smethwick housewife on ATV, she was adamant that immigrants were spreading TB on her street, but when asked how she knew this she simply said that she had been told by 'people who know'.³³⁹ It was not unusual for anti-immigrant local newspapers to play upon concerns about immigration and disease in this way. In her work on race and the British NHS, Roberta Bivins notes that during the 1961 to 1962 outbreak of smallpox, the *Yorkshire Post* 'deliberately fostered the impression of a 'conflict of interest' between 'immigrants' and the local population', creating the impression that immigrants

³³⁵ Prem, *The Parliamentary Leper*, 55.

³³⁶ 'Tuberculosis- Enemy in Retreat,' 5.

³³⁷ 'Whites and Coloured are Treated the Same,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 1 July 1960, 3.

³³⁸ People's History Museum Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, CP/LON RACE/01/07, Bob Smyth, 'The People,' *ISIS*, No. 1477, November 1964, 17.

³³⁹ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Smethwick Race Question,' first broadcast on 7 December 1964, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-07121964-smethwick-race-question

did not care about exposing local people to disease.³⁴⁰ Here we see how some local newspapers presented disease as an immediate threat posed by immigrants within local areas.

The national press also repeatedly reported on the threat of disease posed by immigration. The national press, however, placed far more focus on the need for medical checks upon entry into the UK, as opposed to the *Telephone*, which tended to focus specifically on the poor living conditions of immigrants within the local area, emphasising links between uncleanliness and disease.³⁴¹ ITN and BBC News both broadcast numerous reports about the outbreak of typhoid across the UK.³⁴² Like the national press, they presented immigration as the cause of the problem, but focused on the threat of immigrants arriving with diseases and the need for stricter control on entry into the UK.³⁴³ This was notably different from the way in which ATV presented immigration and disease: as an immediate threat to the local area, caused by overcrowding.

An *ATV Today* report broadcast in April 1965 indicates how ATV's framing of disease and overcrowding in the town was influenced by local reporting in the

³⁴⁰ Bivins, 'Picturing Race in the British National Health Service,' 84.

³⁴¹ 'Check All Migrants for TB Demands Doctors,' *Daily Mail*, 7 December 1961, 1; 'Four Ways to Adjust to Immigration,' *The Times*, 9 March 1965, 13; 'Greater Risk of Tropical Disease,' *The Times*, 20 November 1964, 9; 'Immigrants Put Out New Roots,' *The Times*, 3 June 1960, 7; 'Immigrants Who May Bring Disease: Big Problem of Control,' *The Times*, 20 January 1960, 7; 'X-Ray Check Urged for Immigrants,' *The Times*, 7 December 1961, 6.

³⁴² BBC Motion Gallery, *BBC News*, 'Aberdeen Typhoid Outbreak,' first broadcast on 17 December 1964, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/352-64-05; BBC Motion Gallery, *BBC News*, 'Birmingham: Typhoid Outbreak in Smethwick,' first broadcast on 22 April 1965, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/352-64-05; ITN Archive, *ITN*, 'Typhoid in Aberdeen,' first Broadcast on 9 June 1964, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/723473627

³⁴³ BBC Motion Gallery, *BBC News*, 'Calls for Stricter Medical Checks on Immigrants,' first broadcast on 24 September 1965, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/267-65-12

Telephone.³⁴⁴ It began with a shot of ATV reporter, Tim Downes, standing in front of a small terraced house, telling the audience that the three confirmed typhoid cases from Smethwick lived in the house, along with 'seven or eight other West Indians'.³⁴⁵ As he said this, the camera moved into a tight close-up of the house, emphasising that it was overcrowded by showing its size. The camera then moved back to focus on Downes as he told viewers: 'For some time, the mother and daughter were walking around with the germ and could have passed it on to people they'd been in close contact with.'³⁴⁶ Downes associated this threat with uncleanness when he told viewers that Typhoid came from 'dirty hands and bad food handling', creating links between uncleanness, disease, and immigrants, fuelling the existing panic.³⁴⁷

An analysis of both the *Telephone* and ATV's reporting in the years preceding the election indicates that racial tension was already building in Smethwick and that local media was fuelling local racism. It is also clear that by 1964, dangerous links were forming between the local press, right wing individuals, and mainstream local politics. The *Telephone* helped individuals such as Finney and Rieper to circulate their extreme anti-immigrant views. Finney's newfound connections with Griffiths and the Conservative Party provided him with another platform on which to spread these messages within the local area. The influence of the *Telephone* on ATV's reporting of race and immigration within Smethwick is evident, meaning that this anti-immigrant message was being

³⁴⁴ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Typhoid at Smethwick,' first broadcast on 22 April 1965, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-22041965-typhoid-at-smethwick

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

spread, not just through the local press, but also through the visual medium of regional television news.

The impact of local media on public responses to immigration in Smethwick can be seen in a number of responses to interviews and sociological studies, conducted in 1964. Students from Oxford's University Magazine, *Isis*, found that 'quite a few people' blamed the racial tension in Smethwick on the newspapers; one interviewee said: 'it's all a storm in a teacup. Sometimes you can go for a whole day without seeing a nigger.'³⁴⁸ The magazine stated that of those interviewed, very few of the 90 per cent who admitted that racial tension had influenced their voting choices were personally affected by immigration.³⁴⁹ Similarly, a survey done by British Sociologist, N. Mould, in 1964, found that those who regularly came into contact with immigrants at work were 'a good deal more inclined to tolerate connections' with them than those who did not work with them.³⁵⁰

The *Isis* interviews also revealed that those who had chosen to change their voting behaviour in the 1964 election had done so for local, rather than national reasons, with only 4 per cent of respondents mentioning national issues.³⁵¹ This was corroborated by Mould's sociological survey, which found that a majority of those who changed their vote from Labour to Conservative did so because of local concerns.³⁵² Clearly many residents felt that immigration was a greater

³⁴⁸ Smyth, 'The People,' 16.

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

³⁵⁰ Mould, *White Attitudes to Coloured Immigrants*, 24.

³⁵¹ Smyth, 'The People,' 16.

³⁵² Mould, *White Attitudes to Coloured Immigrants*, 2.

problem in Smethwick than it was in any other part of the country; this was a myth created by Griffiths and the *Smethwick Telephone* and promoted by ATV.

The Election Campaign

Griffiths' extreme views on immigration can be found in his book, *A Question of Colour*, in which he wrote: 'Apartheid, if it could be separated from racialism, could well be an alternative solution to integration.'³⁵³ These views were reflected in his campaign. For example, he famously used the slogan: 'If you want a nigger for a neighbour, vote Labour.'³⁵⁴ Considering the *Telephone's* history of distributing anti-immigrant propaganda, it is unsurprising that the newspaper supported Griffiths in his election campaign. His weekly column, which all candidates wrote in the run up to the election, continuously focused on immigration, with particular emphasis on local issues such as housing.³⁵⁵ Despite giving the appearance of impartiality by giving all three candidates the opportunity to write a column, the newspaper was far more supportive of Griffiths than the other candidates. For example, in October, the month of the election, the newspaper printed an article with the headline: 'Ten Points on Colour', with the subheading 'liberals and socialists agree with some'.³⁵⁶ The article listed Griffiths' ten-point plan with no criticism, other than that Gordon Walker claimed that 'the suggestion of helping immigrants return to their own countries' had been rejected by the Home Secretary.³⁵⁷ The *Telephone* also printed letters relating to the election, including one from Finney, which

³⁵³ Griffiths, *A Question of Colour*, 62.

³⁵⁴ Evan Smith, *British Communism and the Politics of Race* (Leiden: BRILL, 2017), 75.

³⁵⁵ 'Tories Face Uproar,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 9 October 1964, 16.

³⁵⁶ 'Ten Points on Colour,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 2 October 1964, 2.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

claimed that he had 'searched through many newspapers' and found no evidence of a 'single positive thing' that Gordon Walker had done for the town.³⁵⁸ He went on to say that Gordon Walker went against the wishes of the people of Smethwick by fighting the Immigration Bill, and that Griffiths 'fights seven days a week for a cleaner, better Smethwick'.³⁵⁹

The *Birmingham Post*, a daily newspaper that circulated across the West Midlands including Smethwick, was also part of the Conservative owned Birmingham Mail and Post Ltd group, and was also supportive of Griffiths' campaign.³⁶⁰ Shortly before the election the newspaper predicted his win, suggesting that this would be because of his close contact with and understanding of his electorate.³⁶¹ The newspaper appeared keen to highlight his role as a teacher and chairman of the education committee and to play down any of his negative associations.³⁶² For example, an article described his plans to segregate schools as being 'nothing to do with segregation'.³⁶³ The IWA accused the *Birmingham Post* of failing to print statements made in response to Griffiths. A letter sent from Jagmohan Joshi on behalf of the IWA, in September 1964, said that the newspaper gave 'considerable coverage to Griffiths' statement and comments on it and on the racial question in general' but that 'no space was devoted to our statement'.³⁶⁴

³⁵⁸ Donald Finney, 'But What Has the MP Done?,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 11 September 1964, 14.

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ Meryl Aldridge, *Understanding the Local Media* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2007), 72.

³⁶¹ David Talbot, 'Immigration Issue Likely to Give Tory Win,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 15 October 1964, 7.

³⁶² 'Ald Griffiths- 'Post for Mr. Gordon Walker Unethical,' *Birmingham Post*, 17 October 1964, 1.

³⁶³ 'Tory Schools Plan Rejected,' *Birmingham Post*, 14 January 1964, 4.

³⁶⁴ Wolfson Centre for Archival Research, Birmingham, MS 2141 A/4, Jagmohan Joshi, Letter to the Editor of the *Birmingham Post*, 25 September 1964.

It could be argued that the result in Smethwick corresponded to a pattern over a number of General elections, which saw a decrease in support for Gordon Walker. In 1945, Labour won the seat with a majority of 9,885; by 1959 this majority had dropped to 3,500 over three elections.³⁶⁵ This steady loss of support has been associated with Gordon Walker's failure to appear active within Smethwick. However, a majority that reduced gradually over four elections in line with national trends is not sufficient explanation for a crushing defeat in a year in which Labour achieved huge national success.³⁶⁶ From as early as 1961, slogans such as 'Patrick Gordon Walker: traitor to the working class' began to appear on buildings in Smethwick.³⁶⁷ During this period, the *Telephone* began to receive letters claiming that Gordon Walker was out of touch with the people of Smethwick. An example of this is a letter printed in December 1961, which said that Patrick Gordon Walker did not represent the people of Smethwick and that he 'should come and live in Smethwick and then he may understand Smethwick's problems'.³⁶⁸ This was also reflected in vox pops in Smethwick, broadcast by ATV after the election, which showed the opinion that Gordon Walker did not properly understand or represent the community.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁵ Mould, *White Attitudes to Coloured Immigrants*, 4.

³⁶⁶ Robert D. Pearce, ed., *Patrick Gordon Walker: Political Diaries, 1932-1971* (London: Historians' Press, 1991), 41.

³⁶⁷ 'Colour- Bar Daubers Campaign,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 8 December 1961, 1.

³⁶⁸ 'Redundancy and the Immigrants,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 15 December 1961, 7.

³⁶⁹ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Peter Griffiths Vox Pops,' first broadcast on 4 November 1964, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-04111964-peter-griffiths-vox-pops

Throughout the years leading up to the election, a split in the Smethwick Labour Party was heavily publicised in the pages of the *Telephone*.³⁷⁰ For example, a letter sent to the *Telephone* in 1961 by the Secretary of Smethwick Liberals said: 'It is not surprising that the people in Smethwick are disgusted with the Labour Party.'³⁷¹ Much of this disgust originated from claims made by Griffiths himself; throughout the years leading up to the election, Griffiths created a host of wild accusations against Gordon Walker, many of which were distributed by the *Telephone*. One of the most damaging of these rumours was that the Labour Party, specifically Gordon Walker, was responsible for the right of free entry into Britain enjoyed by Commonwealth immigrants, despite the fact that this right dated back to the beginning of the British Empire and was affirmed with the 1948 British Nationality Act.³⁷² This suggestion stemmed from Gordon Walker's opposition to the Commonwealth Immigration Bill on the grounds that it revoked this right.³⁷³

Griffiths made efforts, whenever possible, to stress that he was a local man who represented the ordinary working-class man and woman in Smethwick. He was a teacher, an active member of the National Union of Teachers and had a reputation for demanding improvements in local schools.³⁷⁴ All of this was noted in his election address, in which he said 'this is my home' and 'I know and

³⁷⁰ Ken Bunch, 'Is the Labour Split Getting Wider?,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 15 December 1961, 7.

³⁷¹ J. C. Jay, 'Why do Left Wingers Vote for Tories,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 15 December 1961, 7.

³⁷² Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics*, 44.

³⁷³ Kennetta Hammond Perry, *London is the Place for Me: Black Britons, Citizenship, and the Politics of Race* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 188.

³⁷⁴ Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics*, 29.

understand the problems of the town'.³⁷⁵ He used phrases such as: 'I shall always put the interests of Smethwick before any consideration of party politics', 'I will speak out for you' and 'you know me well enough to trust me'.³⁷⁶ When speaking negatively about immigrants, Griffiths claimed that he was only speaking on behalf of his constituents, whom he clearly saw as only white. By maintaining this argument, Griffiths created the feeling that the immigration situation in Smethwick was somehow unique. He claimed that their greater awareness of the issues surrounding immigration was what made the electorate of Smethwick behave so differently from that of other constituencies.³⁷⁷

Due to its controversial nature, in early 1964 the campaign in Smethwick began to attract some attention from the national press. *The Times* was the only national newspaper to undertake a full investigation of the situation in Smethwick during the election campaign.³⁷⁸ On 8 March, their Midlands correspondent, Brian Priestly, published an article condemning the *Telephone* for the amount of column inches dedicated to the 'immigrant problem'.³⁷⁹ Priestly continued to be highly critical of Griffiths' campaign; for example a report published three days before the general election said that the *Telephone* and the Conservative Party were to blame for the racial tension in Smethwick and that 'slanders and verminous untruths which might be dismissed in a

³⁷⁵ Sandwell Community Archives, Smethwick, Ephemera A1770, Peter Griffiths, 'Smethwick Division General Election 1964.'

³⁷⁶ Smyth, 'The People,' 15; Griffiths, 'Smethwick Division General Election 1964.'

³⁷⁷ Griffiths, *A Question of Colour*, 161.

³⁷⁸ Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics*, 67

³⁷⁹ Midlands Correspondent, 'Immigrants Main Election Issue At Smethwick,' *The Times*, 9 March 1964, 6.

second elsewhere are here a considerable factor in the campaign'.³⁸⁰ The fact that he was so critical of the *Telephone* suggests that Priestly was keen to distance himself and the newspaper from what was happening in Smethwick. Other newspapers, however, were less critical of the campaign, for example, when reporting on Griffiths' refusal to condemn the slogan: 'If you want a nigger neighbour, vote Labour', the *Daily Mail* focused on his threat to bring a libel action against Gordon Walker for remarks he made on TV about the phrase.³⁸¹ Other than Priestley's articles there was extremely limited criticism of the campaign in both newspapers.

The campaign in Smethwick was, however, criticised on national current affairs programming. Current affairs programmes such as ITV's *This Week* allowed ITV to provide a form of in depth investigative journalism that was not offered at a local level. In an episode of ITV's *This Week*, broadcast in 1964, reporter Desmond Wilcox investigated the impact that immigration would have on the upcoming election in Birmingham and the surrounding areas.³⁸² Wilcox interviewed Finney, who he described as an 'extreme and untypical Conservative, who expresses strong feelings'.³⁸³ Finney was interrogated on his use of immigration as a political issue, for example Wilcox asked: 'aren't you making political capital out of it?'.³⁸⁴ Wilcox then interviewed Alderman Harry Watton, Chairman of the General Purposes committee of Birmingham City Council, a neighbouring authority, who condemned Finney and the Smethwick

³⁸⁰ Midlands Correspondent, 'Vile- It's All in Black and White,' *The Times*, 13 October 1964, 18.

³⁸¹ 'I'll Sue Wilson Says Tory,' *Daily Mail*, 11 March 1964, 12.

³⁸² BFI Player, *This Week*, 'Coloured Voting- Hidden Issue,' first broadcast in 1964, <https://player.bfi.org.uk/rentals/film/watch-coloured-voting-hidden-issue-1964-online>

³⁸³ Ibid.

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

Conservatives. He told Wilcox: 'Some of the brash and stupid statements that have been made by councillor Finney and others in our neighbouring authorities, they haven't helped anything at all.'³⁸⁵ He went on to say that housing was a problem 'long before we had any coloured immigrants', providing a different perspective on Smethwick and its housing issues to the *Telephone* and ATV.³⁸⁶

The Aftermath of the Election

Following the election, racial tension in Smethwick heightened. The result in Smethwick gained widespread attention across the country, and received condemnation from both the Liberal and Labour parties, and from the national press.³⁸⁷ The result also provoked a reaction from the Smethwick Church.³⁸⁸ Another strong response came from Harold Wilson, the newly elected Labour Prime Minister, who referred to Griffiths as a 'parliamentary leper'.³⁸⁹ Griffiths responded to this by telling the *Telephone* that Wilson had a vendetta against him and that his comments were 'unfair, ill-founded and vicious'.³⁹⁰ The following week a number of letters were sent to the editor displaying resentment towards Wilson, indicating that Wilson's attack on Griffiths was taken by some as a direct attack on the intelligence of the Smethwick electorate.³⁹¹

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

³⁸⁷ 'Griffiths Win Is Roundly Condemned,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 23 October 1964, 13; 'What the Papers Said About Our Election,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 23 October 1964, 22.

³⁸⁸ Prem, *The Parliamentary Leper*, 10.

³⁸⁹ Randall Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Postwar Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 134.

³⁹⁰ 'MP's Maiden Speech: 'I'll Avoid Colour' He Says,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 6 November 1964, 24.

³⁹¹ Mrs. E. Round, 'That 'Leper' Remark,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 13 November 1964, 23.

ATV reported on the people of Smethwick's reactions to these comments in November 1964, using vox pops.³⁹² These vox pops, conducted on the streets of Smethwick by ATV's Kenneth Hill, provide a sense of how the people of Smethwick felt about the election and Harold Wilson's comments. As the interviews took place they attracted attention from passers by who appeared eager to hear what was being said, indicating the amount of public interest in the topic. The first person to be interviewed was an elderly white working-class woman, who angrily expressed her view that Harold Wilson: 'wants wiping off the face of the earth'.³⁹³ Hill asked: 'Harold Wilson does?', to which she responded by describing Griffiths as 'a gentleman'.³⁹⁴ No further questions were asked.³⁹⁵ The second interviewee was a middle aged white man, who wore a shirt and tie. He described Wilson's comments as 'atrocious' and suggested that they would 'inflame the Smethwick people an awful lot'.³⁹⁶ He went on to say: 'Patrick Gordon Walker is not liked as a man in Smethwick', criticising him for not living there.³⁹⁷ Again, Hill asked no further questions about Griffiths or his campaign, reinforcing the perception that Harold Wilson's comments were inappropriate.³⁹⁸ Following this, a white woman said: 'you need to live in Smethwick to know things like that and I never heard of Peter Griffiths running down the coloured people'.³⁹⁹ This is another indication that Smethwick people

³⁹² MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Peter Griffiths Vox Pops,' first broadcast on 4 November 1964, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-04111964-peter-griffiths-vox-pops

³⁹³ Ibid.

³⁹⁴ Ibid.

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

³⁹⁶ Ibid.

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

³⁹⁸ Ibid.

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

thought that the situation in the town was somehow unique. It also suggests that not everyone perceived Griffiths' campaign as anti-immigrant.

Of all thirteen interviewees in the report, only one person, the sixth person to be interviewed, was an immigrant. Contrary to the opinion of the white interviewees, he said that what Wilson said was 'quite fair enough'.⁴⁰⁰ Although he agreed with Wilson, he also said that he did not 'think he should, you know, make so plain'.⁴⁰¹ This suggests that he was being careful not to appear overly supportive of Wilson; as a black man it is likely that he would have been very cautious about saying anything that could have fuelled the existing racial tension in Smethwick, particularly while being interviewed in front of passers-by. Hill interrupted him to ask: 'you think he perhaps mistimed it?', a question that forced him to be critical of Wilson.⁴⁰² He responded by saying: 'yeh, I think he could have waited say, say it before, you know'.⁴⁰³ Hill interrupted his sentence yet again, to say: 'Yes, but you agree with him?', a closed question which required him to give a yes or no answer.⁴⁰⁴ At this point Hill's face was out of the frame for the only time in the report, shifting the focus solely onto the interviewee. It appears as though Hill struggled to understand what the man was trying to say and so steered the conversation by using closed questions and making suggestions about how he thought the man should feel. The interviewee said that he did agree with Wilson about what was happening in Smethwick. Hill

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

⁴⁰² Ibid.

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.

appeared defensive about this statement and asked: 'Oh, that is what?'.⁴⁰⁵ As soon as the interviewee started talking about the 'colour prejudice' the camera cut him off mid-sentence.⁴⁰⁶ The black man was asked far more challenging questions than the other interviewees and that ATV were keen not to draw attention to the racial problems in Smethwick from a black man's perspective, and to show that Smethwick people supported Wilson.



Man interviewed by ATV's Kenneth Hill on Smethwick Street. MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Peter Griffiths Vox Pops,' first broadcast on 4 November 1964, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-04111964-peter-griffiths-vox-pops

Another example of how ATV portrayed Griffiths in the aftermath of the Election was an interview with the town's Conservative Mayor, Alderman Clarence Williams, broadcast in December 1964.⁴⁰⁷ The interview took place on a Smethwick street, in front of a row of houses and a green area, indicating a

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁷ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Mayor of Smethwick Re Immigration,' first broadcast on 3 December 1964, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-03121964-mayor-of-smethwick-re-immigration-problems

desire to depict Smethwick in a positive manner and to downplay the town's housing issues. The Mayor was a white man, wearing a smart coat, shirt and tie, giving him a look of respectability. The camera moved to focus more closely on Williams, however Harcourt remained in the frame throughout the interview, giving it a relaxed and conversational tone.



Mayor of Smethwick interviewed by ATV's Reg Harcourt. MACE, University of Lincoln, Midlands News, 'Mayor of Smethwick Re Immigration,' first broadcast on 3 December 1964, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-03121964-mayor-of-smethwick-re-immigration-problems

During the interview, Williams suggested that the negative image of Smethwick had been caused by an 'immigration problem' not a 'racism problem', creating the impression that the problem lay solely with immigrants themselves, rather than with the white local community.⁴⁰⁸ Harcourt asked how he planned to get tolerance back into Smethwick; as he answered, the camera switched to show Harcourt, who nodded enthusiastically. Harcourt then asked whether Griffiths would be asked to help. When hearing Griffiths' name,

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

Williams smiled and appeared at ease, making eye contact with Harcourt for the only time in the report. It is clear that in the immediate aftermath of the election, ATV helped to maintain a positive impression of Griffiths within Smethwick, despite the widespread criticism that he faced nationally. This fuelled the perception within Smethwick that those outside of the town did not understand their problems and minimising criticisms or discussions of Smethwick's own 'race problem.'

The Marshall Street Plan

In December 1964, Smethwick once again reached national and international headlines when Griffiths, backed by a number of housewives, started a campaign for the council to purchase all of the available houses on Marshall Street, Smethwick, in order to prevent their sale to immigrants.⁴⁰⁹ The campaign was driven by fears that the street was becoming a 'black ghetto'.⁴¹⁰ By 1964 around half of Marshall Street's inhabitants were immigrants, sparking concerns that white residents would quickly become 'outnumbered' on their 'own' street.⁴¹¹ The plan received widespread support within Smethwick; a survey undertaken in 1965 by the *Birmingham Planet*, owned by Labour MP Woodrow Wyatt, revealed that 71 per cent of respondents supported it.⁴¹² Attempts were made to convince the people of Smethwick that the plan was not necessary; for example in December 1965, the IWA wrote an open letter to the

⁴⁰⁹ Joe Street, 'Malcolm X, Smethwick, and the Influence of the African American Freedom Struggle on British Race Relations in the 1960s,' *Journal of Black Studies* 38, no.5 (2008): 932-950.

⁴¹⁰ Keith Colling, 'White List Clash,' *Daily Mail*, 7 December 1964, 1.

⁴¹¹ 'A Woman's View on Marshall Street,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 22 January 1965, 6.

⁴¹² Sandwell Community Archives, Smethwick, Ephemera A1775, 'Smethwick Survey: Political Facts About the Town,' *Birmingham Planet*, 10 June 1965, 14.

residents of Marshall Street explaining that differences in traditions and customs can be resolved with time and patience.⁴¹³ The letter urged them not to be pulled in by the racist propaganda. The kind of propaganda that this letter referred to was the reporting in the *Telephone*. For example, on 27 November the newspaper claimed that white residents were living in fear of being 'swamped by coloured people who have filthy habits and have lowered the value of property.'⁴¹⁴

On 3 December 1964, ATV reported on the Marshall Street campaign, indicating the channel's continued use of the local newspaper as a source of information.⁴¹⁵ The report began with a shot of a quiet, residential area of Smethwick, representative of the quiet, private British street, believed to be under threat by immigration.⁴¹⁶ This was followed by a close up shot of clean and tidy terraced houses with drawn curtains, indicating a sense of pride in the community and drawing upon imagery of the home as a place of privacy. As Wendy Webster notes, Englishness had become 'synonymous with quiet and privacy'; this shot was reminiscent of contemporary fears about the effect of immigrants on British cultural standards and the 'boundaries of the home'.⁴¹⁷ Further shots showed an Asian woman walking down the street with a pram and two black children standing in the doorway of a house. The children were not smiling and were looking away from the camera uncomfortably, suggesting

⁴¹³ Wolfson Centre for Archival Research, Birmingham, MS 2141 A/4, Jagmohan Joshi, Letter to the Editor of the *Birmingham Mail*, 'An Open Letter to All Residents of Marshall street on Behalf of the IWA,' 16 December 1965.

⁴¹⁴ 'Plea to Council,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 27 November 1965, 13.

⁴¹⁵ *Midlands News*, 'Smethwick Race Question.'

⁴¹⁶ Wendy Webster, *Imagining Home: Gender, Race and National Identity, 1945-1964* (London: UCL Press, 1998), 184.

⁴¹⁷ Webster, *Englishness and Empire*, 8.

that they may have been filmed without their consent. The focus on infants and children may have been a reference to contemporary fears about high immigrant birth rates and may have reinforced concerns about white people becoming outnumbered.⁴¹⁸



Shot of Asian Woman pushing pram on Marshall Street, Smethwick. MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Smethwick Race Question,' first broadcast on 7 December 1964, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-07121964-smethwick-race-question

⁴¹⁸ Webster, *Imagining Home*, 184.



Shot of children standing in doorway on Marshall Street, Smethwick. MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Smethwick Race Question,' first broadcast on 7 December 1964, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-07121964-smethwick-race-question

Reg Harcourt's first interview, which took place on Marshall Street, was with Alice Groves, one of the housewives involved with the campaign, who was also interviewed by the *Telephone* on a number of occasions.⁴¹⁹ The careful way in which she worded her speech suggested that she had been given time to prepare her answer. She appeared keen to emphasise that there was no racial tension on the street, telling Harcourt that her concern was simply that immigrants would not be able to integrate into society. When referring to immigrants she used the word 'they', but quickly corrected this to 'the coloured people', indicating a conscious effort not to come across as overtly racist.⁴²⁰

⁴¹⁹ 'Why We Called for Council Aid,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 15 January 1965, 5; 'A Woman's View on Marshall Street,' 6.

⁴²⁰ *Midlands News*, 'Smethwick Race Question.'

The second interviewee was another working-class woman who lived on the street. When asked what was worrying her she replied: 'the health problem'.⁴²¹ Harcourt interrogated her about this, resulting in her appearing irritated and firmly asserting that TB had been confirmed by 'people who know'.⁴²² However, when she moved on to discuss the problem of 'coloured' people turning it into a 'black street', Harcourt did not interrogate her in the same way.⁴²³ By questioning the validity of concerns about health, but not about integration, Harcourt created the impression that fears about a 'black invasion' of the street were not racist, but merely common sense.⁴²⁴

Harcourt then interviewed a black woman on her doorstep; her body language throughout the interview, as well as the fact that she was standing on her doorstep, indicate that unlike the white women, she had not known in advance that she would be interviewed. When asked how she got on with her white neighbours, her facial expression implied that this was a difficult question for her to answer. She looked from side to side before answering and when she began speaking she faced away from Harcourt. She continued to avoid eye contact throughout the interview and was clearly uncomfortable. This was an unusually direct question for an immigrant to be asked and one of the few times an immigrant perspective on Smethwick was given on ATV. She responded: 'well, they don't, they don't talk to us and I don't talk to them. But that white lady next-door, well she's quite alright and she talk all the time'.⁴²⁵ She seemed

⁴²¹ Ibid.

⁴²² Ibid.

⁴²³ Ibid.

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

⁴²⁵ Ibid.

keen to emphasise that her next-door neighbour was 'alright'; however, her tone and body language suggest that she may have said this to avoid fuelling the existing tension in Smethwick or creating tension with her next-door neighbour.



Woman interviewed by ATV's Reg Harcourt outside her home on Marshall Street, Smethwick. MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Smethwick Race Question,' first broadcast on 7 December 1964, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-07121964-smethwick-race-question

Following this, a black man was also interviewed on the street. He was asked: 'Do you think there should be a limit?'.⁴²⁶ This kind of closed question would have been difficult to answer; by answering 'yes' he would have suggested that immigration was a problem, but by answering 'no' he would have implied that he wanted to see immigration increase, contributing to fears about white people becoming outnumbered. He responded: 'They don't need to have no limit, for it's all one nation.'⁴²⁷ He spoke with a heavy accent and it is unclear if Harcourt understood what he was saying as he did not respond directly to this statement. Instead he asked another closed question: 'Do you think there should be more coloured people coming to Marshall Street?'.⁴²⁸ Harcourt's choice of questions throughout the interview created the impression that the interviewee wanted more houses to be sold to black people. The interview, as a result of Harcourt's choice of questions, corroborated the message of fear communicated by the white housewives.

One of the things that makes ATV's news material such a valuable source is that it provides us with access to immigrant voices on screen. These voices were often captured in very problematic ways, reflecting the views of ATV's reporters and production staff. For example, as in the two interviews described above, ATV would often ask immigrants incredibly challenging and interrogative questions, whilst white complainants, such as Alice Groves, would be given the opportunity to share their views without further question. When reporting on issues concerning immigration, ATV would often interview multiple white

⁴²⁶ Ibid.

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

residents and only one immigrant, who was presumably chosen to provide the 'immigrant voice' on the matter. In presenting race and immigration from a white perspective, ATV reinforced the perception that whiteness was the norm and that black and Asian immigrants were outsiders in the communities in which they lived.

ATV continued to report on the Marshall Street campaign throughout 1965. In April 1965, the Marshall Street housewives visited London to meet Richard Crossman, the Minister for Housing, to voice their concerns.⁴²⁹ ATV showed the housewives leaving Birmingham on the train to take their petition to Crossman.⁴³⁰ The women boarded the train looking positive, enthusiastic and not at all apprehensive about being filmed. The fact that they smiled at the camera demonstrates a sense of pride in what they were doing and a level of support from the filming crew. TV news was a representation of the world created by white people, for white people. Unlike black and Asian people, whose presence on camera invoked negative stereotypes, the image of a white person conjured positive associations, thus the act of filming alone supported their actions.

This can be compared with ITN's coverage of the campaign; a report broadcast on 11 December 1964, examined Marshall Street from an outsider's

⁴²⁹ Keith Colling, 'White List Clash,' *Daily Mail*, 7 December 1964, 1.

⁴³⁰ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Smethwick Women Leave for London With Petition,' first broadcast on 8 April 1965, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-08041965-smethwick-women-leave-for-london-with-petition

perspective.⁴³¹ It opened with a voiceover telling viewers that ‘only one or two of the hundred or so houses in the street look shabby and uncared for’ and that many streets had bigger proportions of ‘coloured’ families.⁴³² The report showed some support for the Marshall Street plan, describing Asian residents as ‘suspicious and camera shy’ and claiming that the Jamaican resident of one of the houses was in prison for indecent assault on a fourteen year old girl.⁴³³ Multiple white residents, including Alice Groves, were given the opportunity to express anxieties about immigrants.⁴³⁴ However, the second half of the report provided an alternative viewpoint. For example, a black man, who was interviewed in his home, was asked if it was true that West Indians were ‘unsanitary in their habits’, to which he replied: ‘that’s a lie’.⁴³⁵ The Chairman of the Housing Committee was asked: ‘where do you intend to put the coloured people who can’t get houses in Marshall Street?’, to which he responded: ‘that isn’t our problem’. The reporter then went on to question him further, asking him if it was his responsibility to provide an alternative, creating the impression that the council was treating immigrants unfairly.⁴³⁶

It is also interesting to compare ATV’s coverage of Smethwick and the Marshall Street campaign with the coverage on ITV’s current affairs programme, *World in Action*, which provided a more in depth analysis of the situation. An

⁴³¹ ITN Archive, *ITN*, ‘Smethwick: White’s Attempt to Halt ‘Coloured Invasion’: Part One,’ first Broadcast on 11 December 1964, www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/video/smethwick-whites-attempt-to-halt-coloured-invasion-ext-news-footage/828506702

⁴³² Ibid.

⁴³³ ITN Archive, *ITN*, ‘Smethwick: White’s Attempt to Halt ‘Coloured Invasion’: Part Two,’ first broadcast on 11 December, 1964, www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/video/smethwick-whites-attempt-to-halt-coloured-invasion-vox-news-footage/828507404

⁴³⁴ Ibid.

⁴³⁵ ITN Archive, *ITN*, ‘Smethwick: White’s Attempt to Halt ‘Coloured Invasion’: Part 3,’ first broadcast on 11 December, 1964, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/828506712

⁴³⁶ Ibid.

episode broadcast in November 1964 focused on racial tension in Smethwick.⁴³⁷ The programme opened with a shot of a crowd of white men, with one man telling viewers: 'the blacks have come here to exploit the whites'.⁴³⁸ The use of vox pops allowed numerous white residents to express their negative views on immigration, for example one man told the reporter: 'I don't think there's room for them here'.⁴³⁹ Finney, who was interviewed for the programme, told the reporter that there was a deliberate plot within the immigrant community to purchase whole streets and create 'little Harlems'.⁴⁴⁰ The programme, however, made visible efforts to provide a contrasting view, reflecting ITV's efforts to provide balanced reporting. The reporter told viewers that immigrants struggled to rent houses and a Sikh interviewee told him: 'I think it is completely impossible for me to get a room in a white community, a white landlord won't accept me.'⁴⁴¹ The reporter then told the audience that immigrants grouped together as that this was the only way they could 'find a place of sorts to live'.⁴⁴² This differed from ATV's approach, which failed to provide this contrasting viewpoint.

In 1965, ITV broadcast 'The Negro Next Door', a documentary examining the response of residents of Roseville Terrace Leeds, to the arrival of immigrant neighbours.⁴⁴³ There were several similarities between the shots used in the documentary and those used in ATV's reporting. For example, the documentary

⁴³⁷ ITN Archive, *World in Action*, 'Smethwick,' first broadcast on 17 November 1964, www.itvarchive.com/Production/3/0175/0013/

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

⁴³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴⁴² Ibid.

⁴⁴³ BFI Player, *This Week*, 'The Negro Next Door,' first broadcast in 1965, <https://player.bfi.org.uk/rentals/film/watch-negro-next-door-1965-online>

opened with a shot of black children standing in a doorway and there were numerous close up shots of windows on the street. However, unlike ATV's news reporters, Desmond Willcox, who presented the documentary, asked a series of questions intended to challenge the racially prejudiced views of local housewives Pat and Margaret. For example, Wilcox asked: 'Do you think that you're doing enough in this situation?' and 'Do you feel a little guilty sometimes about feeling the way you do?', causing the women to question their attitudes.⁴⁴⁴ This was reflective of the approach of both ITV and the BBC towards race at the time; they believed that broadcasters should not be neutral on matters concerning race, resulting in numerous documentaries attempting to challenge racial prejudice.⁴⁴⁵

Unlike ATV, Wilcox entered the home of one of the black neighbours, Mrs Patanelli, whose family had been the subject of complaints. The women and her teenage son were smartly dressed and their house appeared clean and tidy, contrary to complaints about them being unclean. When hearing about these complaints, Mrs Patanelli looked confused and hurt, creating sympathy for her and her family. After entering the home of Mrs Patanelli, both women became angry that 'the situation had reversed', with Pat telling Wilcox: 'I feel as though I've done something wrong.'⁴⁴⁶ This contrasts with the way in which the two white housewives were represented on *ATV Today*, providing an example of how representations of race on regional television news differed, at times, to

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁵ Schaffer, *The Vision of a Nation*, 76-77.

⁴⁴⁶ *This Week*, 'The Negro Next Door.'

national news and current affairs, fuelling racial tension within local communities such as Smethwick.

The 1966 General Election:

If the swing to the Conservatives in Smethwick in 1964 was remarkable, perhaps equally notable was the swing back to Labour in 1966, when Labour candidate, Andrew Faulds, won with a majority of 3,490.⁴⁴⁷ In the nine months prior to the 1966 general election, Labour Party membership almost doubled in Smethwick.⁴⁴⁸ In March 1966, *The Times* reported that the party had 'recovered its self-respect', and at the centre of its revival was 'the bearded figure of their new candidate, Mr Andrew Faulds'.⁴⁴⁹ Faulds was a strong candidate; he was a popular actor who had been on TV and was well known to the electorate.⁴⁵⁰ His success, however, cannot be wholly attributed to his fame or political skills as he had twice unsuccessfully fought in his hometown of Stratford, a safe Conservative seat.⁴⁵¹

Immigration played a smaller part nationally in 1966 than it had done in 1964. Conservative leader, Edward Heath, warned his party that he did not 'approve of any racist organisation in this country' and that he 'would not accept help from anyone like that'.⁴⁵² This presented Griffiths, who had spent his time at Westminster attempting to convince those around him that he was 'a middle of

⁴⁴⁷ Steel, *No Entry*, 109.

⁴⁴⁸ 'Labour Are out for Revenge,' *The Times*, 30 March 1966, 6.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁰ Steel, *No Entry*, 109.

⁴⁵¹ 'Labour Are out for Revenge,' 6.

⁴⁵² Steel, *No Entry*, 109.

the road Tory', with a dilemma.⁴⁵³ Faced with the risk of losing respect from fellow Conservative MPs, Griffiths stuck to the party line on immigration, resulting in a very different campaign from his previous one, offering a 'diluted version' of his views on immigration.⁴⁵⁴ This decision did not pay off, as after such a fiercely anti-immigrant campaign in 1964, this softened stance created the impression that he was unable to meet the huge expectations of electorate.⁴⁵⁵ This impression was reinforced by Griffiths himself when he criticised the Labour government for rising immigration, creating the perception that his time as MP had been ineffective.⁴⁵⁶ After the results were announced, Faulds told television cameras that 'a politician must learn to live with his past'.⁴⁵⁷ Griffiths, who was listening, was said to have 'pulled a wry face to suggest that he would only too willingly forget the past'.⁴⁵⁸

The past, however, could not easily be forgotten. What happened in Smethwick in 1964 and 1965 had a lasting impact on way in which politicians approached immigration.⁴⁵⁹ After the 1964 election, the attitude of the Labour Party towards immigration changed and by 1965 they had issued a White Paper on immigration from the Commonwealth.⁴⁶⁰ Peter Fryer, discusses how between 1958 and 1968 'black settlers in Britain watched the racist tail wag the parliamentary dog'; he argues that both Labour and Conservative politicians

⁴⁵³ D. E. Butler and Anthony King, *The British General Election of 1966* (London: Macmillan, 1966), 252.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid, 253.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid, 253.

⁴⁵⁷ 'Mr Gordon Walker Gets Revenge at Leyton,' *The Times*, 1 April 1966, 12.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁹ People's History Museum and Study Centre, Manchester, H Bourne, 'Smethwick: A Warning and a Call to Action,' *Labour Weekly* 46, 1964, 568.

⁴⁶⁰ Muhammad Anwar, *Race and Politics Routledge Library Editions: Political Science* (London: Routledge, 2015), 20.

became increasingly intolerant towards immigrants because of fear that they would lose seats if they did not.⁴⁶¹ He describes how racism was 'institutionalised, legitimised and nationalised' during this period, arguing that 1964 was a turning point, as it was the first time that racism had successfully been used to win an election, justified as simply being a response to public opinion.⁴⁶² This indicates that Smethwick was part of the trend to bring Labour and Conservative together on immigration policy restrictions and race relations laws. Similarly, Foot notes that what happened in Smethwick had far reaching implications, as it provided the Conservatives with the political formula to remove the loyalty of the working class to the Labour Party.⁴⁶³ Any doubt about the electoral significance of race and immigration was crushed by the entry of Enoch Powell onto the political scene, only a few years later.⁴⁶⁴

Conclusion

There was nothing unique about Smethwick; overcrowding was an issue but was no worse than in neighbouring towns, nor was the percentage of immigrants in the population any higher. But what happened in Smethwick marked a turning point in British politics and had lasting impact on race relations across Britain.⁴⁶⁵ This election result challenged assumptions that 'local candidates and campaigns scarcely mattered any more' and revealed the

⁴⁶¹ Peter Fryer, *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain* (London: Pluto Press, 1984), 381.

⁴⁶² Ibid.

⁴⁶³ Foot, *Immigration and Race in British Politics*, 77.

⁴⁶⁴ Lawrence, *Black Migrants: White Natives*, 131.

⁴⁶⁵ Bourne, 'Smethwick: A Warning and a Call to Action,' 1964.

potential impact of local issues on national politics.⁴⁶⁶ For many years before the election, the local media was constructing myths about the impact of immigration on the town. When, on 1 January 1965, the *Telephone* published an article about the problematic ‘influx’ of birds into Smethwick, in search of food and shelter, one could be forgiven for mistaking this for another report on immigration.⁴⁶⁷ The language used is worryingly similar. For example, the discussion on the park superintendent’s aggravation at his ‘moral obligation to look after them’, the use of words such as ‘smothered’ and ‘influx’ and the discussion of concerns about their breeding habits. This emphasises the extent to which immigrants were dehumanised by the *Telephone*. In the four years leading up to the election, the *Telephone* was firmly anti-immigrant. Stories and letters were printed which linked immigrants to crime, overcrowding, uncleanliness, and disease. Finney, who regularly had his anti-immigrant letters published by the newspaper, later became associated with the Conservative party, creating links between media, immigration, and politics that continued throughout Griffiths’ campaign.

ATV had an opportunity to change perceptions of immigrants by informing the people of Smethwick about the realities of immigration. However, ATV, like other regional broadcasters, often used the local press as a source of information, thus the *Telephone* framed ATV’s response to race and immigration. In the years leading up to the election, it is evident that both the *Telephone* and ATV reinforced and strengthened popular stereotypes about

⁴⁶⁶ Martin Pugh, *Speak for Britain: A New History of the Labour Party* (London: Random House, 2010), 311.

⁴⁶⁷ ‘Another Immigrant Problem-Birds,’ *Smethwick Telephone*, 1 January 1965, 1.

immigrants. The association between immigrants and uncleanliness and disease had existed long before the 1960s, however, reports in the *Telephone* certainly created the impression that this posed a direct threat to Smethwick.⁴⁶⁸ For example, the *Telephone* linked Smethwick's high TB rate with immigration and ATV later suggested that typhoid was caused by 'dirty hands and bad food handling', reinforcing stereotypes about immigrants' eating habits.⁴⁶⁹ Both the *Telephone* and ATV also fostered stereotypes about West Indians being sexually promiscuous and predatory, as well as emphasising the threat that their cultural differences posed to Smethwick.

ATV reports from after the General Election show Griffiths in a favourable light, with the vast majority of people supporting Griffiths. The only man to criticise the timing of Harold Wilson's comments about Griffiths was the only black man to be interviewed on the topic. Similarly, ATV was supportive of the Marshall Street campaign and the only resident that criticised it was the only black man to be interviewed, who, unlike the white interviewees was asked a series of difficult questions by Harcourt. In reports about immigration, immigrants themselves were rarely given the opportunity to speak and when they were, they often appeared uncomfortable and were challenged by interviewers. ATV gave its viewers a primarily white perspective on immigration, with immigrants themselves being constructed as being problematic outsiders.

⁴⁶⁸ 'Rent Strike Was Only a Token,' 1.

⁴⁶⁹ 'Tuberculosis- Enemy in Retreat,' 5; *Midlands News*, 'Typhoid at Smethwick.'

Local racism was not simply a natural reaction to immigration; from the early 1960s strong links began to emerge between local anti-immigrant Conservatives and the local press that supported the party. In 1964, Peter Griffiths was able to exploit these anti-immigrant mentalities in order to successfully gain support in Smethwick. The *Telephone* framed ATV's response to immigration in Smethwick, further reinforcing their anti-immigrant narrative. By taking Smethwick as a case study we can see how local and regional media shaped public responses to immigration in ways that differed from the national media, focusing specifically on the issues that mattered most to local audiences and supporting local anti-immigrant politicians. This chapter has shown how local anti-immigrant politicians who were keen to play upon these local concerns, together with local and regional media, could create huge amounts of hostility towards immigrants. As the following chapters will show, Griffiths' success in Smethwick had a lasting impact on British politics, opening the door for anti-immigrant politicians such as Enoch Powell to exploit local anxieties about race.

Chapter Two

Local Media and Public Responses to Enoch Powell in Wolverhampton

Introduction

On 20 April 1968, Enoch Powell, Conservative MP for Wolverhampton South West, addressed eighty-five attendees at the Annual General Meeting of the West Midlands Conservative Political Centre.¹ He delivered to local party members what later became famously known as his 'Rivers of Blood' speech, voicing concerns about the threat of immigration both to the local area and to the nation.² No one, including Powell himself, could have predicted the impact of this speech; when asked by Reg Harcourt during an interview for *ATV Today* in 1973 whether he anticipated 'the sort of effect it would have', he responded: 'no, nor did anybody who heard it at the time'.³ Although Powell's speech gained widespread national attention, studies of the regional distribution of his support suggest that Powell was significantly more popular within the West Midlands than any other region.⁴ Nowhere did he have more impact than within his home constituency of Wolverhampton.⁵ This chapter will do two things: firstly examine the role of local media in Powell's popularity, and secondly examine the lasting impact that Powell had on ATV's reporting of race and immigration.

¹ Randall Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Post-War Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 185.

² Peter Brooke, 'India, Post Imperialism and the Origins of Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' Speech,' *The Historical Journal* 50, no. 3 (2007): 678.

³ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Enoch Powell Interview,' first broadcast on 17 April 1973, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-17041973-enoch-powell-interview

⁴ Robert King and Michael Wood, 'The Support for Enoch Powell,' in *The Politics of Race*, ed. Ivor Crewe (London: Croom Helm, 1975), 250.

⁵ Frank Reeves, *Race and Borough Politics* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1989), 100.

This chapter is structured as an examination of ATV's reporting of race and immigration both pre and post 'Rivers of Blood'. Firstly, it will place Powell's speech into the context of local disputes surrounding immigration that were taking place in Wolverhampton at the time, examining the coverage of these disputes by Wolverhampton's local newspaper, the *Express & Star*, and by ATV. It will examine both local and national media responses to Powell's speeches, arguing that unlike national coverage, which attempted to provide balanced reporting but tended to be critical, both the *Express & Star* and ATV's reporting was unbalanced in favour of Powell. The second part of the chapter will then examine the impact of Powell's speech on ATV's reporting of race and immigration throughout the decade that followed, revisiting some of the major areas of reporting, including education, Sikhism, and the 1968 Race Relations Act. It will argue that Powell's 1968 'Rivers of Blood' speech had a lasting impact on ATV's representation of race and immigration.

Two significant issues were taking place in Wolverhampton at the time of Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech. Firstly, a campaign by local education authorities for more government funding for local schools under increasing pressure from immigration; and secondly a campaign led by Sikh bus drivers to wear their beards and turbans with their uniform.⁶ Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech and his speech in Walsall earlier the same year drew upon both of these issues. Both the *Express & Star* and ATV covered both of these disputes extensively in the years that preceded Powell's speech. The role of the *Express & Star's* letters pages in the turban dispute has been discussed by George

⁶ Reeves, *Race and Borough Politics*, 61.

Kassimeris and Leonie Jackson, who argue that they provided a space for the local white community to 'vent frustrations' and to 'construct a bounded space in which white ethnic local identities were positioned and articulated as dominant'.⁷ This chapter will expand Kassimeris and Jackson's work by looking beyond local press reporting of this dispute and by providing a broader examination of the *Express & Star* and ATV's representation of the local issues that Powell drew upon in his speeches. It will also examine local media responses to Powell himself.

Unlike the *Smethwick Telephone*, the *Express & Star* showed a commitment to providing balance in their reporting of immigration and was rarely overtly negative in the way that the *Telephone* was. When reporting on the strain on local education, for example, the *Express & Star* emphasised that the issue was not with the immigrant children themselves, but the large numbers arriving into the city and cultural differences that made assimilation difficult. When reporting on the Sikh turban dispute, the *Express & Star* was sympathetic towards the Sikh community. Despite this comparatively positive coverage, the *Express & Star* nonetheless provided a more respectable form of racism, presenting fears about the threat of immigrant culture or the strain on local services as being natural responses to cultural change. ATV's reporting of immigrant education followed the lead of the *Express & Star*, emphasising the impact of immigrants on local schools. In the five years prior to Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech, ATV

⁷ George Kassimeris and Leonie Jackson, 'Negotiating Race and Religion in the West Midlands: Narratives of Inclusion and Exclusion During the 1967-69 Wolverhampton Bus Workers' Turban Dispute,' *Contemporary British History* 31, no. 1 (2016): 365.

broadcast seven reports on the impact of immigrant children on local schools, reporting on the issue of language and other cultural differences.

Despite the extensive reporting of the Sikh turban dispute in the *Express & Star*, ATV provided very limited coverage. ATV's coverage of Sikhism during the decade suggested a desire to portray the religion in a positive light, reflecting national perceptions of Sikhs as desirable immigrants, an outlook originating from their historic role in the British army.⁸ This may explain why ATV was reluctant to cover something that would contradict this positive image. Despite attempting to portray Sikhs in a positive light, the image of Sikhism constructed on ATV throughout the period was one of an exotic, and culturally remote religion with which white audiences could not identify or comprehend. ATV not only provided a visual representation of racial difference, but crucially one that depicted the presence of Sikhs and their 'cultural package' in the audience's local environment.⁹ When Powell spoke about the threat of Sikh communalism he drew upon local anxieties about cultural difference that had been reinforced by ATV throughout the decade.

As well as providing background for the concerns raised in his speech, local media played a part in the legitimisation of Powell. The *Express & Star* attempted to provide balanced reporting of Powell, with articles both for and against him, however the newspaper extensively publicised the level of support he had within Wolverhampton and suggested that he was only speaking on

⁸ David Feldman, 'Why the English Like Turbans: Multicultural Politics in British History,' in *Structures and Transformations in Modern British History*, ed. David Feldman and Jon Lawrence (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 294.

⁹ Edward Eames and Howard Robboy, 'The Wulfranian and the Punjabi: Conflict, Identity and Adaptation,' *Anthropological Quarterly* 51, no. 4 (1978): 208.

behalf of his constituents. Likewise, following the lead of the *Express & Star*, ATV was uncritical of Powell's supporters, presenting them as ordinary members of the local white community. Between 1968 and the General Election of 1979, he was the subject of thirty-two ATV news reports, most of which focused on his views on immigration. Only seven of these reports included any form of criticism of Powell.¹⁰ ATV's reporting appears very unbalanced in his favour. In the aftermath of his speeches, Powell became known across the nation due to extensive national media coverage. The national media was more critical of Powell than local media, however, as Gavin Schaffer notes, Powell's new popular form of racism forced both the BBC and ITV to rethink their approach towards race in order to properly represent the opinions of the British public.¹¹ This suggests that through its legitimisation of Powell, local media had some impact on the way in which race and immigration were represented at a national level.

This chapter will finally examine the impact of Powell's 1968 speeches on ATV's reporting of race and immigration throughout the decade that followed. Directly after Powell's speech there was a significant rise in ATV's coverage of immigrant education. In 1968 alone, the issue was reported on nine times and the influence of Powell's speech can be seen in reporting throughout the 1970s, which presented the presence of immigrant children in local schools as a problem. The impact of Powell's speeches was also apparent in ATV's reporting of the 1968

¹⁰ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Enoch Powell at Meeting in Nottingham,' first Broadcast on 15 April 1969, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-15041969-enoch-powell-meeting-nottingham; MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Student Protests Re Speech by Enoch Powell MP,' first broadcast on 1 May 1968, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-01051968-students-protest-re-speech-by-enoch-powell-mp.

¹¹ Gavin Schaffer, *The Vision of a Nation: Making Multiculturalism on British Television* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 83.

Race Relations Act throughout the 1970s. Unlike national television news, which included interviews from national figures who supported the Act, ATV created the impression that the Act was a threat to local traditions and that the national government did not understand the issues faced by local authorities. From April 1968, the month of the speech, to January 1969, ATV broadcast no reports on Sikhism, reflecting their desire not to fuel tensions between the white and Sikh communities. However, throughout the decade that followed they continued to provide coverage of Sikhism which presented the religion as exotic and incompatible with the British and local way of life, reinforcing Powell's message.

Enoch Powell

John Enoch Powell became Conservative MP for Wolverhampton South West in 1950 with a majority of 691 over Labour's H. D. Hughes, who had won the seat in 1945.¹² By 1967 his majority had risen significantly to 14,467, reflecting his substantial rise in popularity in the town during the period.¹³ Prior to 1965, Powell kept very quiet about immigration; he had ignored the race riots that took place in Nottingham and Notting Hill in 1958. In 1964, when Peter Griffiths was running an anti-immigrant campaign in the neighbouring town of Smethwick, Powell avoided the topic, referring to immigration only mildly in his election address: 'Control of immigration is essential not only for the people of Britain but also for the immigrants themselves.'¹⁴ Foot suggests that what happened in Smethwick in 1964 showed Powell how immigration could be used

¹² Reeves, *Race and Borough Politics*, 100.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Paul Foot, *The Rise of Enoch Powell* (London: Penguin Books, 1969), 69.

to win votes.¹⁵ Between 1965 and 1968, during which time Powell was taking part in an on-going battle for party leadership with Conservative leader Edward Heath, he began to make numerous speeches to local Conservative members, making his views on the matter increasingly clear.¹⁶

These views, Schofield suggests, were shaped by both his experiences of the colonial world and by the end of empire.¹⁷ Although he had once been a passionate supporter of the empire, by the 1960s he opposed the commonwealth and believed that Britain should draw its identity from its own culture and heritage.¹⁸ Despite his belief that the empire was 'better forgotten', Powell continued to perceive the colonial order as the natural one and his own memories of empire continued to have a huge influence on his political beliefs.¹⁹ Scholars such as Schofield have discussed how Powell's 'love and loss of the British Raj' helped to form his particular form of nationalism.²⁰ Powell had worked for Military Intelligence in India from 1943 to 1946; he noted on numerous occasions the incompatibility of British and Indian culture, for example in 1946 he wrote that cultural differences were 'greatest between European and Asiatic nations'.²¹ During his time in the British Raj he came to view communalism as the cause of political trouble in India and the reason that

¹⁵ Ibid, 39.

¹⁶ Gary P. Freeman, *Immigrant Labor and Racial Conflict in Industrial Societies: The French and British Experience, 1945-1975* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1975), 291.

¹⁷ Camilla Schofield, *Enoch Powell and the Making of Postcolonial Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 2.

¹⁸ Amy Whipple, 'Revisiting the "Rivers of Blood" Controversy: Letters to Enoch Powell,' *Journal of British Studies* 48, no.3 (2009): 723.

¹⁹ Bill Schwarz, *The White Man's World: Memories of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 6.

²⁰ Schofield, *Enoch Powell and the Making of Postcolonial Britain*, 28.

²¹ Brooke, 'India, Post Imperialism and the Origins of Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' Speech,' 671.

Indians could not be granted self-government.²² As Gilroy notes, Powell believed that Asians were 'bound by cultural and biological ties which merit the status of a fully formed, alternative national identity'; in other words their allegiance was to their own culture and not British.²³

On 9 February 1968, Powell made a speech in the neighbouring town of Walsall drawing upon local concerns and the 'sense of hopelessness and helplessness' felt by the people of Walsall and Wolverhampton due to the 'continued flow of immigration into our towns'.²⁴ The use of words such as 'we' and 'our' to describe the local white community was continued throughout. He went on to emphasise the local impact of immigration, claiming that 'out of 600 parliamentary constituencies' none were affected by immigration in 'any way like ourselves' and that 'the rest know little or nothing' and 'care little or nothing'.²⁵ He gave the example of a constituent whose daughter was now 'the only white child in class at school', a story by which he claimed a colleague in the House of Commons was 'dumbfounded'.²⁶ Here, Powell presented immigration as a distinctly local and regional issue; he used his local knowledge of an on-going issue to create the impression that the West Midlands was 'bearing the brunt of the immigrant crisis' and that their problems were being ignored by national politicians who had failed to provide their communities

²² Ibid, 672.

²³ Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't no Black in the Union Jack* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1987), 45.

²⁴ Enoch Powell, 'Speech at Walsall,' 9 February 1968, accessed 7 February 2017, www.enochpowell.net/fr-80.html

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

with adequate support.²⁷ Powell was able to fuel racism by drawing upon the visibility of immigrants in the local area.

After mentioning proposals for voluntary repatriation and the impact of Kenyan Asians on the nation, he closed his speech by discussing the bus dispute. For Powell the campaign was a 'vivid demonstration of the changing demography of political practice and identification', the arrival of communalism, 'formerly assigned to the empire', into the West Midlands.²⁸ He told his audience that the dispute was an act of communal agitation, which he described as 'the curse of India'.²⁹ The final message of his speech was that if the uniform regulations were changed, this would be 'the opposite of equal treatment'.³⁰

Two months after his speech in Walsall, Powell delivered his famous 'Rivers of Blood' speech. Powell continuously made reference to ordinary working-class people in his constituency, for example he spoke about an 'ordinary working man' with two children, who he went on to reiterate was a 'decent ordinary fellow Englishman', who told him in his 'own town' that he feared that soon 'his country' would 'not be worth living in for his children'.³¹ The basis of this speech was letters sent to him by local people following his Walsall speech. These letters reflected the vulnerability felt by local people as a result of

²⁷ Kassimeris and Jackson, 'Negotiating Race and Religion in the West Midlands,' 353.

²⁸ Feldman, 'Why the English Like Turbans,' 284.

²⁹ Schofield, *Enoch Powell and the Making of Postcolonial Britain*, 219.

³⁰ Enoch Powell, 'Speech at Walsall.'

³¹ Enoch Powell, 'Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' Speech,' *Telegraph*, 6 November 2007, accessed 25 August 2017, www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/3643823/Enoch-Powells-Rivers-of-Blood-speech.html

changes to their communities.³² They reflected a sense of personal injustice and post-war decline following what was perceived by some to have been Britain's finest hour, or as Camilla Schofield puts it: 'war-time sacrifices and post-war shame'.³³ This included the complaint of an elderly white local woman who had written to him claiming that she was now the only white person living on her street. She had lost her husband and two sons in the war, and since 'the immigrants moved in' her 'quiet street became a place of noise and confusion'.³⁴ Here we see how memories of war were used to mark the boundaries of exclusion in post-war Britain. Powell was able to transform stories of wartime sacrifice into the myth that the state was actively protecting the needs of immigrants to the detriment of 'ordinary' working-class British people, and that British people, particularly those in communities such as the Midlands, were victims both of immigration and of the political establishment.³⁵ In letters to Powell many living in working-class communities in which immigrants settled expressed a sense of neglect from politicians. For example, one writer expressed the view that: 'it is the working man who is going to suffer as he has to live with them on his door step and his children have to mix with them at school'.³⁶

Powell emphasised rapid changes to towns and neighbourhoods as a source of anxiety. He spoke of 'wives unable to obtain hospital beds in childbirth', 'children unable to obtain school places' and 'homes and neighbourhoods

³² Schofield, *Enoch Powell and the Making of Postcolonial Britain*, 8.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Bill Smithies and Peter Fiddick, *Enoch Powell on Immigration* (London: Sphere Books, 1969), 41.

³⁵ Schofield, *Enoch Powell and the Making of Postcolonial Britain*, 19.

³⁶ Whipple, 'Revisiting the "Rivers of Blood" Controversy,' 728.

changed beyond recognition'.³⁷ Diane Spearman's analysis of letters sent directly to Powell following his speech, published in *New Society* in March 1968, found that a common theme was concerns about immigrants 'taking over towns' and the degradation of 'nice little pubs and streets'.³⁸ Wendy Webster notes how Powell drew upon existing imagery of 'the threat to the boundaries of home' which 'had gained wide currency in the British mainstream media in the 1950s'.³⁹ This speech gained far more public and press interest than his Walsall speech. Brooke attributes this change to his use of anecdotal evidence from his constituency.⁴⁰ Through his local knowledge, Powell was able to gain greater support, both locally and nationally.

Once again, the final message of this speech was a discussion of the turban dispute. Powell told the audience that the campaign was a demonstration of how immigrant communities could 'organise to consolidate their members, to agitate and campaign against their fellow citizens', noting that the Race Relations Bill would provide the 'very pabulum they need to flourish', referencing their attempts to have the right to wear the turban included in the Act.⁴¹ The impact of immigration on Britain's legal system, a 'symbol of national culture' which immigrants were able to erode, was particularly pertinent in 1968 amongst parliamentary debates of the Race Relations Bill.⁴² Powell believed that the state was putting its 'past legal obligations' to commonwealth

³⁷ Powell, 'Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' Speech.'

³⁸ Wolverhampton City Archives, Wolverhampton, D-CJ/3, Diane Spearman, 'Enoch Powell's Postbag,' *New Society*, 9 May 1968,

³⁹ Wendy Webster, *Englishness and Empire, 1935-1965* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 8.

⁴⁰ Brooke, 'India, Post Imperialism and the Origins of Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' Speech,' 677.

⁴¹ Powell, Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' Speech.'

⁴² Schofield, *Enoch Powell and the Making of Postcolonial Britain*, 87.

citizens ahead of its obligations to the working class and to the British nation.⁴³ As Herbert notes, the perception that immigrants were being given preferential treatment sparked feelings of 'white defeat' due to the realisation that whiteness no longer signified power or superiority.⁴⁴

Through his 1968 'Rivers of Blood' speech, Powell summoned a 'racialising conception of English nationalism built around white identity', which succeeded in striking a chord with the white working class.⁴⁵ Collective memories of a racialised colonial order were strongly present and manifested themselves in support for Powell.⁴⁶ Powell made his 1968 speech long after the end of formal empire, however empire still existed in popular memory.⁴⁷ It was, Schwarz argues, 'not the wish to forget but the impossibility of forgetting' that caused the eruption of Powellism in 1968.⁴⁸ As Joanna Herbert notes, the arrival of non-white immigrants triggered collective memories of white superiority.⁴⁹ For Powell and his supporters, an end to white authority meant the end of the nation and the breakdown of national identity.⁵⁰

In an interview for the BBC in June 1969, Powell told viewers:

⁴³ Schofield, *Enoch Powell and the Making of Postcolonial Britain*, 19.

⁴⁴ Joanna Herbert, *Negotiating Boundaries in the City: Migration, Ethnicity, and Gender in Britain* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 38.

⁴⁵ Satnam Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 116.

⁴⁶ Schwarz, *The White Man's World: Memories of Empire* 9.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 5.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 9.

⁴⁹ Herbert, *Negotiating Boundaries in the City*, 32.

⁵⁰ Schwarz, *The White Man's World: Memories of Empire*, 29.

An instinct to preserve an identity and defend a territory is one of the deepest and strongest implanted in mankind. I happen to believe that the instinct is good, and that its beneficial effects are not exhausted.⁵¹

This statement encapsulated Powell's attitude towards race, which Martin Baker defines as 'new racism': that it is natural for humans to form exclusive groups in the form of nations, and that these nations have their own traditions which, if threatened, they will naturally and instinctively defend.⁵² It has been argued by scholars such as Paul Gilroy that Powell's 1968 speeches gave 'race' its contemporary meaning', defined not in biological terms but in 'terms of culture and identity'.⁵³ Schwarz suggests that his speeches marked a transition 'from a racial politics organised by a conception of blood' to one that was 'informed more profoundly by notions of civilisation or culture'.⁵⁴ Joanna Herbert discusses the centrality of 'nation' in this form of cultural racism, noting that 'whilst race is a tool to define minority groups 'nation' differentiates and encompasses 'us''.⁵⁵ War was central to Powell's concept of national belonging; he believed that immigrants 'would always carry the problem of failure of allegiance' to the nation.⁵⁶ As Martin Barker notes, the main concept of 'new racism' was 'not that blacks are bad, simply different, therefore their sheer presence in numbers has the same effect as an invasion'.⁵⁷ This belief was

⁵¹ Martin Barker, *The New Racism: Conservatives and the Ideology of the Tribe* (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 1981), 22.

⁵² *Ibid*, 24.

⁵³ Gilroy, *There Ain't no Black in the Union Jack*, 43.

⁵⁴ Schwarz, *The White Man's World*, 170.

⁵⁵ Herbert, *Negotiating Boundaries in the City*, 33.

⁵⁶ Schofield, *Enoch Powell and the Making of Postcolonial Britain*, 5.

⁵⁷ Peter Baker, 'Race Relations in Britain: A Study of Two Towns Using Attitude Survey Data' (Unpublished Masters Dissertation: University of Wisconsin, 1969), 40.

reflected in Powell's consistent use of military metaphors to describe the presence of immigrants in Britain.⁵⁸

Following his speech, Powell gained support across the nation, but nowhere was he more popular than in the West Midlands. King and Wood suggest that despite his national appeal, a significant proportion of Powell's support came from within the region.⁵⁹ Whilst an average of 25 per cent of the country were found to 'admire Powell', in the West Midlands this figure rose to 42 per cent, the only region with a figure over 30 per cent.⁶⁰ Powell was able to gain high levels of support from within the region by drawing upon cross class anxieties about immigration in the West Midlands, using examples from his own constituency, with particular reference to local education and what he perceived to be the threat of Sikh communalism. An examination of the role of local media in the build-up of racial tension in Wolverhampton during the 1960s reveals how the *Express & Star* and ATV provided Powell with the background for his speech.

The Build-up of Racial Tension in Wolverhampton: 1960-1968

Wolverhampton, situated within the West Midlands, developed as a market town, but by the eighteenth century it had a major role in the iron and steel industry.⁶¹ During the 1940s and 1950s large scale firms were taking over Wolverhampton's small metal and engineering industry, attracting immigration

⁵⁸ Gilroy, *There Ain't no Black in the Union Jack*, 45.

⁵⁹ King and Wood, 'The Support for Enoch Powell,' 251.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ Baker, 'Race Relations in Britain: A Study of Two Towns Using Attitude Survey Data,' 19.

into the town.⁶² Immigration into Wolverhampton grew during the 1950s as many travelled to work in local industries, which included metal manufacture.⁶³ In 1956, the post-war industrial boom ended in the town, resulting in cuts and fears about unemployment.⁶⁴ The town's immigrant population, however, continued to grow; in the 1950s the bulk of immigration was mainly West Indian but during the 1960s, immigrants began to arrive in larger numbers from South Asia.⁶⁵ By 1971, 7.5 per cent of the town's population were immigrants, a majority of which were Asian.⁶⁶ By 1981, approximately one third of the 300,000 Sikhs living in the UK had settled in the West Midlands, making them a highly visible immigrant group within the region.⁶⁷

Since 1950, the town consisted of three parliamentary constituencies: North East, South East, and West. During the 1960s, Labour Party candidate Robert Edwards, who held his seat from 1955 to 1987, represented the South East constituency in parliament.⁶⁸ Labour's John Baird represented North East from 1950 to 1964, followed by Labour's Renée Short from 1964 to 1987.⁶⁹ Powell held South West from 1950 to 1974.⁷⁰ In 1961, the Wolverhampton Immigration Control Association (WICA), a branch of the BICA, which already had branches in Smethwick and Oldbury, was formed.⁷¹ This followed a visit

⁶² Foot, *The Rise of Enoch Powell*, 46.

⁶³ Christopher T. Husbans, *Racial Exclusionism and the City: The Urban Support of the National Front* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1983), 67.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁶⁵ Reeves, *Race and Borough Politics*, 1.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Darshan Singh Tatla, *The Sikh Diaspora: The Search for Statehood* (London: UCL Press, 1999), 58.

⁶⁸ Robert Waller, *The Almanac of British Politics* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1991), 190.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ Reeves, *Race and Borough Politics*, 100.

⁷¹ Husbans, *Racial Exclusionism and the City*, 67.

from eight members of the BICA, who distributed leaflets in the town making claims about employment and disease in the area.⁷² However, unlike Smethwick, Wolverhampton's local Conservative politicians, including Enoch Powell, showed comparative restraint when discussing immigration at this point. Unlike the BICA they focused on the issue of numbers, the threat to national culture and the strain on local resources.⁷³

The *Express & Star* was founded in Wolverhampton in 1880 by a group of Liberal Party members.⁷⁴ It was sold to the Graham family in 1902 and has remained in their ownership since.⁷⁵ It catered to a larger audience than just Wolverhampton; in 1963, the daily circulation was 232,208 with 61 per cent of sales being made in neighbouring towns.⁷⁶ As a result, the newspaper covered more national news than other local newspapers, such as the *Telephone*, and reporting was influenced by national as well as local opinion. The *Express & Star's* reporting of race during the early 1960s reflected the attitudes of local politicians in that it was not nearly as frequent or as inflammatory as the *Telephone's*. For example, the WICA did not gain the same support from the local press as the Smethwick branch and the newspaper did not associate disease with immigrants.⁷⁷

⁷² Reeves, *Race and Borough Politics*, 42.

⁷³ *Ibid*, 50.

⁷⁴ 'About Us,' *Express & Star*, accessed 5 February 2016, www.expressandstar.com/about-us

⁷⁵ *Ibid*.

⁷⁶ G.W Jones, *Borough Politics: A Study of the Wolverhampton Town Council, 1888-1964* (London: Macmillan, 1969), 15.

⁷⁷ Wolverhampton City Archive, 'West Indians Don't Bring Disease With them,' *Express & Star*, 8 October 1963, 14.

Clem Jones, editor from 1960, was a member of the Press Council and chairman of the Press Freedom Committee of the Commonwealth Press Union.⁷⁸ He fought for an improvement in journalistic standards and fair reporting of race in British journalism.⁷⁹ His attitude was summed up in 1968, when he told a conference of editors:

I try to see all stories with a colour angle myself, and to look at them not only in the same way as other stories- that is, at their news value- but also in the light of possible reaction from both coloured and white people, and our special responsibility as communicators to the community.⁸⁰

Here we see Jones' belief in the importance of attempting to provide balanced reporting of race and immigration.

This attempt at balance can be seen in the *Express & Star's* reporting of race during the decade. Unlike the *Telephone*, the newspaper condemned Peter Griffiths' campaign in Smethwick. An article published in July 1963 wrote that Gordon Walker had a 'good deal of evidence' to support claims that Griffiths was stirring up race hate in the town.⁸¹ During the 1964 General Election campaign, the *Express & Star* shared the views of Liberal leader Jo Grimond, who described Gordon Walker's campaign as 'the most disgusting thing which has happened in this election' and Harold Wilson, who described it as a 'disgrace to British democracy'.⁸² The newspaper did, however, also provide the opposing view in

⁷⁸ Clem Jones, *Race and the Media: Thirty Years, Misunderstood* (London: Commission for Racial Equality, 1982), 1.

⁷⁹ 'Clem Jones,' *Telegraph*, 11 November 2002, accessed 6 February 2016, www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/1412781/Clem-Jones.html

⁸⁰ Roy Greenslade, *Press Gang: How Newspapers Make Profits from Propaganda* (London: Pan Books, 2004), 225.

⁸¹ 'Tories Playing with Racial Fire,' *Express & Star*, 22 July 1963, 10.

⁸² 'Smethwick Exploded like a Bomb,' *Express & Star*, 17 October 1964, 26.

an article reporting Griffiths' views on immigration and his ten-point plan to deal with the issue, reflecting the newspaper's commitment to providing balanced reporting.⁸³

Despite this attempt at balance, the newspaper nonetheless offered readers a more subtle and respectable form of racism that was later utilised by Powell, presenting the presence of immigrants as a threat to local identity, traditions and culture. Examples of this include a series of articles published in 1962 'dealing with the problems of coloured immigration', the fifth part of which stated that 'Long established tenants of conventional areas have had their patterns of communal behaviour violated, their property devalued in the English market and their serenity of mind shattered.'⁸⁴ The article went on to say that 'most West Indians have houses as clean and well run as those belonging to British workers', suggesting that it was not a racial issue but an issue about changes to the local area.⁸⁵ This, they implied, was a rational and justifiable response. This is an example of how the local press represented immigrants as outsiders from the local communities in which they lived, without being overtly racist.

Other examples of this include an article, published in August 1962, which wrote that West Indians were beginning to 'settle down' and that elements of the 'colour problem' had vanished.⁸⁶ Here we see an attempt to present the local West Indian community in a positive light, however the implication is that

⁸³ 'Face up to the Colour Issues, Says Tory,' *Express & Star*, 30 Sep 1964, 1.

⁸⁴ 'Deport the Worst Types, Say Coloured,' *Express & Star*, 22 August 1962, 7.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ 'West Indians are Settling Down,' *Express & Star*, 24 August 1962, 14.

immigrants and their cultural differences had previously caused issues.

Similarly, when reporting on a protest against local Indian man, Mr Jiwa, being given a flat by the local council, the *Express & Star* reported the views of local resident, Mrs Twyford, who said that she 'objected to the smell of Indian cooking and all night parties'.⁸⁷ This suggested that the issue was not with the immigrants themselves, but with the impact of their cultural differences on the local area.

Local Services: Education

During the 1960s, many immigrant children travelled to Britain to join their families.⁸⁸ In 1966, there were approximately 131,000 immigrant children in British schools and by 1970 this figure rose to 264,000.⁸⁹ The number of black and Asian children in Wolverhampton schools rose from 1000 in 1962, to 5,556 in 1968.⁹⁰ By 1969, twenty-three schools had more than the 30 per cent immigrant children that the government recommended and ten had over 50 per cent.⁹¹ 550 children were bussed out of Wolverhampton daily to forty schools in an attempt to distribute immigrant children and alleviate the issue, a policy that not only gained negative attention from anti-racists but also failed to achieve its aim.⁹²

⁸⁷ 'Open Air Protest over Indian as Neighbour,' *Express & Star*, 16 August 1965, 15.

⁸⁸ Reeves, *Race and Borough Politics*, 77.

⁸⁹ Glen O'Hara, *Governing Post-War Britain: The Paradoxes of Progress, 1951-1973* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 178.

⁹⁰ Reeves, *Race and Borough Politics*, 77.

⁹¹ Baker, 'Race Relations in Britain,' 3.

⁹² O'Hara, *Governing Post-War Britain*, 178.

As appendix one shows, in the five years prior to Enoch Powell's Walsall speech, ATV broadcast seven reports focusing on immigrant education. In 1963, ATV broadcast a report focusing on Pakistani children who were learning English in school during the summer holidays.⁹³ Rather than focusing on the positive aspect of the story, Tony Holmes asked teacher, Mrs Wood: 'How serious is the language problem?', framing the presence of immigrant children as problematic.⁹⁴ In 1965, ATV broadcast three reports on immigrant education. This slight increase in reporting is likely to have been due to the Education Department issuing a circular instructing Local Education Authorities to 'disperse' immigrant children to other schools once they had reached 30 per cent of the total students.⁹⁵ This policy reflected the government's aim throughout the 1960s and 1970s of 'anglicising' immigrant children, an aim that was rooted in beliefs about the superiority of British culture.⁹⁶ This included a report featuring an interview with a head teacher of a local multi-racial primary school, which had received complaints from parents of white children regarding the number of immigrant children.⁹⁷ Warman asked: 'If the white children here went to a different school, do you think they'd get on faster?', suggesting that immigrant children posed a threat to the education of white local children.⁹⁸ This framing of issues around immigrant education continued in the following years, with another three reports on the topic being broadcast in 1967.

⁹³ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Learn English at School,' first broadcast on 13 August 1963, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-13081963-learn-english-school

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ O'Hara, *Governing Post-War Britain*, 178.

⁹⁶ Herbert, *Negotiating Boundaries in the City*, 141.

⁹⁷ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Interview with Headmistress of Multi-racial Primary School,' first broadcast on 8 November 1965, <http://www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-08111965-interview-headmistress-multi-racial-primary-school>

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

In January 1968, Wolverhampton's Labour Group criticised the Conservative council for failing to provide school places for 300 children, 99 per cent of which were immigrants.⁹⁹ Local Labour Councillors, along with Labour MP Renee Short, met Patrick Gordon Walker, Minister of State Education and Science, to demand the need for greater resources in the town to cope with the issue.¹⁰⁰ In February 1968, Powell delivered his speech in Walsall, which included the story of a local child who was the only white child in her class. Three days later, the *Express & Star* reported on the 'over 300 Wolverhampton children' who could not find school places.¹⁰¹ This article told the story of a school teacher who was greeted by a crying 'little Asiatic girl' who could only say 'no English' and wrote of the problems caused by 'long unpronounceable names', different table manners and clothes which are 'inadequate for our winter'.¹⁰² A report broadcast by ATV two days later focused on the provisions in Wolverhampton for the education of Asian school children.¹⁰³ This indicates that ATV was using the *Express & Star* as a source of information about local education. ATV reporter, John Wilford, interviewed Councillor Walter Hughes, chairman of the Wolverhampton Education committee. The first question he asked was: 'How difficult is it for you to find places for these immigrant children coming to Wolverhampton?'.¹⁰⁴ He then asked: 'You've got about twenty-five to thirty a week landing on your doorstep, how long a waiting list have you got?' and 'What

⁹⁹ Reeves, *Race and Borough Politics*, 79.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 84.

¹⁰¹ 'The Challenge: What we Must do to help the Immigrant School Children,' *Express & Star*, 12 February 1968, 4.

¹⁰² *Ibid*.

¹⁰³ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Immigration and Education,' first broadcast on 20 February 1968, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-20021968-immigration-and-education

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*.

happens when these children arrive in Wolverhampton?', again bringing the topic of conversation back on to the number of children arriving.¹⁰⁵ He went on to say that many of these children 'can't speak English at all'; the issue of language was often presented as the main problem facing schools as it prevented children from assimilating and placed a greater strain on teachers.¹⁰⁶ Hughes was also asked if they tried to maintain a 'ratio between immigrant and white children in each school'.¹⁰⁷ He responded 'No, we haven't been able to do that.'¹⁰⁸

The headmistress of a local school was also interviewed in front of a PE lesson. Wilford asked: 'I suppose the main problem when they arrive is communication?'.¹⁰⁹ She replied: 'the majority of Indian children don't speak English'. He then asked: 'Most schools like to keep a ratio between immigrant and white children, but presumably that's gone by the board here has it?'.¹¹⁰ She told him that it was 'unfortunate' that it had. She was then asked if she thought it was a disadvantage having 'so many immigrants', to which she replied: 'Yes it is, because we haven't been given the opportunity to integrate the children properly.'¹¹¹ She described the immigrant children in a very positive way, saying that 'they have so much to give us' and that 'they really are wonderful', suggesting that the issue was not with the children themselves.¹¹²

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

The report then showed Asian children returning home from school; a shot of the children entering the home showed rubbish outside, indicating uncleanliness and a lack of respect for the local area. This was followed by a shot of the children's mother cooking chapattis on the floor of the house. The smell of Indian food and its encroachment onto the street was a popular complaint and source of resentment against south Asian neighbours.¹¹³ As Chris Waters notes, race relations sociologists such as Geoffrey Gorer, Kenneth Little and Sheila Patterson, who studied responses to immigrants in Britain in the post-war period, defined immigrants as 'strangers' who deviated from the white British norm.¹¹⁴ The immigrant 'stranger', it was argued, did not know how to behave and failed to conform to 'certain standards of order, cleanliness, quietness, privacy, and propriety', for example by not keeping dustbins 'tidy and out of sight'.¹¹⁵ Joanna Herbert notes that South Asian immigrants threatened 'boundary markers' by hanging clothing on shared washing lines, or through the smell of curry.¹¹⁶ This was not, she argues, simply a conflict over space; the home represented a quiet, ordered and private space that was under threat by immigrants, who failed to adhere to accepted local standards.¹¹⁷

In April 1968, shortly before Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech, the city was awarded £100,000 from the government to build a new school, a project that

¹¹³ Elizabeth Buettner, "Going for an Indian": South Asian Restaurants and the Limits of Multiculturalism,' *The Journal of Modern History* 80, no. 3 (2008): 875.

¹¹⁴ Chris Waters, "Dark Strangers" in our Midst: Discourses of Race and Nation in Britain, 1947-1964,' *Journal of British Studies* 36, no. 2 (1997): 209.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, 224.

¹¹⁶ Herbert, *Negotiating Boundaries in the City*, 44.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, 44.

was supported by the local press.¹¹⁸ Ernest Rhoden, headmaster of the Grove School, later wrote of the national and international publicity received due to the school's opening, noting that the fact that 'the school had been built in a national record of four months did not have as much news value as the fact that it would have an immigrant intake of 90%'.¹¹⁹ Reeves argues that the public outcry surrounding education in Wolverhampton reveals how 'a minor parochial news item, particularly when conjoined with other little stories, may come to symbolise a threat to national survival' particularly when aided by 'nationally known politicians playing for larger stakes'.¹²⁰

Throughout the weeks before Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech, the *Express & Star* reported on immigrant education extensively. This included an article which claimed: 'More than 12 per cent of the town's school population of 47,000 are immigrants and with children from overseas still arriving at the rate of 30 per week the queue to get into the towns schools is getting bigger [sic]'.¹²¹ Another article wrote that twenty-two immigrant children at one school all lived at the same address.¹²² In Wolverhampton, immigrant became synonymous with 'educational problem'.¹²³ This can be attributed in part to the extensive coverage of the issue by local media. The national press also reported the strain on Wolverhampton's schools, however, unlike the *Express & Star* and ATV, which supported local authority calls for the dispersal of immigrant

¹¹⁸ Reeves, *Race and Borough Politics*, 92.

¹¹⁹ Wolverhampton City Archives, Wolverhampton, D-CJ/3, Ernest L Rhoden, 'A Multiracial School in England,' November 1971,

¹²⁰ Reeves, *Race and Borough Politics*, 79.

¹²¹ 'Focus on Immigrants,' *Express & Star*, 1 April 1968, 6.

¹²² 'Don't 'Sweep' 22 Children Under Carpet,' *Express & Star*, 10 April 1968, 25.

¹²³ Reeves, *Race and Borough Politics*, 87.

children, the national press focused more on national government opinion. For example, *The Times* noted that the Director of Education believed that dispersal was unfair and would create problems.¹²⁴

When Powell made his speech in 1968, he did so in the midst of rising racial tension in Wolverhampton, resulting from increasing pressure on local services, particularly education, and the way in which this was presented by local media. The *Express and Star's* reporting was very different from the *Telephone's*; unlike the *Telephone* it was rarely overtly racist, but like Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech it provided a different and more respectable form of racism that presented anxieties about race as being a natural response to cultural difference. Frank Reeves argues that until 1968, mainstream local politicians did not reflect the strength of anti-immigrant feeling that existed in Wolverhampton, noting that 'The animosity expressed in everyday complaints and gossip, lingered sinisterly in the bar and street corner, awaiting a vehicle prestigious enough to transport it on to the political stage.'¹²⁵ That person would arrive in the form of Powell.

The Wolverhampton Turban Dispute and Local Responses to Sikhism

On 8 August 1967, Sikh bus driver Tarsem Singh Sandhu returned to his job at the Wolverhampton Transport Department after a period of absence. Before taking sick leave he had been cleanly shaven, but whilst away from work he undertook a process of 'spiritual rediscovery' and returned to work wearing a

¹²⁴ Brian Macarthur, 'Ghetto Schools' a Lesson in Racial Harmony,' *The Times*, 17 October 1968, 4.

¹²⁵ Reeves, *Race and Borough Politics*, 54.

turban and beard.¹²⁶ In doing so, he broke the uniform regulations laid out by the Wolverhampton Transport Committee, resulting in his dismissal. Sandhu launched a campaign led by the Sikh organisation, the Shiromani Akali Dal, which involved numerous public demonstrations in Wolverhampton. The campaign lasted for two years and became involved not only with local, but also national and international politics.¹²⁷ In 1968 it became embroiled with national politics when leaders began to direct their efforts towards ensuring protection of the right to wear the turban in the Race Relations Bill.¹²⁸ In January 1969, a sixty-five year-old member of the Akali Dal, Sohan Singh Jolly threatened to burn himself alive at Baisakhi, a festival that celebrated the Sikh New Year, if the decision not to allow turbans and beards was not overturned.¹²⁹ By this point, the dispute had already come to be perceived as a confrontation between the people of Wolverhampton and the Sikh community.¹³⁰

The *Express & Star* reported extensively on the dispute, attempting to provide balanced reporting. The newspaper's initial reporting was supportive of the Sikhs, presenting the ban as narrow minded. For example, it included quotations from senior Labour politician, David Ennals, who described the turban as an 'essential part of the faith', and Mr John Kassie, Liaison Officer of Wolverhampton Council for Racial Harmony, who argued that the ban showed

¹²⁶ Jasbir Singh Sarna, *Some Precious Pages of the Sikh History* (Chandigarh: Unistar Books, 2012), 126.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Beetham, David. *Transport and Turbans: a Comparative Study in Local Politics* (London: Institute of Race Relations, 1970), 57.

¹²⁹ 'Sikhs Backed in Fight for Turbans,' *The Times*, 14 January 1969, 2.

¹³⁰ Beetham, *Transport and Turbans*, 55.

the 'insincerity of attempts to establish good race relations in the town'.¹³¹ In February 1968, between 5000 and 6000 Sikhs marched through Wolverhampton to protest the ban.¹³² The newspaper emphasised that it was a silent protest and that 'women marched in the rain to support their husbands'.¹³³ It also stated that Christians supported the march and included an image of a banner reading: 'Christians support Sikhs' plea.'¹³⁴ There was a clear attempt in the *Express & Star's* reporting to offer a sympathetic view of the campaign and to present the Sikh community in a positive way. The *Express & Star* did, however, continuously note that the dispute might be harmful to race relations in the town.¹³⁵

The national press was very supportive of the Sikhs' right to wear the turban throughout the campaign and paid less attention than the local press to the methods of the Sikh leaders or the potential impact of the dispute on race relations in Wolverhampton. For example, *The Times* published an article, written by Philip Mason, the Director of the Institute of Race Relations, who stated: 'beards and turbans are 'distinguishing features' of Sikhs and 'many will give them up but not if they are forced to do so'.¹³⁶ When the Sikhs won the right to wear turbans in April 1969, the *Express & Star* responded with some scepticism, claiming that the Transport Committee was 'pressured, cajoled and

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Reeves, *Race and Borough Politics*, 70.

¹³³ 'Sikhs March with Protest Letter,' *Express & Star*, 4 February 1968, 22.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ 'A strike Threat on W'ton Beard Dispute,' *Express & Star*, 4 January 1968, 4.

¹³⁶ Philip Mason, 'In a Strange Land,' *The Times*, 26 January 1968, XVII.

virtually forced into reluctant capitulation'.¹³⁷ The *Daily Mail*, on the other hand, published an article in the 'comments' section on the front page of the newspaper, which said that they were 'glad to see that the Sikhs have at last won the right to wear the turban on the Wolverhampton buses' because 'it is intolerant and petty to forbid people to follow the dictates of their religion'.¹³⁸ Despite the *Express & Star* being initially sympathetic towards the campaign, the difference between local and national press reporting of the dispute is clear.

The national press and the public generally supported Sikh campaigns for the right to wear the turban in Britain due to collective memories of war and empire. The turban was commonly presented as a patriotic symbol as the British had identified the Sikhs as a martial race thus giving them status in the Indian colonial hierarchy.¹³⁹ As Bill Schwarz argues, imperial memories 'do not simply vanish from the historical landscape'; even after the empire had ended, many did not forget the status previously held by Sikhs.¹⁴⁰ There was also, throughout the period, a perhaps surprising lack of hostility towards the arrival of a new religion into Britain. As David Feldman has shown, debates about immigration during the period tended to focus on secular issues, such as the impact of immigrants on housing, employment, crime and the threat of interracial sex and reproduction, rather than on the threat of Britain becoming a

¹³⁷ David Bell, 'So its Turbans on- and Sikhs Jubilant at Victory,' *Express & Star*, 10 August 1969, 30.

¹³⁸ 'Turbans,' *Daily Mail*, 11 April 1969, 1.

¹³⁹ Feldman, 'Why the English Like Turbans,' 294.

¹⁴⁰ Schwarz, *The White Man's World*, 54.

multi-faith society.¹⁴¹ These secular issues were the primary focus, not only in parliament, but also by the media and the public. This apparent lack of hostility towards those who practiced alternative religions must be examined in the context of what was happening to Christianity in Britain during this period. David Feldman suggests that 'the rising tide of reform' in many areas of life during the 1960s and 70s weakened the authority of religious principles.¹⁴² In his book, *The Death of Christian Britain*, Callum Brown pinpoints the 'death' of Christianity in Britain to the 1960s, arguing that this brought with it a 'new tolerance of ethnic difference'.¹⁴³

This perhaps explains why, despite the dispute receiving national and international attention, ATV featured very limited film footage and no interviews with any of the Sikhs involved. What little coverage of the dispute they did provide was short and included no sound. A report in August 1967 simply showed a bus, driven by a white driver, pulling in to the bus station in Wolverhampton. ATV also broadcast a twenty-five second long clip of a meeting of Sikhs in Wolverhampton.¹⁴⁴ It is possible that ATV was reluctant to provide extensive coverage of tensions between the local Sikh and white communities over religious disputes, rather than secular issues, such as pressure on school places. It is interesting to compare this with ITV's national coverage of Sikh campaigns. Unlike ATV, ITN broadcast footage of the march through

¹⁴¹ David Feldman, 'Conservative Pluralism and the Politics of Multiculturalism,' in *Secularism, Racism and the Politics of Belonging*, ed. Nira Yuval-Davis and Philip Marfleet (London: Runnymede Trust, 2012), 10.

¹⁴² *Ibid*, 11.

¹⁴³ Callum G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularization 1800-2000* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2001), 1.

¹⁴⁴ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Meeting of Sikhs in Wolverhampton,' first broadcast on 8 January 1968, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-08011968-meeting-of-sikhs-in-wolverhampton

Wolverhampton.¹⁴⁵ In May 1968, ITN broadcast coverage of a march of 300 Sikhs in London, in protest against the Wolverhampton Transport Authority, which showed Sikhs in white turbans peacefully marching through the streets of London.¹⁴⁶ The reason why ITN broadcast this can perhaps be explained through Herbert Gans' list of criteria in his discussion of news values.¹⁴⁷ Gans discusses how journalists that put together the news are able to choose from 'billions of potential activities' but can select only a tiny fraction of these activities.¹⁴⁸ Journalists, he argues, are likely to select stories that are interesting, that evoke audience sympathy or admiration.¹⁴⁹ Journalists are also likely, he argues, to select stories which 'lend themselves to filming'; the Sikh turban carried a symbolic meaning and therefore the imagery of Sikhs marching through the streets of London would have carried a powerful visual message to a national audience.¹⁵⁰

Within Wolverhampton, the campaign was viewed by many as a direct confrontation between the white and Sikh communities.¹⁵¹ The letters page of the *Express and Star* suggested that the march, which took place shortly before Powell's Walsall speech, was not viewed by local people as 'a healthy expression of democratic protest', but instead it was 'understood as an attempt at intimidation and proof that Sikhs were determined not to integrate or conform

¹⁴⁵ ITN Archive, *ITN*, 'Sikhs Protest,' first broadcast on 4 February 1968, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/723193137

¹⁴⁶ ITN Archive, *ITN*, '300 Sikhs March in London', first broadcast on 12 May 1968, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/729837981

¹⁴⁷ Herbert J. Gans, *Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek, and Time* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2004).

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 78.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 156.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 158.

¹⁵¹ Beetham, *Transport and Turbans*, 55.

with the way of life of the town'.¹⁵² Clem Jones, editor of the *Express and Star*, attempted to provide balance in the letters columns, despite the majority of letters received being in support of the Transport Committee.¹⁵³ This suggests that the level of support for the ban within the town was actually higher than these letters indicate.

Throughout the dispute, the turban came to symbolise far more than a change to uniform regulations; those who argued that busmen should be permitted to wear beards and turbans were quick to highlight that the majority of white busmen did not actually wear their regulation caps.¹⁵⁴ It came to represent the threat of alien cultures to the British and local way of life. As Lauren McLaren and Mark Johnson have noted: 'It must be recognised that a key source of threat may not be resources or economic based. Instead the threat posed is of a symbolic nature and may stem from concerns about the loss of certain values or ways of life.'¹⁵⁵ The busman's cap, too, came to represent something more than just a uniform; it began to embody local traditions and values under threat. David Beetham went as far as to say that it 'came to take on the same emotional significance that the turban had for Sikhs'.¹⁵⁶

This poses the question of why Sikhs were viewed in this way by the people of Wolverhampton prior to Powell's speeches. The answer may lie, in part, in the

¹⁵² Kassimeris and Jackson, 'Negotiating Race and Religion in the West Midlands,' 351.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, 347.

¹⁵⁴ The National Archives, Kew, LAB 115/59.K, Smith, Letter to Mr. R. H Addlesee, 'Employment of Commonwealth Immigrants- Visit to Wolverhampton Transport Department,' 29 November 1967.

¹⁵⁵ Lauren McLaren and Mark Johnson, 'Resources, Group Conflict and Symbols: Explaining Anti-Immigrant Hostility in Britain,' *Political Studies* 55, no. 4 (2007): 715.

¹⁵⁶ Beetham, *Transport and Turbans*, 4.

way in which they were presented on ATV in the years that preceded the dispute. As shown in appendix two, ATV broadcast ten reports on Sikhism in the five years prior to Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech, seven of which were broadcast within ten months of the speech. It is clear that ATV attempted to portray the religion in a positive light; for example, in December 1967, whilst the dispute was taking place, ATV reported on the opening of a Sikh temple in Wolverhampton, showing smiling women and children and ignoring any signs of racial tension.¹⁵⁷ However, the way in which ATV presented Sikhs reinforced their cultural difference. The white British public had pre-existing conceptions of Sikhism that 'evolved in tandem with mass immigration from the subcontinent'.¹⁵⁸ Many aspects of the Sikh religion appeared strange and exotic, for example the turban itself was a visual symbol of cultural difference and distinctiveness.¹⁵⁹ Accounts of Sikh ceremonies in the national press, which described 'crowds of men chanting' and 'Sikhs clutching drums' evoked collective memories of exotic and uncivilised people in Britain's former colonies.¹⁶⁰ The visual representation of Sikhs provided by television news was able to say things about their cultural difference that would not have been possible simply through the use of language.¹⁶¹ By offering a visual medium within the audience's local environment, ATV had the additional impact of fuelling local fears about the rapid visible changes taking place within the immediate local area and the possible breakdown of local traditions.

¹⁵⁷ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'New Sikh Temple at Wolverhampton,' first broadcast on 29 December 1967, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-29121967-new-sikh-temple-at-wolverhampton

¹⁵⁸ Buettner, "Going for an Indian", 867.

¹⁵⁹ Gerald Parsons, *The Growth of Religious Diversity: Traditions* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1993), 231.

¹⁶⁰ 'The Punjabi Touch in Southall,' *The Times*, 23 January 1967, 10.

¹⁶¹ Machin and Mayr, *How to Do Critical Discourse Analysis*, 9.

Throughout the 1960s, ATV reported on the opening of numerous Sikh temples in towns and cities across the Midlands with large Sikh populations, including Coventry, Nottingham, Birmingham and Wolverhampton.¹⁶² The first report of the opening of a Sikh temple in Nottingham in 1963, opened with shots of a crowd of smiling Sikh men, all wearing turbans. Shots of the inside of the temple presented the religion as exotic and strange. For example, the camera focused on a man who stood at the front of the room holding the Chauri, a fan with a silver handle, made from the tail hair of a white horse.¹⁶³ The clip had no sound and none of the people in the temple were spoken to, however the use of visual imagery reinforced the sense of separation between the viewer and the Sikh community.



Shot of Sikh ceremony in Nottingham Gurdwara. MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Sikh Temple Gurdwara Opened in Nottingham,' first broadcast on 12 August 1962,

www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-12081963-sikh-temple-gurdwara-opened-nottingham

¹⁶² MACE, University of Lincoln *Midlands News*, 'Sikh Temple Gurdwara Opened in Nottingham,' first broadcast on 12 August 1962, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-12081963-sikh-temple-gurdwara-opened-nottingham

¹⁶³ Geoff Teece, *Sikhism* (London: Black Rabbit Books, 2005), 15.

A similar report, broadcast on 17 November 1967, showed a service at the Guru Gobind Singh Gurdwara Sikh temple in Balsall Heath, Birmingham.¹⁶⁴ The report began with a shot of the outside of a house on a street in Balsall Heath. The following shot showed the inside of the temple, where a Sikh man sat at a raised platform covered by a canopy decorated with fabric, flower garlands, and bells. During the report, the camera zoomed in very closely to the faces of some of the Sikh men, emphasising their visual difference. Again, the clip had no sound, and once again the report's use of visual imagery depicted a very alien and exotic culture, triggering collective memories of empire. None of the people in the clip were given the opportunity to speak, they were simply observed by the camera's white gaze.



Shots of a Sikh ceremony in Balsall Heath Gurdwara. MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Sikh Temple in Balsall Heath,' first broadcast on 16 November 1967, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-16111967-sikh-temple-balsall-heath

¹⁶⁴ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Sikh Temple in Balsall Heath,' first broadcast on 16 November 1967, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-16111967-sikh-temple-balsall-heath

This representation of Sikhism differed significantly from that given by national current affairs programming, which unlike ATV's shorter news programme was able to provide a more extended and in depth examination of the religion. For example, a 1966 episode of ITV's *This Week*, which focused on British Sikhs, suggested that Sikhs were integrating well into British society.¹⁶⁵ A Sikh man told the reporter that his children were 'British subjects' and were 'picking up all English manners' and using English phrases such as 'thank you very much indeed'.¹⁶⁶ The reporter went on to interview two Sikh teenage girls, one of whom told him: 'I wear English dress but I feel Indian because mum wears Indian dress and the food we eat is a sort of mixture really.'¹⁶⁷ Unlike ATV, which presented the religion as strange and incompatible with British life, the programme helped to normalise the religion and showed viewers that integration was possible.

ATV was supportive of the Sikhs' right to wear the turban in Britain. However, due to the visual nature of television news, the image of the turban came to represent racial difference and visible changes taking place within the audience's local area. In March 1963, ATV broadcast a report about an unnamed Sikh man who worked as a bus conductor in Birmingham.¹⁶⁸ This report was broadcast five months after Birmingham City Council made the decision to allow its bus crew to wear turbans and this was clearly the significance of the story.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ BFI Player, *This Week*, 'Sikhs,' first broadcast in 1966, <https://player.bfi.org.uk/rentals/film/watch-sikhs-1966-online>

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Sikh Bus Conductor,' first broadcast on 27 March 1963, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-27031963-sikh-bus-conductor

¹⁶⁹ Beetham, *Transport and Turbans*, 28.

The clip began with a close up shot of the man standing on the street, dressed in his uniform and wearing a black turban. As he spoke, the camera zoomed in on his turban, cutting off his face from the shot. This dehumanised the man, indicating a sense of intrigue and fascination; the focus of the report was his turban, rather than the wearer himself.

Similarly, when an unnamed Sikh man was refused work at Boots the chemist in July 1967, ATV broadcast a report that simply showed the man, who was dressed in a suit and wore a turban and beard, leaving a café and walking down a street into Boots. ATV was attempting to show that discrimination was taking place and to support the Sikh man.¹⁷⁰ The Sikh man, however, was given no opportunity to speak, but was simply observed by the camera's white gaze. The idea of a man wearing a turban was still considered newsworthy by ATV. The representation of Sikhism on ATV throughout the decade goes some way to explain how Powell was able to utilise public responses to the dispute in order to gain significant local support.

Local and National Media Responses to 'Rivers of Blood'

Powell was a great manipulator of the national media; his understanding of news values allowed him to gain huge amounts of publicity. For example, he knew how to use language that would appeal to journalists and how to time his speeches for maximum news coverage.¹⁷¹ But in a 1995 interview, Clem Jones, former editor of the *Express & Star*, revealed that Powell had not always been a

¹⁷⁰ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Sikh Refused Work,' first broadcast on 17 July 1967, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-17071967-sikh-refused-work

¹⁷¹ Churchill Archives, Cambridge, POLL AS/3/10, 'Interview with Clem Jones,' 18 October 1995.

good self-publicist, telling the interviewer that he had approached him prior to his speech 'about the fact that he didn't seem to be getting quite the same amount of publicity as John Baird' former Labour MP for Wolverhampton North East.¹⁷² Powell asked Jones for assistance with 'maximising' his popularity and Jones provided him with 'a sort of breakdown on timing' and taught him the importance of sending out advanced copies of the speech and 'the value of a Saturday release for the six o'clock news which the Sunday papers would pick up'.¹⁷³ Powell's implementation of this advice is evident in the national response to his 'Rivers of Blood' speech, which Jones described as being 'very well stage managed'.¹⁷⁴ The national press heavily quoted his 'Rivers of Blood' speech in its immediate aftermath, including specific references to Wolverhampton.¹⁷⁵

This did not, however, mean to say that the national press was supportive of Powell. Schwarz notes that 'seven national newspapers were initially unfavourable to Powell and two favourable', the two favourable being the *News of the World* and the *Express*.¹⁷⁶ Whilst both *The Times* and the *Daily Mail* did include quotes from Powell's supporters, both were critical of Powell in the days and weeks that followed his speech. For example, an article published on 25 April reporting the support Powell received from the dockers and Smithfield meat porters, quoted Mr Frank Cousins, general secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), who reminded readers that before the war it

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ 'Mr. Powell Filled with Foreboding on Immigration,' *The Times*, 22 April 1968, 2.

¹⁷⁶ Schwarz, *The White Man's World*, 36.

was the dockers who demonstrated against the Blackshirts.¹⁷⁷ Likewise, printed alongside an article reporting the dockers' march in the *Daily Mail*, was a cartoon of a docker arriving to see a black doctor, with the caption: 'I dropped my 'I- back- Enoch' placard on my foot.'¹⁷⁸ Despite this coverage of Powell being critical, as Colin Seymour-Ure notes it was the 'sheer intensity of reportage' that allowed Powell's speech to have such a significant impact.¹⁷⁹

The *Express and Star's* editor, Clem Jones, had been a close friend of Powell for twenty years prior to 1968.¹⁸⁰ Jones and his wife Marjorie, who were looking after Powell's two daughters whilst he delivered his 'Rivers of Blood' speech, watched it on the television and were so horrified that they abruptly ended the friendship.¹⁸¹ Unlike the *Smethwick Telephone's* reporting on Griffiths, the *Express and Star* tried to remain neutral in their reporting of Powell. For example, Jones made an effort to print letters both for and against him.¹⁸² On the day of Powell's speech, the *Express and Star* published a front page article which consisted almost entirely of extracts from Powell's speech, including his statement that: '20 or 30 additional immigrant children are arriving from overseas in Wolverhampton alone every week'.¹⁸³ Another article, published the same day, quoted his story about a local widow.¹⁸⁴ Neither article expressed any comment either in praise or criticism of Powell, but instead simply relayed his

¹⁷⁷ '40,000 Powell Postbag,' *The Times*, 25 April 1968, 2.

¹⁷⁸ 'Dockers March on Commons,' *Daily Mail*, 24 April 1968, 1.

¹⁷⁹ Colin Seymour-Ure, *The Political Impact of Mass Media* (London: SAGE, 1974), 111.

¹⁸⁰ Rupert Jones, 'My Grandparents, Enoch Powell and the Day They Fell out over His 'Rivers of Blood' Speech,' *The Guardian*, 22 October 2016, accessed 25 August 2017, www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/oct/22/my-grandparents-enoch-powell-and-the-day-they-fell-out-over-his-rivers-of-blood-speech

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸² Kassimeris and Jackson, 'Negotiating Race and Religion in the West Midlands,' 346.

¹⁸³ 'Britain's Powder Keg,' *Express & Star*, 20 April 1968, 1.

¹⁸⁴ 'The Fear of a Pensioner,' *Express & Star*, 20 April 1968, 1.

message to readers. Jones later said that Powell had felt 'rather bitter in the circumstances' that his constituency newspaper had not supported him.¹⁸⁵

Despite this appearance of impartiality, however, the newspaper appeared to have been more unbalanced in favour of Powell in the weeks and months that followed his speech than the national press. An interview with Clem Jones, in which the interviewer probed him on his relationship with Powell before and after the speech, suggests that Jones shared some of Powell's views on immigration. Jones spoke about immigrants undercutting local people, whole streets 'going black' and shared his own views on Asian immigration:

The West Indians, I think, the area could have accommodated, they were much more extrovert, they didn't really, I mean they might have got sort of drunk and they might have had noisy parties but somehow or another they seemed to kind of fit in, but the very closely knit Indian communities, or Pakistani or Bengali or wherever they all came from, they were all very close communities and they insisted on maintaining their sort of way of life.¹⁸⁶

Jones defended Powell, for example he told the interviewer that 'he acted as a constituency MP with equal vigour and impartiality on behalf of everybody whether they were black, white, pink, yellow or anything else', that his motives in making the speech were 'misunderstood', and that he was 'speaking for 25 per cent, probably even more' of his constituents who were 'directly affected' by immigration.¹⁸⁷ He implied that Powell's speech placed him in a difficult position; on the one hand he was a close friend, but on the other he had 'written several pamphlets and all the rest of it on the need for a broader approach on

¹⁸⁵ 'Interview with Clem Jones.'

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

the part of the press'.¹⁸⁸ He told the interviewer that he felt 'embarrassed', saying that he 'could see the merits' and 'the fact that something needed to be said' but the 'language was just a little bit stronger, I think, than what was justified at that time'.¹⁸⁹

This view was reflected in an article for the *Express & Star*, written by Jones and published on 29 April 1968.¹⁹⁰ Jones wrote that the significant thing to people was not the speech but the fact that a politician has made it possible for them to speak about something that was 'not quite respectable to talk about'.¹⁹¹ He went on to say that those who knew Powell could 'accept without question' that he did not intend to make a 'racialist speech', however 'a speech without racist intent became one with racist effect'.¹⁹² Although he noted that Powell's speech 'made a peaceful solution to race problems more difficult', he went on to say that it also 'made the solution of race problems in this country desperately more urgent than they were ten days ago' describing the speech as a 'call to action'.¹⁹³ Although critical of the tone of Powell's speech, this article implied that Powell's speech and its effects would ultimately benefit local people.

A number of articles in the *Express & Star* were highly critical of Powell. For example, on 22 April 1968, an article included a quote from Mr Aaron Haynes, Liaison Officer for Wolverhampton Council for Racial Harmony, who said that 'Whatever his intentions, Powell has inflamed fears and hostility towards

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ 'Challenge to us,' *Express & Star*, 29 April 1968, 4.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

immigrants.’¹⁹⁴ This article, however, was situated on page twenty-four of the newspaper and did little to counteract the front page article published the same day, which wrote that Wolverhampton’s ‘top Tories’ were behind Powell, that a ‘wave of sympathy’ had been extended by a group of local steel erectors following his sacking, and that his constituency switchboard was ‘rammed with people ringing up to congratulate the MP’.¹⁹⁵ This extensive coverage informed readers of the level of support Powell was receiving from all sections of society, legitimising his attitude towards immigration.

Powell was also reported on extensively by ATV in the aftermath of his speeches; like the *Express & Star*, despite some effort at balance, ATV’s coverage appears to have been unbalanced in his favour. As shown in appendix three, ATV broadcast only eleven reports on Powell between his election in 1959 and his Walsall Speech almost ten years later, and all of these reports focused on either his role as Minister of Health or his battle with Heath for the party leadership. Between his 1968 speeches and the General Election of 1979, ATV broadcast thirty-two reports on Powell, the vast majority of which focused on his views on immigration. Much of the strength of Powell’s speeches came from his powerful skills as an orator, which enabled him to captivate the attention of his audience. ATV filmed Powell’s 1968 ‘Rivers of Blood’ speech for ITV’s national news programme, suggesting that although it was a local speech, ATV knew beforehand that it would have national importance.¹⁹⁶ Reg Harcourt remembers how it was covered by chance as ATV did not usually do news

¹⁹⁴ ‘Hostility and Fear Inflamed by Powell,’ *Express & Star*, 23 April 1968, 4.

¹⁹⁵ Ernest Prince, ‘A ‘Timid Ted’ Reply from Powell,’ *Express & Star*, 22 April 1968, 1.

¹⁹⁶ ITN Archive, *ITN*, ‘Politics: Enoch Powell Warning on Race Relations,’ first broadcast on 20 April 1968, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/674221192

bulletins on weekends, noting that when a copy of the speech was sent to reporter, Bob Gilman, 'he said words like crikey... this is gonna be good'.¹⁹⁷ The footage began with a shot of Powell standing behind a table in front of an audience.¹⁹⁸ As Powell told the audience: 'we must be mad, literally mad as a nation to be permitting the annual inflow of some 50,000 dependents', the camera zoomed in to him, helping viewers to better identify with his message.

There were numerous pro-Powell marches both locally and nationally following his speech. In the week that followed Powell's speech, ATV broadcast two reports, both of which showed demonstrations in support of Powell. The first opened with shots of a crowd of men marching down a street holding banners, which read: 'Enoch the man who cares about us' and 'Back him not sack him.'¹⁹⁹ A group of smiling women held signs that read: 'HP sauce support Enoch Powell' and 'Rights for free speech.'²⁰⁰ The impression given by the report was that these were simply ordinary local people, fighting for the rights of white local people who had been prevented from speaking their mind about immigration. The following day, ATV broadcast a report on a protest by General Electric Company workers in Birmingham, in support of Powell, which also depicted the march as peaceful.²⁰¹ In the month of Powell's speech, there were no ATV reports that included any criticism of his views. The following month, ATV

¹⁹⁷ 'From Headlines to "Tight-Lines": The Story of ATV Today,' Directed by Peter Raven (Birmingham: ATVLand, 2012), DVD.

¹⁹⁸ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, '1968 Review of the Year,' first broadcast on 30 December 1968, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-30121968-1968-review-of-the-year

¹⁹⁹ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Enoch Powell Demonstration,' first broadcast on 24 April 1968, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-24041968-enoch-powell-demonstrations

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Protest by GEC Workers,' first broadcast on 25 April 1968, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-25041968-protest-gec-workers

broadcast a report on student protests against Powell, showing some attempt at balance, however the speaker was Asian and the camera focused on Sikh men in turbans in the audience, suggesting that opposition was coming from within the local immigrant community.²⁰²

This favourable coverage continued throughout the year. In August 1968, ATV's Jeffrey Watson interviewed an unnamed local Asian businessman who was standing against Powell as an independent candidate for Wolverhampton South West in the General Election.²⁰³ During the interview he was asked no questions about any other topic than immigration. Watson began by asking him: 'Are you in favour of some form of restriction of immigration?', suggesting that this should be the case and showing support for Powell's views.²⁰⁴ The man hesitated before saying: 'Erm, yes, there should be some type but that will have to be decided', indicating that he felt obliged to provide this response.²⁰⁵ He was then asked: 'What sort of support will you be getting from the immigrant population?'.²⁰⁶ He responded: 'I hope to get some support also from the British people because I like to be friendly with all those people and they are mostly friendly with me.'²⁰⁷ At this point he looked directly at the camera for the first time, allowing him to speak directly to ATV's audience, suggesting awareness that the intended audience was white. ATV did broadcast some criticism of Powell in December 1968, in a report on the opening of a school in

²⁰² *Midlands News*, 'Student Protests Re Speech by Enoch Powell MP.'

²⁰³ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Asian Man Standing Against Enoch Powell,' first broadcast on 8 August 1968, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-22081968-asian-man-standing-against-enoch-powell

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

Wolverhampton in which an unnamed man told the reporter that Powell had caused the staff at local schools 'a lot of problems'; however, the coverage of Powell in 1968 did very little to dispel any of the anti-immigrant messages spread by Powell and his speeches.²⁰⁸

National television news also covered his speech extensively.²⁰⁹ This television coverage meant that a speech delivered to eighty-five people reached approximately 96 per cent of the country's adult population in the days that followed.²¹⁰ Schaffer discusses the response of ITV and the BBC to Powell, arguing that his speech 're-jigged broadcasting values on race, forcing liberal broadcasters to recognise the existence of a 'respectable', anti-immigrant position' and the importance of offering a 'balanced' view on immigration.²¹¹ This led to accusations from outside organisations, such as the Race Relations Board (RRB), that Powell was given too much coverage by the BBC.²¹² But others from within the BBC, including Director General Charles Curran, argued that Powell's view was shared by a large proportion of the public and therefore must not be silenced, an opinion which was shared by the ITA.²¹³ Unlike ATV, which was very rarely critical of Powell, national news coverage included interviews with individuals such as Mark Bonham Carter of the RRB and Charlie Boxer, a Community Relations Officer, and Sikh leader Dabara Singh, all of

²⁰⁸ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'M.P.s at Wolverhampton School Opening,' first broadcast on 10 December 1968, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-10121968-mps-wolverhampton-school-opening

²⁰⁹ BBC Motion Gallery, *BBC News*, 'Famous Speeches- Powell on Immigration,' first broadcast on April 20, 1968, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/BBC_SFLX041H; ITN Archive, *ITN*, 'Enoch Powell Warning on Race Relations,' first broadcast on 20 April 1968, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/674221192

²¹⁰ Seymour- Ure, *The Political Impact of Mass Media*, 99.

²¹¹ Schaffer, *The Vision of a Nation*, 83.

²¹² *Ibid*, 99.

²¹³ *Ibid*, 100.

whom criticised Powell.²¹⁴ In 1969 David Frost interviewed Powell on ITV's *Frost on Friday*; Frost was openly critical of Powell throughout the interview, for example he suggested that Powell had exaggerated the issue and made it worse, and criticised his use of language.²¹⁵ Frost also challenged him to provide evidence to support his story of the Wolverhampton widow, which he said he had a 'duty' to do.²¹⁶ This approach differed considerably to that of ATV.

ATV did, however, have some impact on the way in which Powell was represented nationally. A documentary on Powell, produced by ATV and broadcast on ITV in November 1970, focused on Wolverhampton and was unbalanced in favour of Powell.²¹⁷ Political documentaries of this kind about Powell were not broadcast on ATV, but by producing programmes for ITV, ATV was able to provide more extended and in depth coverage of Powell than was possible in their news programme. Powell, who was interviewed on Beacon Hill, overlooking the West Midlands, spoke at length about his love for Wolverhampton, telling the reporter:

Anyhow, it's mine, you may not think it very beautiful but I love it. I feel I come from it and belong to it. And I feel that so much of what I have to say, so much of what I'd like to do, springs from it.²¹⁸

²¹⁴ BBC Motion Gallery, *BBC News*, 'Racial Discrimination,' first broadcast on 20 May 1968, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/150-68-13; BBC Motion Gallery, *BBC News*, 'Re-Action to Reported Racial Intimidation,' first broadcast on 11 November 1968, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/323-68-01; BBC Motion Gallery, *BBC News*, 'Sikhs Respond to Powell's Speech,' first broadcast on 24 November 1968, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/329-68-10

²¹⁵ ITV Archive, *Frost on Fridays*, 'Enoch Powell,' first broadcast on 1 March 1969, www.itvarchive.com/Production/9C/02025/

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

²¹⁷ ITV Archive, *ITV*, 'Enoch Powell,' first broadcast on 10 November 1970, www.itvarchive.com/Production/ENT0544/0001

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Powell was not challenged on his views on immigration, reinforcing the perception that he was acting as the voice of his constituency. Later in the programme, Powell was filmed in his garden with his wife and daughter, presenting him as an ordinary family man. This is an example of how regional television had the potential to impact on race relations at a national level and how local issues were made national issues by media coverage. Correspondence between the BBC and Enoch Powell in the decades that followed his speech indicates that Powell maintained a positive relationship with them. For example, in 1986, Powell received Christmas cards from BBC staff, including the BBC news and current affairs team.²¹⁹ In 1995, when making a documentary on Powell's political career, the BBC requested shots of his family, including: 'tea together, a family game or a tour of a local church' as well as shots of him 'walking down an Asian street' in Wolverhampton, suggesting a desire to legitimise his views on immigration.²²⁰

Race on ATV After 'Rivers of Blood'

Powell's speeches had a lasting impact on ATV's reporting of race and immigration. This can be seen in the way that numerous issues mentioned by Powell in his speeches, including education, Sikhism, and the Race Relations Act, were presented by ATV in the aftermath and throughout the 1970s. Despite criticism from the race relations industry that media coverage was fuelling racial tension, ATV continued to provide extensive coverage in the decade that followed. Some of ATV's reporting showed opposition to Powell. For example,

²¹⁹ Churchill Archive, Cambridge, POLL 3/2/5/11, Christmas Cards to Enoch Powell from BBC News and Current Affairs Team, December 1985.

²²⁰ Churchill Archive, Cambridge, POLL 3/2/5/11, Letter from BBC Political Documentaries to Enoch Powell, 16 May 1995.

one report showed Powell having coffee thrown on him at a meeting in Wolverhampton and another showed Powell receiving a bad reception from students at Aston University.²²¹ The majority, however, supported him. In August 1969, ATV broadcast vox pops with immigrants on the streets of Wolverhampton, in which they were asked if they would return to their country of origin if their fare was paid.²²² This was a provocative question, which legitimised Powell's ideas about repatriation and suggested that they were unwelcome in Wolverhampton. One interviewee responded: 'I am happy here, well if they want to get rid of me then I'll go', indicating that he felt unwanted in the town.²²³ In August 1969, ATV broadcast another of Powell's speeches, in which he noted: 'We simply must have more control over the admission, movement and activities of aliens in this country than is exercised at present.'²²⁴ Later that year, ATV broadcast an interview with Mr Everton, the leader of a group of local businessmen who offered Powell £10,000 to make a bid for Conservative Party leadership.²²⁵ The following month, ATV reporter Jeffrey Watson interviewed an Asian local businessman who supported Powell.²²⁶ He was asked if many of his 'fellow countrymen' would share his opinion, to which

²²¹ *Midlands News*, 'Enoch Powell at Meeting in Nottingham'; MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Mr. Enoch Powell Receives Stormy Reception,' first broadcast on 9 May 1969, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-09051969-mr-enoch-powell-receives-stormy-reception

²²² MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Vox Pops on Latest Enoch Powell Speech,' first broadcast on 10 June 1969, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-10061969-vox-pops-latest-enoch-powell-speech

²²³ *Ibid.*

²²⁴ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Controversial Speech by Enoch Powell,' first broadcast on 27 August 1969, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-27081969-controversial-speech-by-enoch-powell

²²⁵ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Interview with Mr. Everton,' first broadcast on 9 September 1969, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-30091969-interview-mr-everton

²²⁶ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Indian Businessman Backs Enoch Powell,' first broadcast on 18 October 1969, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-08101969-indian-businessman-backs-enoch-powell

he responded: 'They're not educated and they don't read the paper and don't understand much real good English.'²²⁷ He was then asked if he had 'placed himself into any danger' with his 'fellow countrymen' by supporting Powell, providing a positive view of Powell and a negative representation of Wolverhampton's Asian community.²²⁸

In January 1970, ATV's Sue Jay interviewed Dr Doojan Napal, a lecturer at Wolverhampton polytechnic regarding the response of the local immigrant community to Powell.²²⁹ During the interview, Jay asked if local immigrants felt like 'sojourners in a strange land', suggesting that they were out of place in Wolverhampton.²³⁰ She then asked: 'It's been reported that some immigrants in Wolverhampton are going to take a militant form of action, would you support this?', again creating a negative impression of local immigrants.²³¹ The following month, Reg Harcourt interviewed Frank Cousins during his visit to Handsworth.²³² Harcourt asked Cousins about local immigrant responses to Powell's latest speech. Cousins told him that the immigrant community had not 'been talking in any great depth' to him about Powell, going on to suggest that Powell had become irrelevant and was simply repeating the same message.²³³ Harcourt replied defensively to this suggestion, saying: 'He still makes the front page', suggesting that ATV still viewed Powell's speeches as newsworthy. ATV

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Interview with Dr. Doojan Napal,' first broadcast on 19 January 1970, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-19011970-interview-dr-doojan-napal

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Frank Cousins Visits Handsworth,' first broadcast on 26 January 1970, <http://www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-26011970-frank-cousins-visits-handsworth>

²³³ Ibid.

continued to cover Powell's speeches; in August 1972, ATV broadcast footage of Powell making a speech in Wolverhampton regarding the arrival of Ugandan Asian refugees to Britain.²³⁴ By broadcasting this speech, ATV helped to distribute his message across the Midlands.

In 1973, five years after 'Rivers of Blood', Reg Harcourt interviewed Powell about the speech.²³⁵ During the interview, Harcourt questioned Powell about repatriation. At this point the camera moved in closer to Powell's face as he said: 'I cannot imagine the future of cities like Birmingham unless a very big reverse movement takes place over the next ten or twenty years.'²³⁶ The close up shot allowed viewers to engage with Powell's emotional response to the topic of immigration. Harcourt did not question Powell about this statement, allowing this message to go unchallenged. The following year, in 1974, Powell resigned from his position as MP. ATV's reporting of his resignation began with Robin Pollard, Conservative Agent in Wolverhampton, speaking to ATV's Bob Warman about Powell. He told him: 'he has been an excellent constituency member, quite apart from everything that you've heard and seen of him in the country'.²³⁷ This was followed by vox pops with local residents. An elderly white woman told Warman that she was 'heartbroken', going on to describe him as a 'good man' who 'loves his country'.²³⁸ A young white woman said it was a 'great

²³⁴ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Enoch Powell Speech in Wolverhampton,' first broadcast on 8 August 1972, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-16081972-enoch-powell-speech-wolverhampton

²³⁵ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Enoch Powell Interview,' first broadcast on 17 April 1973, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-17041973-enoch-powell-interview

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Resignation of Enoch Powell,' first broadcast on 8 February 1974, <http://www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-08021974-resignation-enoch-powell>

²³⁸ Ibid.

shame' as he said 'what a lot of people think'.²³⁹ All of the interviewees were white and none were critical of Powell.

In the years that followed 1968, ATV's representation of immigrant education was also clearly influenced by Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech. As demonstrated by appendix one, which shows all of the ATV reports on immigrant education over the ten-year period 1963 to 1973, ATV broadcast seven reports on the issue in the five years between 1963 and December 1967. During the following five years, between 1968 and 1973, this number more than doubled to fifteen. ATV broadcast seven reports on immigrant education in 1968 alone; as shown in appendix four, this represented a significant spike in reporting, indicating the impact his speeches had on ATV's selection of news stories. Four days after Powell delivered his 'Rivers of Blood' speech, a report focusing on the lack of school places for five year olds in Birmingham schools was broadcast.²⁴⁰ Whilst immigration was not explicitly mentioned, it was implied in the discussion of the extra 3000 children to educate compared with the previous year. The following month, ATV's John Meredith interviewed Edward Short, Minister of Education, regarding Birmingham schools.²⁴¹ Meredith asked: 'If immigrant children were dispersed about Birmingham schools, wouldn't this give everyone a better chance at a good education?', suggesting that dispersal was a necessary measure.²⁴² Meredith went on to note

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Lack of School Places for Five Year Olds,' first broadcast on 23 April 1968, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-23041968-lack-school-places-5-year-olds

²⁴¹ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Edward Short Interview,' first broadcast on 16 May 1968, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-16051968-edward-short-interview

²⁴² Ibid.

that one school had 93 per cent immigrant children and that many white parents were worried about their children's education, asking: 'Do you think enough is being done?'.²⁴³ This question implied that the presence of immigrants was creating problems.

In December 1968, ATV reporter, Sue Jay, interviewed the head mistress of Grove Primary School at Handsworth, where 97 per cent of pupils were immigrants.²⁴⁴ The report opened with shots of immigrant children in the school playground. Head mistress, Edith Wilkes, was asked: 'Does the fact that there are so many immigrant children here effect the education of white children?'.²⁴⁵ She answered: 'All of the white children who should have gone to grammar schools are there.'²⁴⁶ She was, however, encouraged by the reporter to speak about the issues caused by immigration, with questions such as: 'Does the language barrier present many difficulties?'.²⁴⁷

The following year, ATV broadcast two reports on immigrant education, including an interview with Mrs Sheila Wright, a local white parent, who told the reporter, Sue Jay, that the number of immigrants in her son's class was having an impact on his education.²⁴⁸ In 1970, ATV's Jeffrey Watson interviewed Alderman Sydney Dawes, Chairman of the Birmingham Educational Committee,

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Grove Primary School,' first broadcast on 2 November 1965, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-02111965-grove-primary-school

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Interview Re Plans for Immigrant Children,' first broadcast on 10 January 1969, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-10011969-interview-re-plans-school-immigrant-children

regarding the increase of immigrant children in Birmingham schools.²⁴⁹ Dawes told Watson that 'a big upsurge' in children created an emergency.²⁵⁰ Watson asked: 'What sort of emergency?', prompting him to speak further about the lack of teachers and classroom space. Questions such as: 'Do you know where all these children have come from?' and 'Where are you going to put them?' reinforced the sense of panic surrounding immigration.²⁵¹

ATV continued to report on immigrant education in the years that followed. For example, in 1971, Sue Jay interviewed Margaret Thatcher, Secretary of State for Education and Science, regarding a centre to teach English to immigrant children in Gloucester.²⁵² Rather than focusing on the positive aspects of the centre and what it may achieve, she was asked a series of challenging questions, such as: 'Do you think the parents of a child in a school where there was language difficulties with immigrant children would have the right to be worried?'.²⁵³ In 1973, ATV's Wendy Jones reported from Clapham Terrace Primary School in Leamington.²⁵⁴ Jones interviewed parents of children from the school, who expressed their objections to the number of immigrant children and concerns about their own children's education. Ronald Hammond, the school's headmaster, told Jones that the parents' claims were unfounded. Jones,

²⁴⁹ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'School Places for Immigrant Children,' first broadcast on 13 October 1970, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-13101970-school-places-immigrant-children

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

²⁵² MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Gloucester Centre to Teach Immigrant Children English,' first broadcast on 17 May 1971, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-17051971-gloucester-centre-teach-immigrant-children-english

²⁵³ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁴ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Clapham Terrace Primary School, Leamington,' first broadcast on 12 December 1973, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-03121973-clapham-terrace-primary-school-leamington

however, interrogated him on the issue, telling him: 'Yes, but a lot of English people are complaining because they think their children are being swamped by the immigrant children' and asking: 'The Eleven Plus results have gone down though, haven't they, in the last five years?'.²⁵⁵ It is clear that Powell's speeches had a lasting impact on how issues surrounding immigrant education were reported on by ATV.

Another major area of reporting that was clearly framed by Powell's speech was that of the 1968 Race Relations Act. Powell made his speeches in the midst of parliamentary debates about the Race Relations Bill, which he described as a direct threat to free speech and democracy. ATV broadcast numerous reports about the impact of the Race Relations Act, such as an interview with Jeffrey Watson, a local man who objected to what he perceived to be trivial cases, such as the wording of nursery rhymes, being reported to the RRB.²⁵⁶ Six months after Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech, in November 1968, ATV's Sue Jay interviewed a white worker at a Smethwick factory, who claimed that white workers were being discriminated against because of their race.²⁵⁷ The worker smiled as he told Jay about the discrimination he faced. Jay asked: 'I understand there's been some previous history of trouble like this in the factory'.²⁵⁸ He told her that it had been going on for 'three or four months'.²⁵⁹ He was then asked: 'How do you feel about this?', to which he smiled and responded: 'I think it's

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Interview about Nursery Rhymes,' first broadcast on 20 March 1970, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-20031970-interview-about-nursery-rhymes

²⁵⁷ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'White Workers Strike at Smethwick Factory,' first broadcast on 22 November 1968, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-22111968-white-workers-strike-smethwick-factory

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

disgusting personally.'²⁶⁰ She went on to ask if they had considered reporting them to the RRB; he replied: 'No, but I think it should be done.'²⁶¹ This report created the impression that white British people were now the victims of 'reverse racism'.



Workers interviewed by ATV's Sue Jay outside Smethwick factory. MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'White Workers Strike at Smethwick factory,' first broadcast on 22 November 1968, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-22111968-white-workers-strike-smethwick-factory

In April 1970, ATV's Barbara Blake interviewed Alderman Peter Farmer, Chairman of the Wolverhampton Housing Committee, regarding an investigation into the Committee by the RRB.²⁶² Farmer told Blake:

Wolverhampton and comparatively few other areas are the areas which seem to have to bear the burden of the whole of the immigration that comes into this country and therefore we feel that it is necessary that people who decide to come to areas such as this should be prepared to wait a little longer than other people for a municipal house.²⁶³

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Wolverhampton Housing Committee,' first broadcast on 4 February 1970, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-04021970-wolverhampton-housing-committee

²⁶³ Ibid.

The Housing Committee planned to replace their current housing rule with one in which 'those who have lived in the UK for more than ten years would be treated more favourably'.²⁶⁴ Blake asked him if this rule would include 'immigrants who have been here for more than ten years'.²⁶⁵ He responded by saying that the rule has no 'colour connotation' and was a 'fair rule', suggesting that the RRB had no grounds to investigate.²⁶⁶ He was then asked why the RRB started an investigation, to which he responded: 'they picked on Wolverhampton, I must use the word, picked on Wolverhampton and quite unjustifiably'.²⁶⁷ He went on to say: 'they are deliberately bending over to try and be pernicky in the interpretation of this proposed rule', describing their actions as 'blatant interference with local administration, local people who know local problems and are attempting to solve them in the way that they know best'.²⁶⁸ This focus on the views of local authorities differed significantly from the coverage of the Race Relations Act on BBC News and ITN, which included interviews with national figures such as Mark Bonham Carter, chairman of the RRB, who supported the Act.²⁶⁹

Six years after Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech, in 1974, ATV played out Powell's warnings about the Race Relations Act in a report about an elderly white, local woman who was being sued by the RRB. ATV reporter, Bob Warman, interviewed Winfred Stevenson outside of her home in

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ BBC Motion Gallery, *BBC News*, 'Race Relations: Effects of Race Relations Act,' first broadcast on 2 July 1969, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/183-69-02; ITN Archive, *ITN*, 'New Race Relations Act,' first broadcast on 25 November 1968, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/723681141

Northampton.²⁷⁰ The RRB had recently contacted Stevenson after she had refused to allow a Sikh man to rent a room in her house. Her response to this was highly emotionally charged. Throughout the interview the camera remained close to her face in order to reflect this to the viewer. She told Warman: 'I'm on a hook, and I want to get off it.'²⁷¹ Warman appeared sympathetic, asking: 'Your main objection is not to having coloured people in your home' to which she responded: 'Oh no no, I've had coloured people. I've had very happy relations.'²⁷² Warman then asked: 'But your objection is to being told who and who cannot come into your house.'²⁷³ This reiterated Powell's argument, that the 1968 Race Relations Act took away the rights of British people to free choice and free speech.²⁷⁴ When asked how she would respond to threats from the RRB, she told Warman:

I would willingly go to prison. Because I'm standing up for the rights of an English woman. Not British subject, English women, who are white, born in this country. Your wife, your children, and white babies yet to be born.²⁷⁵

This report was extremely reminiscent of the story of the elderly woman related by Powell in his 'Rivers of Blood' speech. It presented the vulnerable white British woman as a victim of the Race Relations Act and emphasised the direct threat of immigration to the privacy of the home. By framing the Act in this way, ATV was reinforcing Powell's argument and fuelling racial tension. The report suggests that producers of local media believed that Powell was standing up for

²⁷⁰ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Northampton Woman,' first broadcast on 17 August 1974, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-17071974-northampton-woman

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ Ibid.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

the rights of the local white community against those outside of the region who were imposing laws, such as the Race Relations Act, which were viewed as a threat to these rights.



Winfred Stevenson interviewed by ATV's Bob Warman. MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Northampton Woman,' first broadcast on 17 August 1974, [www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-](http://www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-17071974-northampton-woman)

17071974-northampton-woman

ATV also reinforced Powell's message about Sikhism. As shown in appendix two, there was a sharp rise in ATV's reporting of Sikhism immediately prior to Powell's speech, followed by a drop in its aftermath. In the nine months between April 1968 and January 1969, ATV broadcast no reports on Sikhism. In January 1969, when Sikh leader Singh Jolly threatened to burn himself alive if the Wolverhampton Transport Department did not change their decision, ATV broadcast only a very short, mute clip. The fact that ATV appeared hesitant to report on Sikhism in the aftermath of Powell's speech suggests an awareness that this could have enflamed local tensions between the white and Sikh communities. However, the failure to provide the voice of the Sikh community

meant that they were not being represented as part of the local communities in which they lived, reinforcing their exclusion.

ATV continued to report on Sikhism during the 1970s. For example, they reported on Leicester's first Sikh policeman, Leicester's first Sikh traffic warden and the first West Midlands policeman to wear a turban.²⁷⁶ Like the reporting in the previous decade, neither of these reports included interviews with the Sikh men, but simply showed them wearing their turbans and included close up shots of the turban. In 1972, ATV reported on a baptism ceremony that took place at Smethwick temple.²⁷⁷ The footage began with a circle of Sikh men, wearing turbans. The men sang in Punjabi and the camera focused on two men playing traditional Sikh musical instruments. A crowd of elderly Sikh men sat on the floor wearing gold robes. The camera provided a close up shot of the men placing their hands on a metal bowl, which one of them stirred with a sword whilst chanting in Punjabi. The visual imagery used in the report highlighted aspects of the religion that a white British viewer, with no knowledge of the religion, would have found strange and incomprehensible.

²⁷⁶MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'First West Midlands Policeman to Wear Turban,' first broadcast on 17 March 1975, <http://www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-17031975-first-west-midlands-policeman-to-wear-a-turban>MACE; University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Leicester's First Sikh Policeman,' first broadcast on 8 April 1970, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-08041970-leicesters-first-sikh-policeman; MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Leicester's First Sikh Traffic Warden on Duty,' first broadcast on 8 March 1973, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-08031973-leicesters-first-sikh-traffic-warden-on-duty

²⁷⁷ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Sikh Baptism Ceremony at Smethwick Temple,' first broadcast on 4 October 1972, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-04101972-sikh-baptism-ceremony-smethwick-temple



Shots of Leicester's first Sikh policeman. MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Leicester's First Sikh Policeman,' first broadcast on 8 April 1970, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-08041970-leicesters-first-sikh-policeman



Shots of first West Midlands policeman to wear turban. MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'First West Midlands Policeman to Wear Turban,' first broadcast on 17 March 1975, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-17031975-first-west-midlands-policeman-to-wear-a-turban



Shots of Sikh baptism ceremony at Smethwick Gurdwara. MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Sikh Baptism Ceremony at Smethwick Temple,' first broadcast on 4 October 1972, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-04101972-sikh-baptism-ceremony-smethwick-temple

Later reports that depicted Sikhs outside of their place of worship also tended to emphasise cultural differences. On 30 July 1979, ATV reporter Tony Maycock reported from a Sikh sports tournament in Smethwick.²⁷⁸ During the report the camera focused on two men who wrestled on the ground, playing a Sikh game called kabaddi. P.C. Kumar, an Asian police officer, told Maycock that the players had to shout 'kabaddi kabaddi kabaddi' to prove that they were holding their breath.²⁷⁹ Maycock responded: 'What's the point of that?'.²⁸⁰ After Kumar

²⁷⁸ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Sikh Games,' first broadcast on 30 July 1979, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-30071979-sikh-games

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

finished his explanation, Maycock said: ‘ It’s a bit like the kids game tag we used to play as little kids... but a bit more vicious’, belittling the sport by comparing it to a child’s game.²⁸¹ As he said this, the camera focused on the men playing Kabaddi, showing them throwing each other onto the ground. By describing the sport as ‘vicious’ and showing images of what could be perceived as a violent or primitive sport, this report emphasised cultural differences and presented Sikh culture as incompatible with British culture.



Shot of Sikh men playing Kabaddi. MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, ‘Sikh Games,’ first broadcast on 30 July 1979, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-30071979-sikh-games

The following day, ATV reported on the opening of a community centre for elderly Asian men in Wolverhampton.²⁸² The report began with shots of elderly Sikh men walking in a park, alongside the sound of a man chanting in Punjabi. ATV reporter, John Swallow, told the audience: ‘This is not India, or Pakistan. This is West Park, Wolverhampton.’²⁸³ This statement reflected Powell’s

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, ‘Asian Community Centre,’ first broadcast on 31 July 1979, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-31071979-asian-community-centre

²⁸³ Ibid.

warnings about the failure of Sikhs to assimilate and the threat of cultural change. An unnamed Asian social worker explained that their religion forbade them from staying at home with unmarried women. Swallow spoke to one of the Sikh men. His choice of questions gave the impression that the Sikh community was treating the men unfairly. For example, he asked one of them: 'Is it a bit of a miserable life?'.²⁸⁴ The overall message here was that Sikhs were too devoted to their religion and unwilling to compromise in order to assimilate.



Elderly Sikh men in Wolverhampton. MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Asian Community Centre,' first broadcast on 31 July 1979,

www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-31071979-asian-community-centre

The report also included shots of a building in Wolverhampton, which Swallow told the audience was being converted into a community centre for elderly Asians 'at a cost of £4000'.²⁸⁵ His mention of cost suggests that there might have been some opposition within the town. In the park, Swallow interviewed an unnamed white councillor, who explained why the centre was needed: 'they wouldn't use our home help service because they don't expect to have anyone

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

else go into their own homes but their own particular people'.²⁸⁶ He asked her: 'Is it the rate payer that's going to foot the bill?', a question that may have fuelled tension.²⁸⁷ The woman attempted to defend the Asian community by reminding viewers that just as much money was spent on other sections of the population. Swallow's choice of questions, however, reinforced racial differences.

Conclusion

Although Powell is remembered as a figure of national importance, nowhere was his impact as significant as it was in the West Midlands, particularly in his constituency of Wolverhampton. Throughout his speeches, Powell constantly referred to local issues and told audiences that those outside of the West Midlands did not know or understand the issues faced by local people. Powell successfully drew upon local issues and concerns about the impact of cultural differences on local traditions, legitimising his new form of racism by creating the impression that this was a natural response to change. Although the *Express & Star* was not overtly racist, their coverage of race and immigration throughout the decade reinforced his message.

Powell made his 'Rivers of Blood' speech in the midst of local tension surrounding both the impact of immigration on local education and the Wolverhampton turban dispute. The *Express & Star* and ATV's reporting created the impression that immigration was a direct threat to local schools,

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

emphasising the issues caused by cultural difference. The *Express & Star* showed initial support for the Sikh campaign and ATV were reluctant to report on tension, however, ATV's representation of Sikhism throughout the decade had presented Sikh culture as incompatible with the local and British way of life. This contributed to a climate of suspicion that was then reinforced through the *Express & Star's* letters pages during the dispute. The racial tension created by the dispute was utilised by Powell in both his Walsall and 'Rivers of Blood' speeches, in which he spoke of the threat of Sikh communalism on the local area.

The *Express & Star* covered Powell's speech extensively; despite some attempt at balance, this coverage was unbalanced in his favour and helped to legitimise his views. Likewise, ATV presented Powell favourably. Due in part to the way in which he timed his speeches and his skills as an orator, Powell was also able to gain the attention of the national media. In the days and weeks that followed his speech, he was the subject of extensive national press and current affairs reporting. This allowed his message to spread not just across the region, but also across the nation. Powell's legitimisation of popular racism, achieved through his use of local knowledge, forced national current affairs broadcasters to reconsider their coverage of race and immigration in order to better represent the views of the public. This can also be seen at a regional level, where the impact of Powell's 1968 speeches on ATV's coverage is apparent throughout the decade that followed.

Like this previous case study, an examination of Wolverhampton's local media suggests that the *Express & Star* and ATV both provided a context for Powell's speeches and also reinforced their effects. In the years before Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech, local media reinforced the threat posed by immigration to the local area. In the aftermath of his speeches local media was far more supportive of Powell than the national media. The way in which Powell was represented by ATV had an impact on national representations of Powell, signifying the importance of examining local media in order to gain a more complete understanding of public responses to Powell, both at a local and national level. As the following chapter will show, Powell's legitimisation of popular racism would have a lasting impact on race relations, going on to contribute in the rise in local support for the NF within British communities.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁸ Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*, 116.

Chapter Three

The Far Right in 1970s Leicester: The National Front and Local Media

Introduction

A letter sent to Leicester's local newspaper, the *Leicester Mercury* on 12 May 1976, from an anonymous local resident self-named only as 'ex-Labour', expressed anger at 'all three leading political parties' for ignoring local anxieties about 'continuing immigration'.¹ The writer went on to say that their vote for the NF in the recent local election was a 'peaceful way' to voice these concerns.² Less than a decade earlier, in 1967, the NF was formed as a merger of the British National Party (BNP) and the League of Empire Loyalists (LEL), shortly to be joined by the Greater Britain Movement (GBM).³ These three far right parties had clear associations with fascism and violence. Kenneth Chesterton, leader of the LEL, had previously been a leading spokesman for the British Union of Fascists.⁴ John Tyndall, founder of the GBM and later NF chairman, remembers reading *Mein Kampf* during the 1950s and becoming 'crippled by a fear that Jews were conspiring to destroy Aryan culture'.⁵ The two groups that merged to form the BNP, the National Labour Party (NLP) and the White Defence League (WDL) have both been involved with the outbreak of racial tension in Notting Hill in 1958.⁶ How then, despite their past and continuing extremist views, was the NF able to gain over 18 per cent of the total vote, and 29 per cent of the vote

¹ Leicester Record Office, Wigston, 'National Front Vote- A Lesson Other Parties Should Heed,' *Leicester Mercury*, 12 May 1976, 4.

² Ibid.

³ Stan Taylor, *The National Front in English Politics* (London: Macmillan, 1982), xi.

⁴ Nigel Copsey, *Contemporary British Fascism: The British National Party and the Quest for Legitimacy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 5.

⁵ Ibid, 9.

⁶ Ibid, 8.

in two wards in Leicester's 1976 local elections? How was it that a seemingly 'ordinary' member of Leicester's white community came to view a vote for the NF as a 'peaceful' political protest? The NF's support increased nationally in 1976, but results varied dramatically across the country.⁷ Their best result was in Leicester, which had one of the largest immigrant populations in the country. Leicester's large immigrant population does not, however, adequately explain why such an extremist party was able to gain popular support in the city, when the party was unsuccessful in areas such as Manchester, with similar demographics.⁸ This chapter will suggest that both the *Leicester Mercury* and ATV played a crucial role in the NF's success in Leicester through their framing of both local immigration and the NF. Much like what happened in Smethwick in 1964 and Wolverhampton four years later, links between local politics and local media shaped and reinforced responses to immigration in the local area.

The image of Britain as a tolerant nation, which was called into question by popular support for Enoch Powell in the late 1960s, was shattered the following decade by the rise of the NF.⁹ The result in Leicester in 1976 followed a steady rise in both national and local support for the NF throughout the decade, attributed in part to the failure of the Conservative Party to 'make political capital of immigration issues' and to Enoch Powell's legitimisation of racism.¹⁰ It can also be credited to a conscious effort on the part of the NF's leadership to

⁷ Christopher T. Husbands, *Racial Exclusionism and the City: The Urban Support of the National Front* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1983), 10.

⁸ Barry Troyna, *Public Awareness and the Media: A Study on Reporting Race* (London: Commission for Racial Equality, 1981), 15.

⁹ Taylor, *The National Front in English Politics*, xi.

¹⁰ Richard Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain: From Oswald Mosley's Blackshirts to the National Front* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006), 245.

widen their popular appeal by downplaying their fascist links.¹¹ The party received 12,000 votes nationally in the 1970 General Election, a figure that rose to 77,000 in the February 1974 General Election and again to 114,000 in the General Election of October 1974.¹² They drew support disproportionately from areas of inner London, West Yorkshire, Wolverhampton and Leicester.¹³ Support in these localities can be attributed, in part, to the presence of a significant black and Asian population; however, as Christopher Husbands suggests in his 1983 study on the NF, which investigates the 'locational distribution'¹⁴ of the party during the 1970s, this 'fails to consider the nature of the various relationships existing between the black and white people of particular places'.¹⁵ In other words, the national problem of rising racial extremism was being formed at a local level as a result of local experiences.

Leicester was the NF's fastest growing area; although they never won a seat, in the 1973 local elections the party received 27.1 per cent in the city's Latimer ward and 16 per cent overall.¹⁶ The NF was able to make real electoral gains for the first time in the local elections of 1973. The NF's 1973 election leaflet drew on local anxieties about race, claiming that there had been 266 new cases of TB in Leicester, 8.5 per cent of which were immigrants, 3978 births, 1033 of which were to immigrants and a total school population of 59,523, of whom 9253 were

¹¹ Copsey, *Contemporary British Fascism*, 15.

¹² Satnam Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 128.

¹³ Husbands, *Racial Exclusionism and the City*, 7.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 10.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 25.

¹⁶ Rafaela M. Dancygier, *Immigration and Conflict in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 209.

immigrants.¹⁷ In the 1975 local elections the NF's support did not increase significantly across the country, however in Leicester, local NF leader Anthony Reed-Herbert gained 23 per cent of the poll, beating both the Conservative and Liberal candidates.¹⁸ In 1976 the NF contested all of Leicester's seats and gained over 29 per cent of the vote in two wards, and over 18 per cent of the total vote.¹⁹ This chapter will argue that Leicester's local media contributed to this rise in popularity. The *Leicester Mercury* had been providing a firmly anti-immigrant message throughout the 1970s and, like Griffiths and Powell, the NF used the local newspaper throughout the decade to fuel local racism, which again centred on local issues such as education and housing.

Leicester had two local newspapers during the 1970s: the *Leicester Mercury* and the *Illustrated Leicester Chronicle*.²⁰ This chapter will focus on the *Mercury* as its readership was comparatively high, with a circulation of 180,000 in 1963, out of a total population of 273, 470 in the 1961 census, compared with the *Chronicle's* 30,000 in the early 1960s, after which it began to fall.²¹ The *Mercury* was first published in 1874 by James Thompson.²² From 1877 it was owned by the Hewitt family and from 1939 it was part owned by Associated Newspapers Ltd,

¹⁷ Leicester Record Office, Wigston, DE6314, National Front leaflet, 'Health Facts of Leicester,' 1973.

¹⁸ Nigel Fielding, *The National Front* (Abingdon: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), 26.

¹⁹ Dancygier, *Immigration and Conflict in Europe*, 209.

²⁰ Lorna Chessum, 'Race and Immigration in the Leicester Local Press 1945-1962,' *Immigrants and Minorities* 12, no. 2 (1998): 38.

²¹ Chessum, 'Race and Immigration in the Leicester Local Press 1945-1962,' 38; Stephen Butt, *Leicester in the 1970s: Ten Years that Changed the City* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing Limited, 2015), 14.

²² Steve England, *Magnificent Mercury: A History of a Regional Newspaper* (Leicester: Kairos Press, 1999), 13.

owners of the *Daily Mail*, who took full control in 1964.²³ From 1970 to 1974, Brian West edited the newspaper.²⁴ In 1974 Neville Stack, former editor of the *Daily Mirror* and the *Daily Herald* and later news editor of *The Sun*, took over the role of Editor.²⁵ The newspaper brought in an editor who had previously worked with the national press and Leicester was a much bigger and well-known area than Smethwick, meaning that the racially inflammatory news stories in the *Mercury* possessed a far greater ability to influence national responses.

The history of racist reporting in the *Mercury* is well documented in Lorna Chessum's study of race and immigration in Leicester's local press from 1945 to 1962.²⁶ Chessum notes that 'a consciousness of empire' was 'present in the discourse of the local newspapers of Leicester in the 1950s' in the form of stories about white emigrants moving to commonwealth countries that presented these countries as 'belonging to 'us''.²⁷ She contrasts this with depictions of the black and Asian community in Leicester, who were simultaneously represented as 'them'.²⁸ Chessum also discusses the *Mercury's* reputation for supporting the Conservatives, noting the newspaper's close ties to Cyril Osborne, Conservative MP for Louth, who was known for his anti-immigrant stance and was an important figure in Leicester Conservatism.²⁹ She notes that 'the ideological context in which events and issues are presented

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid, 82.

²⁵ Ibid, 89.

²⁶ Chessum, 'Race and Immigration in the Leicester Local Press 1945-1962,' 37.

²⁷ Ibid, 36.

²⁸ Ibid, 36.

²⁹ Ibid, 42.

helps to construct white identity in relation to black'; in other words, the way in which race was framed by the *Mercury* from the 1950s reinforced the exclusion of immigrants and the inclusion of white Britons as constituting the local community in Leicester.³⁰ This chapter will build upon Chessum's work by exploring representations of race in the *Mercury* during the 1970s, a period of increased racial tension in the city, as well as by examining ATV's regional news reporting.

Not only did the *Mercury* represent immigrants unfavourably, but the newspaper also reinforced the narrative that the NF were simply ordinary Leicester people and that their aims were a natural response to immigration. Unlike the national press, including the *Daily Mail*, which shared the same ownership, it overlooked the NF's links to fascism, legitimised the NF as a political party and created the impression that it was the extreme left that presented a threat of disorder. During the 1973 election campaign, the *Mercury* provided a platform for the NF, for example by providing information about their candidates.³¹ Letters in support of the NF were also published. For example, one local resident wrote: 'my son and I have supported the Conservative party in all previous elections but shall now vote for the NF', going on to say: 'nor are we Nazis but ordinary intelligent people'.³²

Barry Troyna's study of local and national press compared the coverage of the arrival of Ugandan Asian refugees in the *Leicester Mercury* with the *Manchester*

³⁰ Ibid, 37.

³¹ 'National Front Name 2 More Candidates,' *Leicester Mercury*, 20 February 1973.

³² I. Heggis, 'Not Nazis but Thinking People,' *Leicester Mercury*, 2 March 1973, 4.

Evening News. Manchester and Leicester's local press were chosen for his study as they represented 'two areas with similar socio economic and demographic profiles but differed in terms of electoral support for the National Front'.³³ He found that the *Leicester Mercury* had a far greater focus on race and colour, presenting the Ugandan Asians as 'coloured immigrants', as opposed to the *Evening News*, which presented them as refugees.³⁴ This difference in reporting can perhaps be attributed to newspaper ownership; the *Evening News* was owned by the Guardian Media Group, which is known for its left wing stance.³⁵ The local press acted as a voice of the community, reporting from a local perspective on issues that mattered to local people; this difference in reporting suggests that Manchester's white population were more tolerant of the arrival of Ugandan Asians. Troyna suggests that the *Mercury* reinforced 'the conception of 'race as a problem'.³⁶ Joanna Herbert argues that the newspaper presented the activities of the NF as 'outside the agenda of race relations', instead relating them to 'issues of democracy', suggesting that the party's racism was overlooked by the local press, which instead presented them as a viable alternative to other political parties.³⁷ This representation helped to normalise the NF within Leicester and I argue that ATV worked to visually normalise the NF as well.

³³ Troyna, *Public Awareness and the Media*, 15.

³⁴ *Ibid*, 61.

³⁵ Meryl Aldridge, *Understanding the Local Media* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2007), 33.

³⁶ Barry Troyna, *Public Awareness and the Media*, 62.

³⁷ Joanna Herbert, *Negotiating Boundaries in the City: Migration, Ethnicity, and Gender in Britain* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 28.

In his study of NF support, Christopher Husbands noted that the NF's 'fortune has risen and fallen according to the occurrence of race related events and, in particular, to the type of coverage that these have been given by the media'.³⁸ This chapter will examine the *Mercury* and ATV's representation of immigrants and the NF in the years leading up to the 1976 local elections, focusing specifically on two major race related events that took place in the years proceeding them, both of which were exploited by Leicester's NF. The first of these was the 1972 Ugandan Asian migration. In August 1972, Uganda's president, Idi Amin, expelled all Asians from the country, forcing them to leave behind their homes, businesses and possessions.³⁹ The arrival of Ugandan Asians in Britain affected the whole country, but disproportionately impacted Leicester, where particularly large numbers settled.⁴⁰ The second incident that was exploited by the NF was the 1974 Imperial Typewriter Factory strike. Hundreds of Asian workers went on strike due to poor working conditions, low pay, and racial discrimination.⁴¹ The strike lasted for almost fourteen weeks and saw crowds of Asian strikers marching through Leicester. The *Mercury's* framing of these events presented the presence of Asians in Leicester as problematic, as a strain on already stretched local resources, and as a threat to the community.

³⁸ Husbands, *Racial Exclusionism and the City*, 8.

³⁹ Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Postwar Britain*, 199.

⁴⁰ Sean McLoughlin, 'Discrepant Representations of Multi-Asian Leicester: Institutional Discourse and Everyday Life in the 'Model' Multicultural City,' in *Writing the City in British Asian Diasporas*, ed. Sean McLoughlin, William Gould, Ananya Jahanara Kabir and Emma Tomalin (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), 98.

⁴¹ Amrit Wilson, *Finding a Voice: Asian Women in Britain* (London: Virago, 1978), 57.

ATV's coverage of both the Ugandan Asian migration and the Imperial Typewriter factory strike reinforced the *Leicester Mercury's* narrative of immigration as a problem. Frances Eames' study, which compares ITV and ATV's news coverage of the migration, suggests that unlike ITN, which tended to focus on the experiences of Ugandan Asians, ATV framed their arrival as a problem and as a direct threat to the region.⁴² The focus was on whether Leicester 'could cope' with the arrival of large numbers of refugees. Eames explores this coverage from a media studies perspective, using the migration as a case study to offer an in depth examination of the difference in news values between local and regional news. This chapter places her work into the broader context of 1970s Leicester and examines links between ATV and Leicester's local press. ATV's coverage of the Imperial Typewriter strike in 1974 presented the strikers as aggressive troublemakers, showing images of crowds of Asian men on Leicester's streets and the factory's management protected by police officers. By visually depicting Asians taking up public spaces within the viewer's local area, ATV fuelled concerns about the local changes brought about by immigration throughout the decade.

ATV also provided a platform for Leicester's NF on two occasions, in 1974 and 1976. This included coverage of a NF march in protest against the Imperial Typewriter Strike, and a response to their success in the 1976 local elections. Unlike both ITV and the BBC's national television news, which attempted to provide balanced reporting of the NF, and ITV's national current affairs

⁴² Frances Eames, 'ITV and the 1972 Ugandan Migration: A Historiography of Regional/ National News Archives,' *Media History* 15, no. 4 (2009): 453-469.

programming, which Gavin Schaffer argues was often critical of the NF, ATV presented the party favourably.⁴³ When reporting on Leicester's NF, ATV provided arguments from both sides of the debate, however the reporting was imbalanced in favour of the NF. ATV's coverage of the 1974 march created the impression that the threat of violence came from the Interracial Solidarity Campaign's counter march, which was planned for the same day. Coverage in the aftermath of the 1976 local elections reinforced the *Mercury's* narrative that the NF were a viable alternative to the mainstream political parties and that they provided a voice for local people.

1970s Britain

The local media discussed throughout this chapter must first be placed into the context of 1970s Britain. Despite the argument of scholars such as Joe Moran against attempting to 'package decades as entities', this study does focus on the discreet histories of existing decades, reflecting work on, for example, the 1970s, which allows the historian to unpack the distinct trends within media in particular in these periods.⁴⁴ The 1970s is often characterised as a time of radical social change and economic hardship.⁴⁵ This has, however, been the subject of academic debate in recent years. In the introduction to *Reassessing*

⁴³ Gavin Schaffer, *The Vision of a Nation: Making Multiculturalism on British Television* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 73.

⁴⁴ Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy, and the United States* (London: Bloomsbury, 1998); Joe Moran, 'Decoding the Decade,' *The Guardian*, 1 November 2009, accessed 28 June 2017, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/nov/13/1; ; Lawrence Black and Hugh Pemberton, 'Introduction: the Benighted Decade? Reassessing the 1970s,' in *Reassessing 1970s Britain*, ed. Lawrence Black, Hugh Pemberton and Pat Thane (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).

⁴⁵ Joe Moran, 'Decoding the Decade,' *The Guardian*, 1 November 2009, accessed 28 June 2017, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/nov/13/1; 'Introduction,' in *British Culture and Society in the 1970s: The Lost Decade*, ed. Laurel Forster and Sue Harper (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 1.

1970s Britain, Lawrence Black and Hugh Pemberton argue that there are 'alternative readings' of the decade, suggesting that contemporary media and politicians contributed to a 'social panic' that amplified the sense of crisis.⁴⁶ Andy Beckett describes popular narratives of the 1970s as 'too neat', questioning 'If Britain was so sickly in the seventies, where did people get the money at the time to buy so many records and bold pairs of trousers?'.⁴⁷ Another alternative reading of the decade is offered by Alwyn Turner, who describes it as a 'period not of transition but of transformation' and as 'the foundation of modern Britain'.⁴⁸ Turner's work has, however, been criticised by Black and Pemberton, who argue that his analysis 'too simply inverts conventional narratives'.⁴⁹ There is little doubt that, as Beckett notes: 'something profound and unsettling did happen to Britain in the seventies'.⁵⁰ The decade saw political instability, rapid economic changes, and increased racial tension.

The decade opened with a Labour government, led by Harold Wilson; this changed in 1970, when Conservative leader Edward Heath secured an unexpected victory.⁵¹ Troubles with industrial relations and economic crisis meant that during his four years as Prime Minister, Heath's government declared a total of four states of emergency.⁵² This included the three-day week,

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 2.

⁴⁷ Andy Beckett, *When the Lights Went out: What Really Happened to Britain in the 1970s* (London: Faber & Faber, 2009), 3.

⁴⁸ Alwyn W. Turner, *Crisis? What Crisis? Britain in the 1970s* (London: Aurum Press Ltd, 2008), 276.

⁴⁹ Black and Pemberton, 'Introduction: the Benighted Decade?', 16.

⁵⁰ Beckett, *When the Lights Went out*, 4.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 13.

⁵² Dominic Sandbrook, *State of Emergency: The Way We Were: Britain, 1970-1974* (London: Penguin, 2011), 12.

announced on New Years' Eve, 1973, meaning that for two months all non-essential businesses could only receive electricity for three consecutive days per week.⁵³ In 1974, Harold Wilson returned to power; Wilson later stood down in 1976, to be succeeded by James Callaghan.⁵⁴ Due to a number of by-election defeats, Labour's small majority was lost, thus from 1976 to 1979, Callaghan led a minority government, maintained by a pact with the Liberals.⁵⁵ During Callaghan's time as Prime Minister, Britain was met by financial crisis, resulting in cuts to public spending and a severe rise in unemployment.⁵⁶ Following the 1978 to 79 'winter of discontent', a motion of no confidence was carried against the Labour government, resulting in a forced election and subsequent victory of Conservative leader, Margaret Thatcher, in 1979.⁵⁷

Many of the economic changes that took place in Britain during the decade, including increased wage inequality and lack of job security, were caused by de-industrialisation.⁵⁸ Jim Tomlinson argues that de-industrialisation not only caused 'increased wage inequalities and job insecurity' but also crucially 'reshaped the social security system and the pattern of public employment'.⁵⁹ Since the 1950s and 60s, industry had been declining rapidly and, as a result, large number of workers found that their skills became redundant.⁶⁰ This particularly affected those living in industrial towns and cities, including many areas of the Midlands. The decade also saw the 1973 oil crisis, which

⁵³ Beckett, *When the Lights Went out*, 126.

⁵⁴ Black and Pemberton, 'Introduction,' 4.

⁵⁵ Andy Williams, *UK Government and Politics* (Oxford: Heinemann, 1998), 30.

⁵⁶ Alistair Clark, *Political Parties in the UK* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 71.

⁵⁷ Black and Pemberton, 'Introduction,' 4.

⁵⁸ Jim Tomlinson, 'De-industrialization not Decline: A New Meta-Narrative for Post-War British History,' *Twentieth Century British History* 27, no. 1 (2016): 76.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 76.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 85.

significantly impacted the British economy, leading to a recession that lasted until 1975.⁶¹

The financial hardship and political inconsistency that characterised the 1970s was the driving force behind demands for change by working-class Britons.⁶² Membership of trade unions accelerated and the number of shop stewards quadrupled.⁶³ The 1970s, which saw a level of labour stoppages not experienced in Britain since the immediate aftermath of World War One, has gained a reputation as a time of widespread strike action caused by rising inflation and subsequent drop in real wages.⁶⁴ This particularly affected coal mining, the docks, ship building, car manufacturing and iron and steel manufacturing.⁶⁵ During the decade there were two miners' strikes: one in 1972 and another in 1974, which played a crucial role in the weakening of the Heath government.⁶⁶

In the context of rising unemployment, there was now competition for jobs amongst the white and non-white working classes, ultimately resulting in increased racial tension.⁶⁷ Immigrants were increasingly perceived as the

⁶¹ Richard Bending and Richard Eden, *UK Energy: Structure, Prospects and Policies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 1.

⁶² Black and Pemberton, 'Introduction,' 5.

⁶³ Beckett, *When the Lights Went out*, 55.

⁶⁴ Robert Taylor, 'The Heath Government and Industrial Relations: Myth and Reality,' in *The Heath Government 1970-74: A Reappraisal*, ed. Stuart Ball and Anthony Seldon (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), 161.

⁶⁵ Chris Wrigley, *British Trade Unions: 1945-1995* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 26.

⁶⁶ Dennis Kavanagh, 'The Fatal Choice: The Calling of the February 1974 Election,' in *The Heath Government 1970-74: A Reappraisal*, ed. Stuart Ball and Anthony Seldon (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), 361.

⁶⁷ Andy Beckett, *When the Lights Went out*, 367.

‘enemy within’, as violent outsiders, and as a threat to white British society.⁶⁸ The late 1960s saw a growth in the reporting of racial violence and the advent of what was known as ‘Paki-bashing’, where groups of white youths would attack black and Asian men.⁶⁹ By the 1970s, immigrants became associated with disorder due in part to increasing attention from the state, particularly the police, to alleged connections between race and crime.⁷⁰ Through his speeches, Enoch Powell had played a crucial role in relating the threat of violence to the presence of large concentrations of immigrants in British communities.⁷¹

During the second half of the 1960s the Labour government became increasingly firm in their approach to immigration and during the 1970s Government approaches to immigration hardened further.⁷² In 1971 the Conservative Party introduced a new Immigration Act, removing the automatic right of Commonwealth citizens to live in the UK.⁷³ The Act divided British subjects into patrials and non-patrials, with patrials being made up of ‘British subjects and UKC [United Kingdom and Commonwealth] citizens who had themselves or whose parents or grandparents had been born, adopted, naturalised, or registered in the United Kingdom’, or UKC citizens who had lived in the UK for over 5 years.⁷⁴ Non-patrials living outside of the UK could only

⁶⁸ John Solomos et al., ‘The Organic Crisis of British Capitalism and Race: The Experience of the Seventies,’ in *The Empire Strikes Back: Race and Racism in 70s Britain*, ed. Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (London: Hutchinson & Co, 1982), 24.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 44-46.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 40.

⁷¹ Rob White, *Racist Violence and the State: A Comparative Analysis of Britain, France and the Netherlands* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), 43.

⁷² Beckett, *When the Lights Went out*, 367.

⁷³ Zig Layton-Henry, ‘Immigration and the Heath Government,’ in *The Heath Government 1970-74: A Reappraisal*, ed. Stuart Ball and Anthony Seldon (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), 225.

⁷⁴ Kathleen Paul, *Whitewashing Britain: Race and Citizenship in the Postwar Era* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1997), 181.

enter if they were granted a work permit, which allowed only temporary access.⁷⁵ This Act is an example of the racialisation of British immigration law, as non-patrials were usually those with ancestors from the colonies, and therefore less likely to be white.⁷⁶ Kathleen Paul suggests that this act gave 'concrete form' to the 'separate spheres of nationality which had shaped policy-making debates since 1948', by allowing the government to specifically control the migration of non-white immigrants.⁷⁷ In 1976 the government passed another Race Relations Act, indicating that concern about containing the growing problem of racism towards those who were already living in Britain coincided with the desire to prevent more immigrants from arriving.⁷⁸

1970s Media

During the 1970s, the British press was also reshaped, both in terms of its politics and ownership.⁷⁹ Rupert Murdoch purchased the *News of the World* in 1968 and the *Sun* in 1969.⁸⁰ Martin Conboy argues that *The Sun* 'redefined the contemporary tabloid in Britain', changing 'both the face of journalism and the face of Britain'.⁸¹ He describes the introduction of 'Page 3' girls as 'emblematic of this shift'.⁸² *The Sun's* circulation rose from one million in 1969 to over three million in 1973 and continued to rise throughout the decade, overtaking the

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 180.

⁷⁸ Gavin Schaffer, 'Race on the Television: The Writing of Johnny Speight in the 1970s,' in *British Culture and Society in the 1970s: The Lost Decade*, ed. Laurel Forster and Sue Harper (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 113.

⁷⁹ John Shepherd, *Crisis? What Crisis? The Callaghan Government and the British 'Winter of Discontent'* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 111.

⁸⁰ Brian McNair, *News and Journalism in the UK* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1994), 87.

⁸¹ Martin Conboy, *Tabloid Britain: Constructing a Community Through Language* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), 8.

⁸² Ibid.

Daily Mirror in 1978 as Britain's best selling newspaper.⁸³ In 1971, Associated Newspapers re-launched the *Daily Mail* in tabloid form and by 1977 the *Daily Express* was also available as a tabloid.⁸⁴ Conboy describes tabloid journalism as a departure from 'an emphasis on political coverage', with more focus on human interest and 'engagement with broadly public issues'.⁸⁵ Tabloids reported the news in an exaggerated and sensationalist way that, as Conboy notes, amplified polarisation.⁸⁶ *The Sun* was previously a Labour supporting newspaper, but during the 1970s it transformed slowly to become pro-Conservative.⁸⁷ This was reflected in broader trends in the national press, which, as a result became increasingly Conservative.⁸⁸ At the time of the 1974 General Election only 40 per cent of the British daily newspapers supported the Conservatives but only four years later, 70 per cent of newspapers supported the party and opposed Trade Unions.⁸⁹ Numerous scholars including John Shepard, Lawrence Back, Hugh Pemberton and Collin Hay have suggested that the right-wing sensationalist media played a crucial role in amplifying the sense of crisis during the 1970s, particularly during the 1978 to 1979 'winter of discontent'.⁹⁰

⁸³ Shepherd, *Crisis? What Crisis?*, 111.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Conboy, *Tabloid Britain*, 10.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁸⁷ Shepherd, *Crisis? What Crisis?*, 111-112.

⁸⁸ McNair, *News and Journalism in the UK*, 88.

⁸⁹ Shepherd, *Crisis? What Crisis?*, 111.

⁹⁰ Black and Pemberton, 'Introduction,' 9; Colin Hay, 'Narrating Crisis: The Discursive Construction of the 'Winter of Discontent',' *British Sociological Association* 30, no. 2 (1996): 253-277; Shepherd, *Crisis? What Crisis?*, 111.

Television news also changed during the decade. The 1970s is often remembered as the 'golden age' of British current affairs broadcasting.⁹¹ During the decade, ITV's current affairs programmes reached new levels of popularity and were watched by millions.⁹² In 1967, the ITA requested that ITV include a half an hour television news bulletin, reflecting their commitment to high quality current affairs programming.⁹³ The bulletins included two newscasters, more reporter led film items and, as advised by the Director General, Sir Robert Fraser, were 'heavily illustrated with still pictures and film'.⁹⁴ ITV's current affairs programming, which included *World in Action* and *This Week*, responded to the social and economic instability of the decade by exploring 'controversial issues', exposing 'hidden scandals', and challenging 'vested interests'.⁹⁵ Since the Television Act of 1964, the ITA had powers to 'exercise considerable control over ITV's television output' and to 'interfere in news and current affairs to ensure balance and impartiality'.⁹⁶ The tensions that emerged in the 1970s, including 'the troubles' in Northern Ireland, and the Miners' strikes of the 1970s, posed a new challenge to the definitions of impartiality and balance that governed current affairs programming, and to the relationship between the government, broadcasters and the IBA.⁹⁷ Throughout the decade, this often led to conflict between the IBA and ITV. As McQueen argues, in comparison with the BBC's current affairs programmes, ITV's output was less 'cautious and establishment friendly' and these 'notions of impartiality and balance' were

⁹¹ David McQueen, '1970s Current Affairs: a Golden Age?', in *British Culture and Society in the 1970s: The Lost Decade*, ed. Laurel Forster and Sue Harper (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 76.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ Steven Barnett, *The Rise and Fall of Television Journalism* (London: Bloomsbury, 2011), 69.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ McQueen, '1970s Current Affairs: a Golden Age?', 76.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 82.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 77.

challenged.⁹⁸ He describes the current affairs programming of the decade as 'bold, innovative, challenging and popular'⁹⁹, noting that 'it is hard to imagine a current affairs programme today coming anywhere near such an openly critical tone'.¹⁰⁰

The rise of British fascism in the late 1960s and 1970s posed a challenge to the impartiality of British television. Gavin Schaffer discusses debates during the 1970s surrounding the coverage of racial extremes, including the NF.¹⁰¹ He describes the resulting tensions between the BBC's commitment to complete impartiality, and section six of the 1965 Race Relations Act, which made it 'unlawful to stir up hatred against any section of the public in Great Britain distinguished by colour, race, or ethnic or national origins'.¹⁰² This resulted in an attempt at neutral reporting of the NF. For example, an episode of the BBC's *Inside Story*, 'Behind the Front', broadcast in 1978, allowed viewers to 'make up their own mind' about the party.¹⁰³ Throughout the decade there was increasing calls from within the BBC to provide more 'forceful opposition'.¹⁰⁴ ITV's current affairs programming, Schaffer argues, was far more 'overtly hostile'.¹⁰⁵ For example, a documentary about the NF, broadcast by ITV in 1974, 'set the NF in a comparative framework with Nazism' by questioning NF leaders about their

⁹⁸ Ibid, 83.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 89.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 87.

¹⁰¹ Schaffer, *The Vision of a Nation*, 96.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid, 102.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 104.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 107.

policies of forced repatriation and showing shots of opponents chanting 'Nazi Front'.¹⁰⁶

The 1970s has also been referred to as a 'golden period' for *ATV Today*, which during the decade commanded audiences of around 3 million each weekday evening.¹⁰⁷ Reporter Wendy Nelson told interviewers for 'From ATV Land in Colour': 'We won awards because our show was regarded as one of the best in the country.'¹⁰⁸ Like ITN, during the 1970s ATV introduced a second newscaster, Wendy Nelson, who joined Bob Warman.¹⁰⁹ Warman remembers how 'it suddenly became fashionable, and it seemed curious if you didn't have a double headed presentation'.¹¹⁰ ATV reported on the impact of national issues, such as the oil crisis, the 'troubles' in Northern Ireland and immigration from a regional perspective, focusing on the impact on local communities. Their framing of issues differed at times from ITN's; this included their approach to coverage of racial extremism. ATV not only provided Leicester's NF with a platform in which to share their views, but these views were allowed to go largely unchallenged and were open to less criticism than the activities of the far left. This suggests that ATV defined neutrality differently than ITV or the BBC; to ATV neutrality meant providing the voice of the communities that they represented. These communities, however, appear to have been imagined as being entirely white.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 105.

¹⁰⁷ 'From 'ATVLand' in Colour,' Directed by Peter Raven (Birmingham: ATVLand Production, 2011), DVD; 'From Headlines to "Tight-Lines": The Story of ATV Today,' Directed by Peter Raven (Birmingham: ATVLand, 2012), DVD.

¹⁰⁸ 'From 'ATVLand' in Colour.'

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

The Build-up of Racial Tension in 1970s Leicester

Leicester, situated in the East Midlands, was ranked the country's fourteenth largest city in 1972, with a population of around 285,000.¹¹¹ When the decade began, the city had the lowest unemployment rate in the country, with 40 per cent working in engineering, hosiery, knitwear and allied trades.¹¹² Other major industries included footwear machinery, construction, knitting machinery, and fabric manufacture.¹¹³ However, due to economic decline, by the mid-1970s, Leicester was faced with its first economic downturn in many years.¹¹⁴ Between June 1974 and January 1976, the unemployment rate in Leicester quadrupled.¹¹⁵ By 1974 the city's unemployment rate exceeded the national average for the first time in decades.¹¹⁶

The three parliamentary seats in Leicester saw few changes throughout the 1970s, with Labour's Greville Janner holding the seat of Leicester West and Labour's Tom Bradley holding the seat of Leicester East.¹¹⁷ The only exception to this was Conservative Tom Boardman's election victory in Leicester South in 1974, however this seat was regained by Labour's Jim Marshall only eight months later.¹¹⁸ The local elections, on the other hand, reflected the political instability witnessed nationally during the decade. The Labour Party took

¹¹¹ Butt, *Leicester in the 1970s: Ten Years that Changed the City*, 65.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Dancygier, *Immigration and Conflict in Europe*, 199.

¹¹⁵ David Reeder and Clive Harrison, 'The Local Economy,' in *Leicester in the Twentieth Century*, ed. David Nash and David Reeder (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1993), 75.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Butt, *Leicester in the 1970s*, 66.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

control of the council in 1972, the Conservatives in 1976, and Labour again in 1979.¹¹⁹

Following World War Two, Leicester became a popular destination for immigrants due to its affluence, range of industry, cheap housing, and convenient position in the country. Throughout the 1970s, the immigrant population of Leicester was one of the highest in the country, with the bulk of immigrants originating from the Indian Subcontinent, the West Indies, and East Africa. The first wave of post-war immigration into Leicester was mainly from the Caribbean, shortly followed by a wave of immigrants from the Indian subcontinent.¹²⁰ A surge of immigration from East Africa occurred from 1968 to 1972 as a response to Africanisation programmes, which saw the governments of Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Malawi attempting to 'eradicate the economic dominance of South Asians that had developed under British rule'.¹²¹ By the end of the 1970s, around 15 per cent of Leicester's population were immigrants, over two thirds of whom were of Asian origin.¹²² In his chapter on Leicester's built environment in the twentieth century, Richard Rodger notes that this had a significant impact on Leicester's 'social geography' and on the 'specific character of neighbourhoods' as 'specialist shops, services and places of worship' began to emerge during the 1960s.¹²³

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Dancygier, *Immigration and Conflict in Europe*, 199.

¹²¹ Herbert, *Negotiating Boundaries in the City*, 15.

¹²² Butt, *Leicester in the 1970s*, 67.

¹²³ Richard Rodger, 'The Built Environment,' in *Leicester in the Twentieth Century*, ed. David Nash and David Reeder (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1993), 26.

Racial tension existed in Leicester before the 1970s, however interviews with South Asians, conducted by Joanna Herbert in 2004, suggested a 'radical shift in white attitudes' during the decade.¹²⁴ These interviews indicate that South Asians presented a threat to both the 'economic and social status' of white local people and that the visible presence of South Asians on the streets of Leicester was the cause of anxieties.¹²⁵ Research conducted in 1975 with 238 white Leicester people revealed that 86 per cent of those who 'lived in an area of ethnic concentration' believed that 'the area had gone down hill'.¹²⁶ Herbert describes the crucial role of the neighbourhood in the shaping of local identities, noting that the neighbourhood 'functioned as an agent enforcing conformity to accepted standards of behaviour'.¹²⁷ Interviews emphasised the importance of local traditions and pride in their community; the arrival of South Asians disrupted this established order, for example interviewees complained about how their new neighbours parked their cars, the food they cooked and their use of shared washing lines.¹²⁸ Christopher Husbands' research, carried out in 1978, also found that 'to a quite extraordinary degree' in Leicester, 'the question about neighbourhood change revealed a strong concern among NF supporters about cultural divergence and territorial penetration by black people'.¹²⁹ Husbands wrote:

In Leicester one can identify a syndrome of suspicion and parochialism that has a clear economic ingredient but whose major factor is a complex attitudinal intermingling of fears about locality and loss of cultural distinctiveness.¹³⁰

¹²⁴ Herbert, *Negotiating Boundaries in the City*, 177.

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, 35-41.

¹²⁶ *Ibid*, 28.

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, 43.

¹²⁸ *Ibid*, 44.

¹²⁹ Husbands, *Racial Exclusionism and the City*, 122.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*.

This suggests that the NF's success in Leicester rested upon concerns about the impact of immigration on the immediate local area.

But the presence of immigrants in the local area alone is not enough to explain local support for the NF. Barry Troyna's 1981 study, which compared Manchester and Leicester, found that 'there was a clear difference in the relative importance attached to race related matters as national problems'; when people in Leicester were asked what they considered to be the most important local and national problems, around 25 per cent mentioned race relations as a national problem, compared with around 13 per cent in Manchester.¹³¹ Troyna attributed this partially to differences in the local press.¹³² Local concerns about Leicester's high immigrant population were reflected in the *Mercury*. The *Mercury* continuously emphasised and constructed the cultural differences of immigrants, presenting them as incompatible with local values.¹³³

As in Wolverhampton, the strain on local education was a particular issue in Leicester at the start of the decade. Between 1967 and 1974 the number of school children in the city rose by around 20 per cent.¹³⁴ The issue was racialised by the newspaper; for example, the statistic that one in ten school children in Leicester schools were immigrants was repeatedly printed.¹³⁵ In

¹³¹ Herbert, *Negotiating Boundaries in the City*, 53.

¹³² Troyna, *Public Awareness and the Media*, 60.

¹³³ 'West Indian Pair Said Detective 'Planted Joints',' *Leicester Mercury*, 15 September 1971, 31; 'Two Indians Jailed in Rape Case,' *Leicester Mercury*, 20 July 1970, 21; 'I Had Girls Consent' Says African on Rape Charge,' *Leicester Mercury*, 18 June 1970, 21.

¹³⁴ Dancygier, *Immigration and Conflict in Europe*, 208.

¹³⁵ '1 in 10 Leicester Schoolchildren are Immigrants,' *Leicester Mercury*, 11 February 1970, 17.

1970, the newspaper told the story of a Leicester mother of six, who claimed that the 'government racial policy' was preventing her children from attending a local school, which she argued had been 'reserved for immigrant children'.¹³⁶ Rather than presenting it simply as an issue of increased numbers, the newspaper created the impression that white local children had to compete with immigrant children for school places.

The Ugandan Asian Migration

Leicester reached the national headlines in 1972 due to the city's hostile reaction to the arrival of Ugandan Asian refugees. Ugandan President, Idi Amin, demanded that Uganda's approximately 30,000 Asians leave the country by 8 November. They were forced to leave their homes, businesses and possessions behind.¹³⁷ Approximately one fifth of the 30,000 Ugandan Asians who came to the UK settled in Leicester.¹³⁸ It was well known that Leicester would be a popular destination for those travelling to Britain as refugees and Leicester County Council responded to these concerns by placing an advertisement in a Ugandan newspaper, *The Ugandan Argus*, warning Asians not to settle in Leicester.¹³⁹ But the advert did not stop Ugandan Asians from travelling to Leicester; in fact, it simply advertised to them that there was a city in England with a large Asian population.¹⁴⁰ Mala Kotecha remembers leaving Uganda when she was fifteen; she discusses how she settled in Leicester despite seeing

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Postwar Britain*, 199.

¹³⁸ McLoughlin, 'Discrepant Representations of Multi-Asian Leicester,' 96.

¹³⁹ Leicester Record Office, Wigston, DE6314, 'An Important Announcement on Behalf of the City of Leicester, England,' *Ugandan Argus*, 29 September 1973.

¹⁴⁰ McLoughlin, 'Discrepant Representations of Multi-Asian Leicester,' 96.

the advertisement.¹⁴¹ She says that her family moved to Leicester as they had relatives there who had already found her parents a house, going on to say: 'it was nicer to be nearer someone who was already living here'.¹⁴² These important family ties within the Asian community are what first drew many Ugandan Asians to the city.

The East African Asians who were travelling to Britain from Uganda differed from the Asians who had emigrated from the Indian subcontinent during the 1950s and 1960s in a number of ways. Firstly, East African Asians tended to be from urban, as opposed to rural, backgrounds.¹⁴³ Secondly, Asians had formed a privileged minority in East Africa, occupying a social position in between the Africans and the British elite.¹⁴⁴ Ugandan Asians tended to work in skilled jobs, such as teachers and managers, or to own their own businesses, and so they arrived into Britain with skills such as language and business acumen.¹⁴⁵ Despite their skills and middle-class backgrounds, however, they were viewed by many white Leicester people in the same way as the Asians who had already settled in Britain, with whom they had very little in common.

¹⁴¹ Mala Kotecha, 'Leicester Had Already Put an Ad in the Newspaper 'Please Do Not Come to Leicester'', National Archives Moving Here Stories, accessed 24 March 2016, http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.movinghere.org.uk/stories/story_EMMHUGanda10/story_EMMHUGanda10.htm?identifier=stories/story_EMMHUGanda10/story_EMMHUGanda10.htm.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of the Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (London: Routledge, 1996), 34.

¹⁴⁴ Joanna Herbert, 'Masculinity and Migration: Life Stories of East African Asian Men,' in *Gendering Migration: Masculinity, Femininity and Ethnicity in Post-War Britain*, ed. Wendy Webster and Louise Ryan (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 190.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

The number of Ugandan Asians due to arrive in Leicester was vastly overestimated by the local council and reporting of their arrival in the local press reflected this. Throughout August and September 1972, the *Mercury* reported extensively on the prospect of their arrival, constantly speculating about possible numbers and the impact this would have on Leicester, claiming that the number of Asians in Leicester could double from the 'influx'.¹⁴⁶ Words such as 'invasion, flood and influx', created a sense of panic amongst the public.¹⁴⁷ The *Mercury* also emphasised the number of immigrants already living in Leicester, noting that the immigrant population already stood at 20,000.¹⁴⁸ It suggested that Leicester was 'full up' and could not cope with any further immigration.¹⁴⁹ The newspaper also extensively reported on the response of the Labour leader of the City Council, Alderman Edward Marston, who said that the Ugandans were unwelcome in Leicester.¹⁵⁰ As Sean McLoughlin argues, both Leicester County Council and the *Leicester Mercury* contributed to local racial tension in Leicester by 'actively resisting the permanent resettlement of Ugandan Asian evacuees'.¹⁵¹

The existing severe housing shortage in Leicester meant that accommodating the Ugandan Asians was one of the Resettlement Board's biggest concerns. Although Leicester was building around 1000 houses per year, there were

¹⁴⁶ 'Leicester's Asians Could Double from Influx from Uganda,' *Leicester Mercury*, 19 August 1972, 3.

¹⁴⁷ McLoughlin, 'Discrepant Representations of Multi-Asian Leicester,' 95.

¹⁴⁸ 'Leicester's Asians Could Double from Influx from Uganda,' 3.

¹⁴⁹ 'Whitehall Told: No More- Leicester Is Full up,' *Leicester Mercury*, 31 August 1972, 1.

¹⁵⁰ 'Asians Unwelcome Unless City Is Given Aid- Labour Leader,' *Leicester Mercury*, 29 August 1972, 1; 'City United by Anxiety Over Threat to Its Way of Life- Alderman,' *Leicester Mercury*, 1 September 1972, 8; 'Top Talks in City on Asians,' *Leicester Mercury*, 23 August 1972, 1.

¹⁵¹ McLoughlin, 'Discrepant Representations of Multi-Asian Leicester,' 90.

already approximately 10,000 people on the council house waiting list.¹⁵² By March 1973, around 5000 Ugandan Asians had arrived in Leicester and this put a strain on the existing crisis.¹⁵³ Leicester had a shortage of 1800 houses in 1971, resulting in a rise in house prices and rent charges, making it difficult for Ugandan Asians to purchase properties.¹⁵⁴ This meant that a significant number of Ugandan Asians were forced to live in overcrowded and run-down houses.¹⁵⁵ The *Mercury* reported that there was already a waiting list of 9000 for housing due to slum clearance, quoting Councillor Bob Trewick as saying: 'We have got sufficient problems on our hands as it is'.¹⁵⁶ An article published in September 1972, noted that the local council had decided 'that the housing, social service, health and education services of the city are already stretched to capacity'.¹⁵⁷ Another article published on the same day claimed that landlords in Leicester were 'pushing up the rents of furnished accommodation in anticipation of the arrival of Ugandan Asian refugees'.¹⁵⁸ By focusing entirely on the problems posed by Ugandan Asians, the *Mercury* failed to portray the traumatic experience they had faced. The fact that their arrival coincided with a time of post-industrial decline and economic crisis meant that Ugandan Asian refugees came to symbolise the perceived threat that immigration posed to the British working-class way of life.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵² Herbert, *Negotiating Boundaries in the City*, 137.

¹⁵³ Valerie Marett, *Immigrants Settling in the City* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1989), 136.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 81.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 137.

¹⁵⁶ 'Can't Give Houses to Uganda Asians Says Head of Committee,' *Leicester Mercury*, 18 August 1972, 23.

¹⁵⁷ 'What the Council Have Decided,' *Leicester Mercury*, 1 September 1972, 1.

¹⁵⁸ 'City Landlords Are Cashing in on Asian Crisis- Solicitor,' *Leicester Mercury*, 1 September 1972, 21.

¹⁵⁹ France Widdance Twine, *A White Side of Black Britain: Interracial Intimacy and Racial Literacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 20.

The reporting of the Ugandan Asian expulsion in the national press was far more sympathetic. Whilst it was acknowledged that their arrival could put pressure on certain areas of the UK, unlike the *Mercury* which focused solely on the impact on the local area, both *The Times* and the *Daily Mail* emphasised the situation in Uganda and the reasons for their arrival into Britain. For example, *The Times* reported that Asians arriving into Heathrow had ‘stories of cruelty’ and emphasised that they had been forced to leave their belongings behind.¹⁶⁰ The *Daily Mail*, whilst describing the arrival as ‘dangerous and unwanted’, quoted Uganda’s Foreign Minister as saying: ‘any Asians left in Uganda after the stipulated time will be dealt with by Ugandan Law’, emphasising the reason for their departure.¹⁶¹ *The Times* also indicated in that the situation was being exaggerated, for example one article dispelled claims that an elderly widow from Kensington would be forced to share her home with two Ugandan Asians, stating that ‘similar rumours have been spread- many quite deliberately- in other parts of Britain’.¹⁶² Unlike the national press, the *Mercury* overlooked the reasons behind the expulsion, focusing instead on its impact on the local area.

The *Mercury* received hundreds of letters on the topic of Ugandan Asian refugees in 1972. Although occasionally letters were published which expressed support for Ugandan Asians, the vast majority demonstrated fierce opposition. Many letter writers expressed anger at the government, resentment towards

¹⁶⁰ ‘25 Arrive without Money at Heathrow,’ *The Times*, 31 August 1972, 2; ‘Asians Tell of Passports Cut, Broken-Glass Haircuts,’ *The Times*, 1 September 1972, 5.

¹⁶¹ Walter Terry, ‘Talks to start on Expelled Asians,’ *Daily Mail*, 7 August 1972, 1.

¹⁶² Christopher Walker, ‘Board Seeks to Defuse Growing Local Hostility,’ *The Times*, 30 August 1972, 12.

other countries, and annoyance that ordinary people in Leicester had no control over the situation. Many of these letters began with a strong denial of racism, often with the words: 'I'm not a racist but', going on to express despair about the situation.¹⁶³ Others referenced inter-racial tension, for example: 'Let those people who talk about racialism between white and coloured first look to the hatred and intolerance that exists between two lots of coloured people.'¹⁶⁴ It was not unusual for the media to emphasise tension between non-white racial groups. During the 1970s and 80s, Britain's national and local press began to focus increasingly on interracial hostility. For example, in his six part series for the *Mercury*, 'Black and White in Leicester', Neil Everton wrote that 'racial prejudice does exist, not only between white and coloured but also between different coloured communities.'¹⁶⁵ This tactic of 'contrast and division' was used 'in order to create illusion of ethnic rivalry', acting as a 'divide and conquer strategy'.¹⁶⁶

Many letter writers, including Anthony Reed Herbert, who would later become the leader of Leicester's NF, expressed the opinion that national politicians were ignoring the needs of people in Leicester.¹⁶⁷ One writer suggested that Leicester people were 'the ones who should make the decision as to whether these people, unfortunate though they be, could reasonably be offered shelter here', and another said: 'the government should ask the people of England if we really

¹⁶³ I. Heggs, 'Dismayed at the Thought of More Immigrants,' *Leicester Mercury*, 9 August 1972, 4.

¹⁶⁴ Eileen Lyall, 'Hatred, Intolerance,' *Leicester Mercury*, 19 August 1972, 4.

¹⁶⁵ Neil Everton, 'We Needed Immigrants No Less Than They Need Us,' *Leicester Mercury*, 12 June 1970, 20.

¹⁶⁶ Tuen Van Dijk, *Racism and the Press* (London: Routledge, 1991), 197.

¹⁶⁷ 'Our Readers Views on the Uganda Situation,' *Leicester Mercury*, 19 August 1972, 4.

want any more'.¹⁶⁸ This feeling of anger towards the government often came alongside praise for Enoch Powell, who was viewed by many as a positive alternative to mainstream politicians and as someone who would listen to their views.¹⁶⁹ Unlike the *Express & Star*, which attempted, albeit often with difficulty, to provide a balanced view of Powell on its letters pages, the *Mercury's* letters pages appear unbalanced in favour of Powell and against immigration.

In her study of Ugandan Asian settlement in Leicester, Valerie Marett describes the number arriving into Leicester as 'the main plank of the NF's campaign'.¹⁷⁰ For example, a NF leaflet that circulated in Leicester in 1972 wrote: '80,000 more Asians are coming to Britain... the fight for survival is on'.¹⁷¹ The arrival of Ugandan Asians into Leicester and the way in which this was represented by local media was exploited by the NF, who played upon local concerns about the immediate threat to the local area.

The NF used the *Mercury* to exploit local responses to the arrival of Ugandan Asians. The newspaper mentioned and directly quoted the NF on a number of occasions during August 1972. For example, one article wrote: 'The Leicester branch of the NF claimed today that one in three of Leicester's population would be coloured if 20,000 more immigrants come to the city'.¹⁷² Following the NF's plans for an anti-immigrant march across Leicester in 1972, an article in the

¹⁶⁸ Margaret Robins, 'Very Deep Concern by the Majority of Leicester People,' *Leicester Mercury*, 24 August 1972, 4; Mrs. C. J. Hudson, 'A Place for Us?,' *Leicester Mercury*, 24 August 1972, 4.

¹⁶⁹ D. H. Clifford, 'Weak-Kneed Leaders,' *Leicester Mercury*, 7 September 1972, 4; Jacqueline Harvey, 'What Do MPs Think?,' *Leicester Mercury*, 24 August 1972, 4; M. R., 'Warning Not Heeded,' *Leicester Mercury*, 26 August 1972, 4.

¹⁷⁰ Widdance Twine, *A White Side of Black Britain*, 20.

¹⁷¹ Leicester Record Office, Wigston, DE6314, National Front Leaflet Circulating in Leicester, August 1972.

¹⁷² 'Asians Are Thin End of a Thick Wedge- Powell,' *Leicester Mercury*, 16 August 1972, 16.

Mercury claimed that the NF had: 'its biggest ever show of support in Leicester when about 600 people marched behind its banner in an anti-immigration demonstration through the city on Saturday'.¹⁷³ It went on to quote the Secretary of Leicester's NF: 'this support proves we are not just an extremist fringe group. We do have mass support and this has been clearly demonstrated.'¹⁷⁴ The newspaper reported the following week that the demonstration had gone quietly and that there was 'no sign of any trouble', creating a positive impression of the NF.¹⁷⁵

As well as quoting them, the *Mercury* printed numerous letters sent in by local NF leaders. This included one from Ken Sanders, the Vice Chairman of the Leicester branch, who wrote that the NF was the only party concerned with immigration and that the branch was formed in Leicester so that ordinary people could have 'a platform on which to express their opinions'.¹⁷⁶ Another letter from the organiser of the Leicester branch wrote: 'our current success and growth rate comes at a time when there is no one else to turn to'.¹⁷⁷ It is clear that like Griffiths and Powell, the NF were using local media to draw on and create local concerns about race and immigration.

¹⁷³ 'Anti-Immigrant March in Leicester Draws 600 People,' *Leicester Mercury*, 11 September 1972, 5.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ 'National Front Demonstrators 'Go Quietly',' *Leicester Mercury*, 18 September 1972, 5.

¹⁷⁶ Ken Sanders, 'This Is What the National Front Party Stands For,' *Leicester Mercury*, 15 September 1972, 4.

¹⁷⁷ Graham Eustace, 'People Livid,' *Leicester Mercury*, 15 September 1972, 4.

ATV broadcast seven reports on the arrival of Ugandan Asians into Leicester between August and November 1972.¹⁷⁸ This reporting followed similar patterns to the *Mercury*, and there were clear links between the reporting in the *Mercury* and ATV. The arrival of Ugandan Asians provided ATV with a new group of Immigrants with different class backgrounds to examine, but nevertheless, in many ways ATV treated them as the same. On 17 August 1972, ATV's Hugh Owens interviewed Mohammed Amin, secretary of the British Asian Welfare Society in Leicester, which was formed to help accommodate Ugandan Asians.¹⁷⁹ In the days that preceded this report, the *Mercury* had printed numerous articles about the number of Ugandan Asians due to arrive in Leicester, including one the day before, which said that a 'flood' was coming.¹⁸⁰ The report began with a shot of a sign which read: 'City of Leicester', followed by shots of Leicester streets, suggesting that the arrival of a large number of Ugandan Asians would have a negative effect on the local area. The first question he was asked was 'How many people do you think will come to Leicester from Uganda?'.¹⁸¹ He replied 'Well I don't have any idea about it', to which Owens responded: 'But you expect quite a few?', fuelling the sense of panic already existing in the city.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁸ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Ugandan Asians in Leicester,' first broadcast on 8 November 1972, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-08111972-ugandan-asians-in-leicester

¹⁷⁹ MACE, University of Leicester, *ATV Today*, 'British Asian Welfare Society Formed in Leicester,' first broadcast on 17 August 1972, <http://www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-17081972-british-asian-welfare-society-formed-leicester>

¹⁸⁰ 'Most Uganda Asians Would Prefer India, Says Amin Minister,' *Leicester Mercury*, 16 August 1972, 10.

¹⁸¹ *ATV Today*, 'British Asian Welfare Society Formed in Leicester.'

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

On 25 August 1972, a report was broadcast on *ATV Today* regarding the accommodation of Ugandan Asian refugees at Hillcrest Hospital in Leicester.¹⁸³ This report came less than one week after the *Mercury* reported on a meeting of the British Asian Welfare Society 'to discuss the plight of 50,000 Asians in Uganda ordered to leave the country by November'.¹⁸⁴ It began with a number of shots of the hospital, an old, run-down, building. The shots of the inside of the hospital showed its prison like appearance: narrow corridors, and small rooms with camp beds. Outside of the hospital, reporter Peter Plant interviewed Harban Singh Rattoo, president of the British Asian Welfare Society, regarding the problem of finding suitable accommodation for Ugandan Asian refugees. The first question asked by Plant was 'Can Leicester cope?', a question asked repeatedly by *ATV*.¹⁸⁵ He responded: 'If you ask me, Leicester cannot cope.'¹⁸⁶ The camera then focused on Plant, who asked: 'What measures do you believe the Home Office must take immediately to control the situation, and the vast number of Asians that are going to be arriving in this country?'.¹⁸⁷ Again, rather than focusing on the positive work that was being done within communities to deal with the problems associated with the arrival, he asked a question designed to add to the existing sense of panic. Plant then interviewed Councillor David Taylor, Vice Chairman of Leicester Social Services Committee, a white man, who stood in front of the hospital. Taylor discussed the accommodation problem, saying that the hospital could only house twenty people. He was

¹⁸³ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Hillcrest Hospital, Leicester,' first broadcast on 25 August 1972, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-25081972-hillcrest-hospital-leicester-ugandan-asian-refugees

¹⁸⁴ 'Leicester's Asians 'Could Double by Influx from Uganda', *Leicester Mercury*, 19 August 1972, 3.

¹⁸⁵ *ATV Today*, 'Hillcrest Hospital, Leicester.'

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

asked: 'And how many are you expecting over the next few months?', to which he responded: 'We don't know.'¹⁸⁸ It is clear that the questions asked by Plant throughout these interviews were intended to fuel the existing sense of panic in Leicester.



Shots outside Hillcrest hospital, Leicester. MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Hillcrest Hospital, Leicester,' first broadcast on 25 August 1972, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-25081972-hillcrest-hospital-leicester-ugandan-asian-refugees



Shots inside Hillcrest hospital, Leicester. MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Hillcrest Hospital, Leicester,' first broadcast on 25 August 1972, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-25081972-hillcrest-hospital-leicester-ugandan-asian-refugees

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

On 8 November 1972, Reg Harcourt interviewed Ugandan Asian, Ayub Ismail Majothi, and his wife Fatima, about why they decided to come to Leicester.¹⁸⁹ They sat opposite Harcourt and their two young children sat on their laps. Harcourt, who was visible in the shot, asked what they had to leave behind, alluding to the fact that they came from a middle-class background.¹⁹⁰ The camera focused on Ayub's face as he said: 'Sweet memories of Uganda', and smiled.¹⁹¹ Harcourt then said: 'Let's ask your wife, was it a shock having to leave, so suddenly?'.¹⁹² As he asked this, the camera moved across to focus on Fatima who calmly said: 'Well yes, I had never expected such a sudden journey'.¹⁹³ She was asked: 'do you still feel bitter about it?', to which she replied: 'Yes, I do as far as climate is concerned'.¹⁹⁴ It appears that Harcourt was trying to rouse anger in his interviewees by making them talk about their experiences, however they remained calm and smiled throughout the interview. This is an example of the agency of immigrants in front of television cameras; despite Harcourt's efforts to present Ayub and Fatima in a particular way, their responses push back against this attempt.

¹⁸⁹ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Ugandan Asians in Leicester,' first broadcast on 8 November 1972, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-08111972-ugandan-asians-in-leicester

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.



Ugandan Asian couple interviewed by ATV's Reg Harcourt. MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Ugandan Asians in Leicester,' first broadcast on 8 November 1972, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-08111972-ugandan-asians-in-leicester

The first half of the interview provided a sympathetic view of the situation, however Harcourt went on to question them about the impact of their arrival on Leicester.¹⁹⁵ Ayub and Fatima, who were both visible in the frame, were then asked: 'The city of Leicester did try to persuade people not to come here. Why did you come to Leicester?'.¹⁹⁶ This confrontational question caused the couple to appear uncomfortable. The camera zoomed in to focus on Ayub, who was asked: 'Are you sensitive to the opposition, from some people in Leicester, to too many Asians coming to the city?', to which he replied: 'I think this is quite natural.'¹⁹⁷ This question attempted to force Ayub to express anger and resentment, this time towards the people of Leicester.

Following this, Harcourt conducted Vox Pops on the streets of Leicester regarding the arrival of Ugandan Asians. A young white woman told him: 'Well,

¹⁹⁵ Eames, 'ITV and the 1972 Ugandan Migration,' 453-469.

¹⁹⁶ *ATV Today*, 'Ugandan Asians in Leicester.'

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

you don't mind them coming as long as there's plenty of money for them and, I mean as the housing is now, I mean there's not enough for people here as it is, is there.'¹⁹⁸ Another white woman said: 'there's too many people coming to Leicester, I mean we're having them come all the time, every day, and I think it's causing a bit of ill feeling'.¹⁹⁹ A third white interviewee shook her head and said: 'No, I don't like them at all.'²⁰⁰ When asked why, she said: 'I just don't seem to get on with 'em, have enough of the coloured ones as it is.'²⁰¹ Only white local people were interviewed in the report and the views of Leicester's existing black and Asian community were ignored. It is clear from these vox pops that ATV was focusing on expressing concern about the arrival of Ugandan Asians, rather than praising those, such as the British Asian Welfare Society, who were helping to aid their resettlement.

Frances Eames' study on ITV and the Ugandan migration compares ATV's coverage with that of ITV, noting the clear differences in their framing of their arrival.²⁰² Her analysis of ITV's reporting suggests that ITV focused on the 'personal situation of the new arrivals' as opposed to the problems they may bring, and that interviews offered an idea of 'us' and 'them' in which both whites and British Asians were on one side and the Ugandan Army were on the other.²⁰³ Unlike ITV reports, which focused on 'loss of assets and income' and the experiences of the Ugandan Asians, emphasising their middle-class backgrounds, ATV's regional reporting framed the arrival as a problem and

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Eames, 'ITV and the 1972 Ugandan Migration,' 453-469.

²⁰³ Ibid, 458.

largely overlooked class differences between Ugandan Asians and Asians from the Indian subcontinent.²⁰⁴

This ATV coverage was also markedly different from ITV's national current affairs programming, which provided a more in depth analysis of the expulsion and its impact on Britain. For example, an episode of ITV's *This Week*, broadcast in 1972, showed viewers the situation in Kampala, where crowds of Asians were attempting to flee the country.²⁰⁵ Shots of children were played alongside a voice-over, which told viewers that less than eight weeks remained until the deadline ran out and if they remained in the country they would be sent to concentration camps. A number of the men in the queue told the reporter that they were 'terrified'.²⁰⁶ The report went on to emphasise the lifestyle that many Ugandan Asians were leaving behind, telling viewers that 'the Asians live western sophisticated lives, they enjoy the recreation of the affluent. They earn five, ten, twenty thousand pounds a year. They reside in expensive houses and retain a cluster of servants.'²⁰⁷ This created sympathy for the Ugandan Asian refugees by emphasising what they were leaving behind, however it also spoke of a potential class divide amongst white working-class Britons and previously affluent Ugandan Asians.

ITV's *World in Action* saw Wally Murrell, a worker from Smithfield meat market, who at the beginning of the report expressed firm opposition to the arrival of

²⁰⁴ Ibid, 456.

²⁰⁵ BFI Player, *This Week*, 'Exodus- Uganda,' first broadcast in 1972, <https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-exodus-uganda-1972-online>

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

Ugandan Asians, travel to Uganda.²⁰⁸ Murrell spoke to numerous Asians in Kampala who explained to him what they were being forced to leave behind. He questioned whether they might feel more 'at home' in India or Pakistan and was told: 'we live the British life you know'.²⁰⁹ This conversation caused Murrell's opinion to alter slightly; he told viewers: 'talking to them, I just couldn't help feeling sorry for them', going on to say that they would be 'accepted more so in Great Britain than the black population because they seem to lead the British way of life more'.²¹⁰ By the end of the programme, his opinion of the situation had completely changed. He told the audience: 'we should try and do our best and take these people in and try and sort the problems out afterwards. It's a much more complex situation than I ever dreamt'.²¹¹ Unlike ATV's news coverage, which emphasised the problems associated with their arrival, it is clear that the aim of both of these ITV programmes was to educate viewers about the severity of the situation in Uganda and to prevent racial tension. Likewise, both BBC and ITV's news programmes emphasised that Ugandan Asians were UK citizens and that Britain had an obligation to help them.²¹²

The 1974 Imperial Typewriter strike

Some of the Ugandan Asians who settled in Leicester found employment in the Imperial Typewriter Factory. The Imperial Typewriter Company was

²⁰⁸ BFI Player, *World in Action*, 'See it for Yourself!', first broadcast in 1972, <https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-see-for-yourself-1972-online>

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² BBC Motion Gallery, *BBC News*, 'Kenyan/ Ugandan Asians: A Brit. Moral Problem?', first broadcast on 16 February 1970, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/047-70-08; ITN Archive, *ITN*, 'Uganda Asians,' first broadcast on 7 August 1972, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/729096369

established in Leicester in 1908 and by 1960 was making an annual profit of £571,000.²¹³ Due to foreign competition, this rise in profits did not continue into the 1960s; subsequently in 1966 the company was sold to Litton Industries, an American company.²¹⁴ From 1968 to 1972 the number of employees at the factory doubled. Until 1968 all employees had been white; however, in search of cheap labour, the company sought to recruit Asian workers.²¹⁵ By 1974 the company had a workforce that was two thirds Asian, many of whom were Asian women.²¹⁶ Asian workers at the factory faced racial discrimination, low wages, and poor working conditions.²¹⁷ On 1 May 1974, thirty-nine Asian workers, twenty-six of whom were women, walked out on their jobs at the factory, shortly to be followed by a further 500 workers.²¹⁸ This marked the beginning of a strike that lasted until August and gained not only local but also national media attention. Both Imperial's management and the local TGWU denied any form of racial discrimination and the local TGWU did not support the strike.²¹⁹ The NF, aided by local media coverage, exploited the situation at the factory, using it to gain local support.

The tensions that existed at the Imperial typewriter factory were partially a result of the class differences between existing workers and the new arrivals from Uganda. A study conducted by Valerie Marett in 1989 revealed that 'people

²¹³ Ron Ramdin, *The Making of the Black Working Class in Britain* (Aldershot: Gower Publishing Company, 1987), 272.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Wolfson Centre for Archival Research, Birmingham, MS 2142/C, 'Strike Bulletin of the Imperial Typewriter Strike Committee,' 1974.

²¹⁷ Ramdin, *The Making of the Black Working Class in Britain*, 273.

²¹⁸ Wilson. *Finding a Voice*, 57.

²¹⁹ Wolfson Centre for Archival Research, Birmingham, MS 2142/C, 'A Statement Made by the Management of Imperial Typewriter Company,' 1974; Wolfson Centre for Archival Research, Birmingham, MS 2142/C, 'TGWU- Statement from G Bromley District Secretary,' 13 May 1974.

coming from the middle class suffered as a result of their loss of status'.²²⁰ Despite their lack of confidence upon arrival into Britain, due to economic necessity many East African Asian women, who had no experience of waged labour, found work in Leicester's factories.²²¹ Gina Buijs suggests that migrant women were forced to 'examine their preconceptions and to adopt both to social and economic role which would have been rejected at home', and that this 'remaking of self was a traumatic experience'.²²² Having come from privileged positions, they were far less willing to accept the same treatment from Imperial's management as the Asian workers who had come to Britain from the Indian subcontinent.²²³

The *Mercury* printed extensive coverage of the dispute. In May 1974, the month that the strike began, the dispute was mentioned on the front page seventeen out of thirty-one days. The newspaper vilified the strikers, presenting them as aggressive Asian trouble causers and emphasising their visible impact on the local area. For example, it was claimed that one resident had called the police because she was concerned about picketing outside her home.²²⁴ Numerous articles referred to the strikers as 'the trouble makers' or 'the Asians', reinforcing the racial nature of the dispute.²²⁵ Asian women made up the majority of the approximately 500 workers to join the strikers in the days that

²²⁰ Leicester Record Office, DE6314, 'Study on Asian women,' 1974-78.

²²¹ McLoughlin, 'Discrepant Representations of Multi-Asian Leicester,' 97.

²²² Gina Buijs, *Migrant Women: Crossing Boundaries and Changing Identities* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1999), 2.

²²³ Brah, *Cartographies of the Diaspora*, 35.

²²⁴ 'No Colour Bar on Job Chances, Asians Told,' *Leicester Mercury*, 2 May 1974, 1.

²²⁵ 'Vote to 'Shun the Troublemakers',' *Leicester Mercury*, 23 July 1974, 1.

followed the walkout.²²⁶ However, the role of women in the dispute was largely overlooked. Like the *Mercury* the national press presented the strikers as violent and suggested that there was no racial discrimination at the factory.²²⁷ It is unsurprising that the national press presented the strikers in this way; throughout the 1970s, the national press was hostile towards strikers and consistently attempted to undermine public sympathy towards them.²²⁸ The reporting of the strike in the national press was, however, significantly less extensive than that of the *Mercury*.

ITN did not cover the strike, and the BBC broadcast only two reports in May 1974, including one that showed strikers marching to the TGWU office in London, and another that showed violence outside of the factory.²²⁹ ATV, however, broadcast five reports on the strike, including interviews with strike leaders. Unsurprisingly, ATV's framing of the strike followed the same patterns as the *Mercury*. On 7 May 1974, just days after the *Mercury* had published several front-page reports about trouble outside of the factory escalating due to intimidation, ATV showed a group of strikers picketing outside of the factory.²³⁰ Despite the fact that women played an important role on the picket lines, ATV showed no women in this context. The report showed a white police officer

²²⁶ McLoughlin, 'Discrepant Representations of Multi-Asian Leicester,' 98.

²²⁷ 'Asian Strikers Arrested,' *Daily Mail*, 31 May 1974, 1; David Leigh, 'Nine Asians Arrested After Picket Fighting,' *Daily Mail*, 8 April 1974, 3; David Leigh, 'Undercurrents that Feed Asians' Strike,' *Daily Mail*, 3 June 1974, 3.

²²⁸ James Thomas, *Popular Newspapers, the Labour Party and British Politics* (London: Routledge, 2007), 81.

²²⁹ BBC Motion Gallery, *BBC News*, 'Asian Workers Discrimination Demo,' first broadcast on 17 May 1974, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/137-74-10; BBC Motion Gallery, *BBC News*, 'Asian Workers Discrimination Strike,' first broadcast on 30 May 1974, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/150-74-11

²³⁰ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Imperial Typewriter Factory, Leicester,' first broadcast on 7 May 1974, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-07051974-imperial-typewriter-factory-leicester

escorting a white worker into the factory, creating the impression that the strikers were a threat to the local white community.²³¹ Similarly, another report, broadcast six days later, opened with a shot of a line of police, who stood in front of the factory.²³² It showed Asian strikers marching through the streets of Leicester carrying banners which read: 'Support just demands of imperial workers', followed by shots of Asian men shouting and waving their hands. This imagery reinforced the perception that the strikers were aggressive and male troublemakers who were physically taking over the streets of Leicester.



Shot of strikers outside Imperial Typewriter factory, Leicester. MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Imperial Typewriter Factory, Leicester,' first broadcast on 7 May 1974, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-07051974-imperial-typewriter-factory-leicester

During the 1960s and 1970s, as Rob Waters argues, public anxieties about black and Asian nationalism grew as white audiences watched extensive television coverage of the black power movement, including the struggles between black

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Imperial Typewriter Factory, Leicester,' first broadcast on 13 May 1974, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-13051974-imperial-typewriter-factory-leicester

power activists and the American government.²³³ Black power created a template for antagonism towards the British black and Asian population, who became associated with organised violence.²³⁴ The *Mercury* emphasised the role in the strike played by Bennie Bunsee, a writer and activist known for his role in the radical Pan-Africanist Congress, a South African Black Nationalist movement and who was in exile from South Africa for many years due to his opposition to apartheid.²³⁵ Bunsee travelled to Leicester to support the strikers and was labelled by the press as a professional agitator. The fact that Bunsee was travelling around the country to support Asian workers in various industrial disputes was viewed with suspicion by both the factory's management and the local press.²³⁶ The *Mercury* fuelled public fear about the spread of organised violence, writing that: 'there was in existence a short list of firms to which the troubles were planned to spread'.²³⁷ It also emphasised Bunsee's far-left influences, claiming that 'there were reports from well informed sources that a Trotskyite group were at the back of the troubles' at the Imperial Typewriter factory.²³⁸

²³³ Rob Waters, 'Black Power on the Telly: America, Television, and Race in 1960s and 1970s Britain,' *Journal of British Studies* 54, no. 4 (2015): 951.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 967.

²³⁵ Elizabeth M. Williams, *The Politics of Race in Britain and South Africa: Black British Solidarity and the Anti-Apartheid Struggle* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2015), 104; Gail M. Gerhart and Clive L. Glaser, *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882-1990* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2010), 153.

²³⁶ 'Mansfield' Strike Man in Imperial Dispute,' *Leicester Mercury*, 7 May 1974, 1.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

On 20 May, ATV reporter, John Withington, interviewed Bunsee regarding his role in the strike.²³⁹ The report began with a shot of two police officers standing outside of the factory, followed by a close up shot of the 'Imperial Typewriter' sign on the front of the building. The camera zoomed out to show a group of Asian men standing in front of the factory gates. Bunsee stood in front of a crowd of Asian men and no women were shown in the report. Withington noted that Bunsee was 'not a worker at the factory', asking him how he got involved with the strike, emphasising his status as an outsider.²⁴⁰ Withington also spoke to the group of male strikers who stood behind Bunsee during his interview, questioning how they felt about threats that they would be sacked if they did not return to work. The men laughed and said: 'We don't care' and 'we had a letter on Thursday but we got no cards so I think they're just trying to fool us.'²⁴¹

George Bromley was also interviewed by Withington in this report. Withington questioned Bromley about allegations of racial discrimination at the factory, asking if the Union had investigated them. Bromley replied: 'They have a much better proportion of top rated jobs, section leaders, leading hands, than the white people and we know for a fact that there can be no discrimination in such a mixed labour force.'²⁴² Bromley's response appeared very rehearsed and it is therefore very likely that he was expecting to be asked this question, allowing him to plan his response. After he spoke, the camera showed Withington

²³⁹ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Imperial Typewriter Factory, Leicester,' first broadcast on 20 May 1974, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-20051974-imperial-typewriter-factory-leicester

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Ibid.

nodding his head, validating his answer. Withington remained in the shot as he asked: 'Do you think this is a symptom that the union's lost the confidence of its coloured members?'.²⁴³ This question suggested that the problem was with the Asian workers, who were overly suspicious and mistrusting of the union. Bromley replied: 'I don't think really in truth we've ever had the confidence. I think they mistrust us as they do all other British institutions.'²⁴⁴ In a letter sent to Bromley on 1 June 1974, H. Khetani, strike leader, wrote: 'On TV you said that Asians do not understand British institutions. How do you come to this remarkable conclusion?'.²⁴⁵ This is an example of how the strikers responded to their negative representations on *ATV Today*, indicating awareness that it had a potential impact on public opinion.

The strike bulletins, which were published and distributed to strikers by the strike committee, accused the *Mercury*, which they described as a 'racist rag', of printing management's lies.²⁴⁶ This is an example of how the strikers were attempting to push back against the local press, which continuously cast them in a negative light. On 4 June 1974, H. Kethani wrote to Moss Evans, General Secretary of the TGWU, saying that they had faced a 'hostile propaganda war conducted by the local press'.²⁴⁷ He went on to say that the *Mercury* was one of the most far-right wing papers in the country, accusing the newspaper of being

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Wolfson Centre for Archival Research, Birmingham, MS 2142/C, H. Khetani, Letter to George Bromley, 1 June 1974.

²⁴⁶ Wolfson Centre for Archival Research, Birmingham, MS 2142/C, Imperial Typewriter Strike Bulletin, 'No 3- Report of London Meeting with TGWU and National Inquiry, and How the Dispute Started,' 1974, 6.

²⁴⁷ Wolfson Centre for Archival Research, Birmingham, MS 2142/C, H. Kethani, Letter to Brother Moss Evans, TGWU, 4 June 1974.

'openly racialistic'.²⁴⁸ The fact that Asians in Leicester were responding in this way indicates that local press reporting was shaping their experiences.

The NF responded to the strike by marching through the streets of Leicester in protest.²⁴⁹ The *Mercury* reported extensively on plans for the march in August 1974, as well as a counter march organised by the Interracial Solidarity Campaign. Some articles were critical of the NF, including one which quoted local Conservative Ken Reeves, who told reporters: 'they're extremists and will cause racial tension'.²⁵⁰ The extensive reporting, nonetheless, advertised the march as well as the NF's ideology.²⁵¹ The reporting was extremely critical of the Interracial Solidarity Group's counter demonstration, quoting John Reed, solicitor for Leicester's NF branch, who suggested that the left wing were using 'carefully orchestrated methods as an excuse to commit violence'.²⁵² The newspaper claimed that a Union affiliated with Leicester's Trade Council decided not to support the counter march because they were 'against the principle of anyone trying to deny people the right of saying what they like'.²⁵³ This right to free speech was mentioned multiple times in letters, including one which stated that only 'people at the top' supported the counter demonstration because they did not 'know or care what their constituents or members really

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ People's History Museum Archive and Study Centre, Manchester, 'National Front in Demo Setback,' *Labour Weekly*, 30 August 1974.

²⁵⁰ 'National Front Preys on People's Fears Claims Conservative,' *Leicester Mercury*, 14 August 1974, 10.

²⁵¹ 'National Front Preys on People's Fears Claims Conservative,' *Leicester Mercury*, 14 August 1974, 10.

²⁵² 'Left-Wing Battle Tactics Will Threaten Our March- NF Claim,' *Leicester Mercury*, 16 August 1974, 34.

²⁵³ 'Union Snubs Invitation to a Counter Demonstration,' *Leicester Mercury*, 17 August 1974, 11.

desire'.²⁵⁴ Again, this shows how the *Mercury* presented the NF as the voice of Leicester's white community, whose concerns about immigration were being ignored. This is reminiscent of the way in which the *Smethwick Telephone* represented Griffiths: as Smethwick's only hope of reducing immigration in the town.

National papers were extremely wary of appearing to support the NF, firstly because they were a political rival to the Conservatives and secondly due to their links with fascism. This was due in part to the *Daily Mail's* historic links to fascism; the newspaper, and its owner Lord Rothermere, had famously taken a pro-Nazi line during the 1930s and were keen to distance themselves from this reputation.²⁵⁵ An article published in the *Daily Mail* in June 1974, wrote: 'we deplore the politics of the hard faced men of the national front who look as if they are doing well out of race hate.'²⁵⁶ *The Times* published numerous articles that suggested that the NF caused racial tension. For example, in June 1974 an article said that the British Embassy had criticised the party for 'holding provocative processions through immigrant areas.'²⁵⁷ Unlike the *Mercury*, which presented the NF as the voice of the local community and defended their right to free speech, both *The Times* and the *Daily Mail* were far more critical, despite the *Daily Mail* sharing the same ownership as the *Mercury*. This suggests that

²⁵⁴ Burma Star, 'Man in the Street Is Not Asked for Views on March,' *Leicester Mercury*, 22 August 1974, 4.

²⁵⁵ Richard Griffiths, *Fellow Travellers of the Right: British Enthusiasts for Nazi Germany, 1933-1939* (London: Faber and Faber, 2015), 162.

²⁵⁶ 'The Red Rag and the National Front Bull,' *Daily Mail*, 17 June 1974, 6.

²⁵⁷ Peter Evans, 'Embassy Concerned at 'Intense Pressure' on Asians in Britain,' *The Times*, 3 June 1974, 4.

the *Mercury* was less concerned about providing balanced reporting of extreme right groups.

Like the *Mercury*, ATV also provided positive coverage of the NF's 1974 march against the Imperial Typewriter Strike. Reg Harcourt stood outside of the factory gates and told the audience that in order to avoid the Interracial Solidarity Group's counter march, the NF had 'agreed to shift their assembly point to a car park near the Granby Hall', presenting the NF as cooperative and their opponents as the cause of trouble.²⁵⁸ He went on to say: 'there is a worry, however, that militant groups like Tariq Ali's International Marxists, won't be content with just a protest march'.²⁵⁹ There was no mention of potential disturbances arising as a direct cause of the NF's protest march or any mention of racism at this point.

Harcourt interviewed Terry Verity of the NF regarding the march. Verity was asked why the march was so important and responded:

As you probably know there's been a strike for eleven weeks with the Asians being on strike and we think that the British workers at Imperial Typewriters have been shouldered aside for too long.²⁶⁰

This response suggested that the NF were acting as the voice of Leicester's white community. Harcourt responded: 'Your opponents allege that the march is an incitement of racial hatred', to which Verity replied: 'No, well I don't think it is, you could say that it was incitement to racial hatred when the Asians at

²⁵⁸ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'National Front and Interracial Solidarity Group Marches,' first broadcast on 12 August 1974, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-12081974-national-front-interracial-solidarity-group-marches

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

Imperial, who have marched two or three times through Leicester behind such people as Tariq Ali and things like that.’²⁶¹ Harcourt then asked: ‘But you are aware of the fact that many people are opposed to your views and that normally when the NF marches, there are attempts to cause trouble?’²⁶² Verity replied by saying that the ‘ordinary man on the street’ did not oppose them, but opposition came from those on the left.²⁶³ This again suggested that any potential trouble would be the cause of those who opposed the march, rather than by the NF themselves. By interviewing Verity, ATV provided the NF with a platform on which to express their views, giving them a sense of legitimacy as a political party.

Following this, Harcourt interviewed Margaret Gracie of the Interracial Solidarity Group. She was asked why they decided to hold their counter demonstration at the same time as the NF march. She responded:

Our first objective was to have the march banned because in our view it’s an incitement of racial hatred. But since the National Front march seems to be going ahead, we want to give Leicester people the opportunity to demonstrate their opposition to racialism.²⁶⁴

Harcourt then said: ‘The National Front, you see, will claim the responsibility to avoid trouble is really yours, because they haven’t demonstrated when Asian workers have marched in Leicester’.²⁶⁵ Again, this gave the impression that the group was causing trouble. The concluding message of the report was that left wing demonstrators could use their demonstration ‘as a cover’ to disrupt the

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

NF's march.²⁶⁶ Whilst giving the appearance of being balanced, this report was more critical of the counter march than it was of the NF. Unlike ITN, which Gavin Schaffer argues 'tended to be overtly hostile', ATV allowed the NF to go unchallenged.²⁶⁷

The Rise of the NF in Leicester: The 1976 Local Elections

On a national level, the NF performed poorly in the 1974 General Election, with all fifty-four candidates losing their deposits.²⁶⁸ In East Leicester, one of their highest polling areas, the party received 7.4 per cent of the vote.²⁶⁹ Local elections, however, told a different story; despite the NF's support not growing notably in the 1975 local elections on a national level, Leicester's NF candidate, Anthony Reed Herbert, beat both the Conservative and Liberal candidates with 23 per cent of the vote in a council by-election.²⁷⁰ This indicates that support for the NF in Leicester was a response to local, rather than national issues. In 1976, at the height of their success, the NF achieved their best local election result in Leicester, where they contested all six wards and gained an average of 18 per cent of the vote.²⁷¹ This figure was even higher in some inner city wards, including Abbey Ward, in which the NF gained 29 per cent of the vote and came only sixty-one votes away from winning a council seat.²⁷² The level of popular support achieved in Leicester by a fascist organisation indicates the extent to which the party was able to draw upon local concerns about race.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Schaffer, *The Vision of a Nation*, 107.

²⁶⁸ Chris Cook, *History of British Elections Since 1689* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), 185.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Nigel Fielding, *The National Front* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1981), 17.

²⁷¹ Dancygier, *Immigration and Conflict in Europe*, 209.

²⁷² Ibid.

In the lead up to the 1976 local elections, the *Mercury* provided a platform for the NF. On 7 April an article reported that Leicester's NF claimed that the Interracial Solidarity Campaign's election leaflets were 'illegal and a smear campaign' that had been paid for with tax payers money.²⁷³ The following day, the newspaper printed the NF's announcement of 'the first six of the 48 candidates' that were to fight in Leicester's city council elections the following month, noting that this included four women.²⁷⁴ The article emphasised that they were all ordinary local people, describing Mrs Betty Calver as having been born in Leicester and living in the city 'all her life', Mrs Margaret Saunders as 'a Leicester housewife with five children', Miss Marilyn Taylor as 'a secretary at a local firm', and Mr Stan Carter as a local hairdresser who was born in Leicester and had three children.²⁷⁵

Three days before the election, an article described the NF's plans to support the sale of council houses and their manifesto promises relating to traffic and transport, with no mention of immigration.²⁷⁶ The following day, the newspaper reported that the party had received an 'excellent response to their canvassing' and were expecting a 'vastly increased vote compared with the last council elections'.²⁷⁷ The day before the election, the newspaper allowed the Labour, Conservative, Liberal, and NF parties each to 'have their say', presenting the NF

²⁷³ "Smear' Leaflets Illegal- Claim in National Front Election Fight,' *Leicester Mercury*, 7 April 1976, 15.

²⁷⁴ 'National Front Name First 6 of 48 Election Candidates,' *Leicester Mercury*, 8 April 1976, 29.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ 'Stop Spending on Prestige Projects- National Front,' *Leicester Mercury*, 3 May 1976, 21.

²⁷⁷ 'National Front Could Hold the Key to City Council Battle,' *Leicester Mercury*, 4 May 1976, 12.

as a legitimate political party.²⁷⁸ The NF's closing message was their promise to 'preserve the country and give hope for the future', a clear reference to immigration.²⁷⁹

Shortly after the election, ATV broadcast a report on the growing support for the NF in Leicester.²⁸⁰ It began with various shots of Leicester with a voice over from ATV's Reg Harcourt, who told the audience:

More than 14,000 people in Leicester voted for the National Front in the local elections three weeks ago. The right wing anti-immigrant organisation put up candidates for every seat on the District Council, and although it didn't actually win any, they got 18.5 per cent of the poll.²⁸¹

As he said this, the camera showed a quiet local park, where a white man sat on a bench. When Harcourt went on to discuss how 'Leicester's immigrant community is mainly Asian', the report showed an Asian family walking through the park.²⁸² He then said: 'and including the refugees from Uganda who settled in the city two years ago, it's now estimated at around 40,000, that's 20 per cent of the population'.²⁸³ A shot of a pavement filled with Asian women and children, who filled the frame, suggested that the arrival of large numbers of immigrants was physically impacting on the city. The focus here was primarily on the large number of children in the shot, fuelling concerns about the strain on local schools as well as the proliferation of immigrant communities.

²⁷⁸ 'The Parties Have Their Say,' *Leicester Mercury*, 5 May 1976, 12.

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

²⁸⁰ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'National Front in Leicester,' first broadcast on 26 May 1976, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-26051976-national-front-in-leicester

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ Ibid.

The report then went on to contrast the Highfield area of Leicester, which Harcourt told the audience was where the immigrants were concentrated, with what he described as ‘the council estates and the middle-class semis in the outer suburbs’: the predominantly white area in which the NF got the majority of support.²⁸⁴ The report showed two small white children and a dog running through a large green area in front of a street of houses. The camera then panned past a row of detached houses. The imagery used to represent these two areas of the city contrasted each other, creating the impression that large numbers of immigrants were causing overcrowding and the degradation of certain areas of Leicester



Shot of crowded Leicester street. MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, ‘National Front in Leicester,’ first broadcast on 26 May 1976, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-26051976-national-front-in-leicester

²⁸⁴ Ibid



Shot of Leicester suburbs. MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'National Front in Leicester,' first broadcast on 26 May 1976, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-26051976-national-front-in-leicester

Harcourt interviewed Conservative leader of the local council, Michael Cufflin, regarding the recent success of the NF in Leicester. Cufflin told him that he could 'well understand the situation' as there was 'very widespread concern about particularly immigration' within the city.²⁸⁵ He was asked if the result concerned him, to which he responded: 'I regard this very much as a protest vote and I'm sure that's exactly what it was', suggesting, as the *Mercury* did, that the concerns of Leicester's white community were not being properly acknowledged.²⁸⁶ He went on to suggest that all other major political parties must take the result into consideration and view it 'rather seriously', indicating his belief that not enough was being done by the mainstream parties about the

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

problem of immigration in Leicester and that the NF's success was a result of this.²⁸⁷

Harcourt also interviewed local Labour leader Reverend Ken Middleton, who also claimed that it was a protest vote, but attributed it to 'fear of the somewhat unknown, strange people surrounding folk in Leicester now'.²⁸⁸ He described the vote as being 'somewhat irrational', however he did not express any strong feelings against the NF or about their anti-immigrant message.²⁸⁹ Middleton was asked if there was any question of the Labour Party 'rethinking its policy on immigration'.²⁹⁰ He replied by saying that there was 'some justification for having a re-assessment of the situation'.²⁹¹ He was then asked if the subject of immigration had become 'taboo in the Labour Party', resulting in them becoming 'out of step' with their supporters.²⁹² He appeared defensive when answering this question, saying that it had never been taboo and had always been freely discussed, going on to say that he hoped this discussion would 'become deeper'.²⁹³ It is clear that he was very aware that being seen as too soft on immigration would lose the Labour Party votes in Leicester. Harcourt then interviewed Tara Mukherjee, founder of the Confederation of Indian Organisations, who began by saying that 'Leicester has the biggest concentration of Her Majesties coloured subjects' and that it was 'quite easy to

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Ibid.

play on people's fear'.²⁹⁴ He went on to say that 'blind adherence to nationalism, as prescribed by the NF, is a dangerous thing'.²⁹⁵ The fact that the Asian man was the only person to speak particularly critically of the NF provided an unbalanced view of the party.

Far more time was dedicated to interviewing local NF leader, Anthony Read Herbert, than any other interviewee. Harcourt described Herbert as a 'solicitor who joined the NF four years ago' also noting that 'he was once chairman of the South Leicester Young Conservatives and a member of the YC's National Committee', providing him with an element of credibility.²⁹⁶ Harcourt explained that their members included 'shopkeepers, municipal workers and lorry drivers' and that 'a third of them are women', again legitimising the party by showing their appeal to a broad range of 'ordinary' working-class people.²⁹⁷ Harcourt discussed the impact of the 'influx of Uganda Asians' and the Imperial Typewriter strike on their success, as footage from the 1974 demonstration march against the strike was shown, emphasising the existence of racial tension in Leicester.²⁹⁸

Harcourt asked Herbert what he thought the Labour party could learn from the success of the NF in Leicester, suggesting that the other political parties were at fault for failing to listen to the white community. Herbert replied:

I think the same lesson as both the Conservative and Liberal parties have to learn. That the people of Leicester, and I'm sure they're no different

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

from British people all over the country, are increasingly sick and tired of what is going on in Britain today.²⁹⁹

He went on to say that the three main parties had failed on all major issues and that if they wanted to remain in power they needed to 'trim their policies and their political philosophy, to accord more with what the people of Britain want'.³⁰⁰ Herbert was never challenged about accusations of racism in the party and the conversation was very relaxed.

Harcourt told the audience that the *Leicester Mercury* had 'reported reluctantly on the growth of the National Front in the city'.³⁰¹ He interviewed the editor, Neville Stack, who was asked about the newspaper's attitude towards the NF. Stack responded: 'we recognise it's a force in local politics, we recognise that our readers need to be told what's going on'.³⁰² He went on to say: 'the major parties have got to stand up and say where they stand'.³⁰³ Despite claiming that the newspaper opposed prejudice, Stack went on to suggest that the party were the only one standing up for Leicester's white community.

This ATV coverage, which showed the more respectable face of the NF by interviewing the party's middle-class local leader, was markedly different from their representation on ITV's current affairs programming, which offered a more in depth and critical analysis. An episode of ITV's *World in Action*, broadcast in the same year, opened with a shot of two white men sitting in a

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Ibid.

room in front of a Union Jack flag.³⁰⁴ The men were asked by reporter Geoffrey Seed why they had a picture of Adolf Hitler hanging on their wall, to which one of the men replied: 'Well, he had some good ideas. He wanted Germany to be for Germans and we want Britain for British, for the white, for English people.'³⁰⁵ Seed responded: 'He also believed in repatriation didn't he, and what did that lead to?', prompting them to say: 'Well, he took it a bit too far.'³⁰⁶ A voiceover then told the audience that the men were members of the National Party but also supported 'another racist organisation, the National Front', going on to say: 'As support for the extreme right wing political parties has grown, racial violence has increased.'³⁰⁷ Unlike ATV's coverage, which was uncritical and presented the NF as a legitimate political party, this programme presented the party and its members as violent fascists.

The success of the NF in Leicester in the 1976 local elections suggests that their triumph came as a response to local, as opposed to national issues surrounding immigration. Unlike ITN, ATV presented the NF as a viable alternative to the other political parties and allowed them to share their message to a mass audience, unchallenged. By the end of the 1970s the NF's support had rapidly declined across the country and in the May 1979 election the party gained only 1.3 per cent of the national vote.³⁰⁸ This was partially due to efforts of the media and opposition groups to expose their links to fascism.³⁰⁹ The shift of the

³⁰⁴ BFI Player, *World in Action*, 'The National Party,' first broadcast in 1976, <https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-the-national-party-1976-online>

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Copsey, *Contemporary British Fascism*, 19.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

Conservatives further to the right under Thatcher's leadership also helped the Conservative Party to gain back many of the voters they had lost to the NF during the decade.³¹⁰

By the end of the decade, ATV was becoming increasingly aware of the need to better represent the regions black and Asian community. This can be seen in ATV's application for the ITV contract for the East and West Midlands, written in May 1980, which discussed the aim of reflecting 'the needs and aspirations of the whole community', noting that 'relations between the broadcasters and socially disadvantaged groups' had been marked by mistrust.³¹¹ It went on to say that ATV did not intend to allow 'the strong individualism of specific areas within the region' to 'distort' its news judgment.³¹² There was a change in ATV's representation of the NF after 1980. Unlike earlier reports, which included interviews with local NF leaders, legitimising the party, ATV's reporting in the late 1970s and 1980s presented both the NF and the extreme left as equally violent and dangerous. After 1980, ATV's coverage of the NF was primarily reporting on marches being banned, with reports including interviews with representatives from local councils and police forces.³¹³ This was a reflection

³¹⁰ Ibid.

³¹¹ IBA Archives, Bournemouth, 61/1/C/1, 'Application by ATV Midlands for Independent Television Contract C East and West Midlands,' May 1980.

³¹² Ibid.

³¹³ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'National Front,' first broadcast on 18 August 1980, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-18081980-national-front-march; MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'National Front,' first broadcast on 18 March 1981, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-18031981-national-front; MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'National Front March Ban,' first broadcast on 8 August 1980, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-07081980-national-front-march-ban; MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'National Front Marches Banned,' first broadcast on 15 August 1980, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-15081980-national-front-marches-banned

both of changing public attitudes towards the NF as well as increased efforts by ATV to maintain better relations with black and Asian viewers.

Conclusion

The 1970s saw the rise of numerous NF local branches across the UK, including Leicester where they gained the largest vote in the country in 1976. The popularity of the NF within Leicester was clearly related to the city's high immigrant population, however this alone is not enough to explain why the NF were so popular in Leicester compared to other areas with high immigrant populations, such as Manchester.³¹⁴ This chapter has argued that, like in Smethwick and Wolverhampton during the previous decade, the local press continuously fuelled local concerns about race, depicting immigration as a direct threat to the local area. The *Mercury* also presented the NF as a viable political alternative to the mainstream political parties. ATV, influenced by Leicester's anti-immigrant local press, framed the presence of immigrants as a problem and presented the NF as the voice of the people of Leicester. Like in Smethwick and Wolverhampton, there are clear differences between representations of immigration and local anti-immigrant politicians in local and national press, emphasising the need to examine local media in order to understand public responses to the NF.

When many Ugandan Asians arrived into Leicester in 1974, facing the struggle to rapidly adapt to life in Britain, the focus of the *Mercury* and subsequently of ATV was the pressure placed on Leicester's already strained resources, most

³¹⁴ Troyna, *Public Awareness and the Media*, 15.

notably on education and housing. For example, the *Mercury* wrote about the size of the council house waiting list and made claims about the rise in rent prices.³¹⁵ The NF, assisted by the *Mercury*, exploited the arrival of Ugandan Asians in order to gain local support. The *Mercury* published letters and quotes from local NF leaders, making claims about the number of Ugandan Asians due to arrive into Leicester.³¹⁶ The *Mercury* also publicised a NF march against their arrival, presenting it as a peaceful demonstration.³¹⁷ As Eames notes, ATV covered their arrival in a similar way, emphasising the strain on local services, continuously asking if Leicester could 'cope' and framing their presence as a problem.³¹⁸

Another local race related event exploited by the NF was the 1974 Imperial Typewriter strike. The *Mercury* presented the strikers as violent and aggressive Asian men and emphasised the role of Bennie Bunsee, who was presented as an outsider and an agitator. During the strike, ATV visually depicted Asian men physically imposing on the streets of Leicester, picketing and marching, reinforcing local fears about the spread of violence and intimidation. Although many of the strikers were Asian women, the only Asian person to be interviewed by ATV was Bunsee. The *Mercury* publicised the NF's march against the strike, emphasising their right to free speech. ATV's coverage of the 1974 march created the impression that the NF was representing Leicester's white community and that the only threat of violence came from the Interracial Solidary Group's counter march.

³¹⁵ 'Can't Give Houses to Uganda Asians Says Head of Committee,' 23.

³¹⁶ 'Our Readers Views on the Uganda Situation,' 4.

³¹⁷ 'Anti-Immigrant March in Leicester Draws 600 People,' 5.

³¹⁸ Eames, 'ITV and the 1972 Ugandan Migration,' 453-469.

It is perhaps unsurprising then, that in 1976 an 'ex-Labour' member of Leicester's white community saw their vote for the NF as a peaceful political protest. Throughout the decade, the NF, aided by the *Mercury* and ATV, were able to exploit local concerns about immigration and position themselves as a viable alternative to mainstream political parties that did not care about the needs of the 'ordinary' white person in Leicester. The role played by local and regional media in the shaping of public responses to immigration and to the NF in Leicester throughout the decade is evident, going some way to explaining the uneven development of racial tension and rise of NF support throughout the country during the 1970s. This level of support was not, however, maintained in Leicester during the following decade. This was due in part to ATV's increased awareness of the need to better represent the Midlands' black and Asian communities, resulting in a more negative representation of the NF. The extent to which ATV, which changed its name to Central Independent Television in 1982, succeeded in its aims of representing black communities during the 1980s will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Four

Here and Now: Regional Multiracial Programming and Representations of the 1985 Handsworth Riots

Introduction

When rioting broke out in Handsworth on 10 September 1985, the initial reaction from many, both within and outside of Handsworth, was shock. Many questioned how this could happen in a place like Handsworth, which only the day before had been home to a 'happy, jolly and peaceful' carnival, celebrating the diversity of cultures in its population.¹ However, one did not need to look far beneath this happy exterior to reveal the issues faced by Handsworth's black community. By the 1980s, concerns no longer focused primarily on immigration into Britain, but increasingly on black communities within the UK, which came to be perceived as 'the enemy within'.² This chapter will examine ATV's (Central after 1982) representation of the black community in the years preceding, and immediately following the 1985 riots, in order to gain a greater understanding of the programme's representation of black culture during this period. In addition to looking at ATV's regional news programming in the 1980s, this chapter will also explore the representation of the black community on a different programme produced by ATV (Central after 1982): *Here and Now*, a weekly twenty-five-minute long ethnic minority arts and culture television magazine, the only show of this kind at a regional level to run throughout the decade. It will argue that *Here and Now* differed significantly to *Central News*

¹ Wolfson Centre for Archival Research, Birmingham, MS 2192/C/D, Julius Silverman, 'Independent Inquiry into the Handsworth Disturbances,' September 1986.

² John Solomos, *Black Youth, Racism and the State: The Politics of Ideology and Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 43.

and Birmingham's local press in that it provided a far more negative representation of the police and a more sympathetic view of the black community. *Here and Now* is a unique example of a form of regional media that aimed to allow communities to tell their own stories, have their voices heard, and to provide an image of ethnic minorities that contested the negative representations given in other forms of regional media. This openly challenged ATV's white gaze and disrupted white hegemony amongst audiences.

As the previous three chapters have shown, the majority of ATV's broadcasting during the 1960s and 1970s was primarily aimed at a white audience and represented the presence of immigrants as problematic. It ignored the contribution of immigrants to British society, showing black and Asian culture as strange, exotic and often incompatible with the British way of life, and generally focused on their negative impact on issues such as housing, crime, and employment. The presence and contribution of black people to British history and society was also rarely acknowledged. During the 1985 riots, black youths were depicted as violent criminals, with sexualised language such as 'orgy of violence' used in reports. Asian businessmen, on the other hand, were presented as innocent victims, creating divisions between the two communities, which fell along class as well as racial lines. For example, one Asian shop owner told a Central (formerly ATV) reporter: 'it's just that they know we got the money, that's why they're going after our shops'.³ Birmingham's local press, the *Birmingham Mail* and the *Birmingham Post*, which, like the *Smethwick*

³ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Central News*, 'Handsworth Riots,' first broadcast on 10 October 1985, www.macearchive.org/films/central-news-10091985-handsworth-riot

Telephone, were part of the Birmingham Post and Mail group Ltd, owned by the Conservative Iliffe family, represented the riots in a similar way. Like ATV, they highlighted the criminality of the rioters, representing the rioters as solely West Indian men, and failing to draw connections between social depravation, racial discrimination and rioting.⁴

Here and Now's introduction coincided with the rise of 'multiculturalism' in Britain, a phrase which originated in the early 1970s as a response to the existence of cultural differences in Britain.⁵ Stuart Hall described 'multiculturalism' as 'the strategies and policies adopted to govern or manage the problems of diversity and multiplicity which multicultural societies throw up'.⁶ During the late 1970s and 1980s there was a new emphasis on multiculturalism as black and Asian people came to be perceived by the Conservative government no longer simply as immigrants, but as a permanent feature in Britain's electorate.⁷ In an effort to win support, the Conservative party attempted to construct a new vision of the nation that included black and Asian people, but required them to abandon the features which made them culturally distinct.⁸ For example, a 1983 Conservative advert had the line: 'Labour say's he's black, Tories say he's British' along with an image of a black or Asian man wearing a suit.⁹ This suggestion that a person could be defined

⁴ Birmingham Library, 'City Mobs Run Riot,' *Birmingham Post*, 10 September 1985, 1; Birmingham Library, 'Riot of Death,' *Birmingham Evening Mail*, 10 September 1985, 1.

⁵ Barnor Hesse, 'Introduction: Un/Settled Multiculturalisms,' in *Un/Settled Multiculturalisms: Diasporas, Entanglements, "Transruptions"*, ed. Barnor Hesse (London: Zed Books, 2000), 7.

⁶ Stuart Hall, 'Conclusion: The Multi-Cultural Question,' in *Un/Settled Multiculturalisms: Diasporas, Entanglements, "Transruptions"*, ed. Barnor Hesse (London: Zed Books, 2000), 209.

⁷ Matthew Francis, 'Mrs Thatcher's Peacock Blue Sari: Ethnic Minorities, Electoral Politics and the Conservative Party, c. 1974-86,' *Contemporary British History* 21, no.2 (2017): 287.

⁸ *Ibid*, 276.

⁹ *Ibid*, 276.

'more by their "orientation towards capital" than their race' was reflective of Conservative emphasis on private enterprise and their assertion that entrepreneurship and aspiration were common features of both Conservatives and ethnic minorities. This particularly applied to British Asians; Conservative politicians, including Thatcher, often emphasised that Asians were hard working and often owned businesses and homes.¹⁰ This was reflected in media coverage during the 1980s, which often underlined the dichotomies between aspirational Asian businessmen and 'violent' black youth.

Multiculturalism met with criticism from those who saw it as 'a well meaning but ultimately vacuous approval of cultural difference' and an ineffective way of combating racial discrimination.¹¹ It was attacked by the right, who saw the acceptance of alien cultures as a threat to the British way of life.¹² Reports about multiculturalism in education in the national press during the 1980s reflected these fears. For example, an article in *The Times*, published in February 1983, quoted a Sociology Professor from the University of Bristol as saying: "Multicultural' education suggests discussion about culture and implies that children ought to follow their ancestors way', in other words, multiculturalism was viewed as a barrier to assimilation.¹³ Similarly, an article published in the *Daily Mail* in 1981, stressed the need for 'immigrant children' to 'absorb as much English culture as possible so as to be fitted to succeed in an overwhelmingly English cultural environment'.¹⁴ On the other hand,

¹⁰ Ibid, 284.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Avtaha Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (London: Routledge, 1996), 227.

¹³ Lucy Hodges, 'Ideology of 'Racism' Questioned,' *The Times*, 26 February 1983, 4.

¹⁴ 'A Useless Report,' *Daily Mail*, 18 June 1981, 6.

multiculturalism was seen as problematic for contrasting reasons by left-wing anti-racists, who saw it as a 'dangerous distraction to the anti-racist struggle', or as superficial and tokenistic, summarised by 'saris, samosas, and steel bands'.¹⁵

The 1980s not only saw an emphasis on multiculturalism from the government, but also by British broadcasters, who were becoming increasingly aware of the need to better represent black and Asian audiences. Before the 1980s, ITV had approached multiculturalism through racial sitcoms.¹⁶ As Schaffer notes, comedy provided a space for discussion about topics about which we were 'unsure, bashful or ashamed'; it provided an outlet for concerns about immigration, which could be defended by the phrase 'only joking'.¹⁷ During the 1970s, however, changing attitudes towards race resulted in increasing criticism of racial sitcoms from race relations organisations and by the 1980s it was widely acknowledged that this kind of programming was offensive.¹⁸ Sarita Malik describes the 1980s as a time of 'important breakthrough in terms of accessing the black voice' as black representation was 'placed on the agendas of British broadcasting agencies' for the first time.¹⁹ In 1982, Channel Four was introduced with the intention of including black and Asian perspectives, indicating that the other national channels had failed to do so adequately up to this point.²⁰

¹⁵ Hesse, 'Introduction,' 9; Elizabeth Buettner, "'Going for an Indian": South Asian Restaurants and the Limits of Multiculturalism,' *The Journal of Modern History* 80, no. 3 (2008): 867.

¹⁶ Gavin Schaffer, *The Vision of a Nation: Making Multiculturalism on British Television* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 178.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 182.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 216-218.

¹⁹ Sarita Malik, *Representing Black Britain: Black and Asian Images on Television* (London: SAGE, 2002), 56.

²⁰ Wadsworth, 'Racism in Broadcasting,' 38.

By the 1980s, ITV was keen to use its regional services to meet the specific needs of local audiences and to reflect the multi-racial community in their programming.²¹ Broadcasting to a region with such a high immigrant population, by the 1980s ATV was aware that it had to make some acknowledgement of multiculturalism, something it was failing to do through its other regional programming. In an interview conducted in 2002 by John Wallace with Claire Mulholland, the IBA's regional officer from 1977 to 1982, Mulholland remembered criticising ATV for its failure to reflect the region's multi-racial community.²² This type of criticism may have occurred during the early 1980s as a response to fears that black people who did not feel accepted in their local communities had the potential to become a threat to society. These fears were reinforced by Lord Scarman's report on the 1981 Brixton riots, which warned of the impact of negative press representations of the black community.²³ The result of this criticism was *Here and Now*.

Here and Now was one of very few programmes of this kind broadcast at a regional level, and the only programme of its kind to run throughout the decade, demonstrating its significance and highlighting how local media responded to the needs of specific regions. ITV's regional channel for London, London Weekend Television (LWT), which also had large numbers of potential black and Asian viewers, broadcast a six part series called 'Babylon' in 1979, targeting

²¹ IBA Archives, Bournemouth, 61/1/C/1, 'Minutes of a Meeting with ATV Network on Local Interest/Origination Contractual Requirement,' 29 May 1981.

²² Frances Eames, 'Normative Narratives: Everyday Identity in Regional Television News, 1960-1990' (Unpublished PhD Thesis: University of Nottingham, 2009), 180; John Wallace, 'A Sense of Region? Independent Television in the Midlands, 1950-2000' (Unpublished PhD Thesis: University of Leicester, 2004), 2.

²³ The National Archives, Kew, BL 2/1993, 'Lord Scarman's Report of the Brixton Disorders,' 1981.

a black audience.²⁴ LWT also produced a series of thirty-minute documentaries called 'Skin' in 1980, which targeted a black and Asian audience but also intended to 'appeal to the interests and concerns of white audiences' sparking criticism that it was 'about, but not for, black communities'.²⁵

Here and Now, on the other hand, was made by black and Asian people, for black and Asian viewers. It was produced by Zia Mohyeddin, a Pakistani born actor and director who had been famous for his work on Pakistani TV.²⁶ Mohyeddin had previously trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in London, from 1953 to 1956, and had had roles in various stage productions including 'A Passage to India' (1960).²⁷ Unlike *ATV Today* (*Central News* after 1982), *Here and Now* had black, white and Asian reporters, representing the multi-ethnic character of the Midlands. This included: Indian born Mita Hackett, who worked as a journalist and TV presenter with the BBC, Central and Europa TV and went on to become a news producer with Reuters TV until 1992; St Vincent born reporter, Vera Gilbert, who went on to work on as a television presenter for Central during the 1990s; and London born actor, Hilary Minster, who was famous for his role in the BBC sitcom *Allo 'Allo!* from 1984 to 1992.²⁸ After presenting *Here and Now*, Paula Ahluwalia continued to work for Central on the five-part documentary 'Spice', broadcast in 1990, alongside Vera Gilbert and Zia

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Jim Pines. *Black and White in Colour: Black People in British Television Since 1936* (London: BFI Publishing, 1992), 70.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ 'Mita Hackett,' Artists and Illustrators, accessed 1 June 2017, www.artistsandillustrators.co.uk/mita-hackett; *Central News East*, first broadcast 1994, Youtube, accessed 3 January 2017, www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4SWC_Dn-io; Garry Berman, *Best of the Britcoms: From Faulty Towers to The Office* (Plymouth: Taylor Trade Publishing, 2011), 62.

Moyeddin.²⁹ Black presenter, Peter Emina, went on to direct numerous documentaries including 'After the Riots', broadcast on Central in 1986, A 'Child is Dead' (1988), and 'Selling Socialism' (1990).³⁰

Having an Asian producer and black and Asian reporters meant that, unlike *ATV Today* and later *Central News*, which offered a wholly white perspective on immigration, *Here and Now* was able to offer something which was created by black and Asian people, specifically for black and Asian people. This is an instance in which a black and Asian team successfully created their own media output, which aimed to allow communities to tell their own stories, have their voices heard and provide an image which contested the negative representations given in other forms of local media. *Here and Now* offered a perspective that spoke directly to the black and Asian communities in the Midlands, including cities such as Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Leicester with large immigrant populations. At the beginning of the 1980s, Leicester and Wolverhampton both had black and Asian populations of around 15 per cent and in inner city areas such as Handsworth this figure was as high as around 50 per cent.³¹

Here and Now focused on the issues that mattered to black and Asian viewers as well as showcasing inspirational and positive aspects of their culture. The show

²⁹Paula Ahluwalia,' British Film Institute, accessed 1 June 2017, www.bfi.org.uk/films-tv-people/4ce2b823b5d15

³⁰ 'Peter Emina,' British Film Institute, accessed 5 July 2016, www.bfi.org.uk/films-tv-people/4ce2ba7c482c7

³¹ Stephen Butt, *Leicester in the 1970s: Ten Years that Changed the City* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing Limited, 2015), 69; Frank Reeves, *Race and Borough Politics* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1989), 1; John Brown, *Shades of Grey: Police West Indian Relations in Handsworth* (Cranfield: Cranfield Institute of Technology, 1977), 7.

concentrated on both black and Asian communities, however this chapter will focus specifically on representations of the black community in the lead up to, and directly following the 1985 Handsworth riots. The riots represent a point that emphasises how *Here and Now* was able to provide an alternative image of the black community to that which was given in other forms of regional media, such as *ATV Today* and *Central News*. *Here and Now* offered a departure from the representation of black people as either criminals or as victims and demonstrates the agency, albeit limited, of black and minority ethnic populations within regional programming. *Here and Now* also included some items on more serious political topics affecting the black community in Handsworth and other Midlands cities, such as unemployment and policing. By focusing on these issues, as well as positive aspects of black culture, *Here and Now* provided a more realistic representation of the black experience. This marked a departure from the 'large helpings of light entertainment and trivial news coverage', criticised by Marc Wadsworth in an essay published in an edited collection from the seminar 'Employment Prospects for Black People in the Media', which took place in 1988, for giving black culture a 'middle-class gloss'.³²

Between 1980 and 1990, *Here and Now* broadcast a total of 314 programmes on a weekly basis. Appendix five shows the range of topics explored on *Here and Now* between 1980 and 1985, the period of this chapter's focus. Appendix six shows the topics covered between 1986 and 1990. The primary focus of the

³² Marc Wadsworth, 'Racism in Broadcasting,' in *Black People and the Media: Equality in Employment and Training: Policies and Practice*, ed. Joe Harte (Warwick: London Borough of Lewisham and the Commission for Racial Equality, 1988), 39.

show was on arts and culture; musical performances were featured in over half of the shows and other popular topics included dance performances, film and cinema, sports, food, arts and crafts, and poetry. Appendix six suggests that this focus did not change significantly throughout the ten-year period and more serious political issues such as unemployment, police, and immigration law were never common features in the show. Instead programme makers preferred to focus on positive images of black and Asian communities rather than current affairs. This study will examine items with a focus on black arts and culture as well as numerous items that look at the more 'serious' issues of unemployment and institutional racism in the police, and probation services. Whilst appendices five and six suggest that the programme's key focus was on arts and culture, the items that diverge from this focus are revealing of how the programme makers' attitudes towards race differed from those of *Central News*.

The question of audience is important when examining *Here and Now*; whilst on rare occasions, the show appears to have been directed at a white audience, the programme appears to generally have targeted black and Asian viewers. In a meeting of the ATV network regarding local interests, which took place in 1981, it was acknowledged that 'whites had shown an interest in the series', indicating that there was some interest from the white community, but that this was not their target demographic.³³ Rather than trying to expand their usual target audience through *Here and Now*, ATV appealed to a separate audience altogether. The rare moments in which the show does appear to aim its content

³³ IBA Archives, Bournemouth, 61/1/C/1, 'Minutes of a Meeting with ATV Network on Local Interest/ Orientation Contractual Requirement,' 29 May 1981.

at a white audience illuminate this further by appearing out of step with the rest of the programme. These moments tended to take place when white reporter, Hilary Minster, conducted interviews from a white perspective, prompting interviewees to explain things that the black and Asian community would already have understand or been aware of.

The impact of *Here and Now* must not be overstated. The show was broadcast on Thursdays at 10.30pm until 1982, when this changed to Sunday afternoons at 1.30pm.³⁴ Neither of these broadcasting times fell within prime time viewing hours and this was reflected in the show's audience figures. *Here and Now* had an average audience estimated at 65,000, an extremely small figure in comparison with that of *Central News*, which was broadcast Monday to Friday at the more popular time of 6 to 7pm and regularly attracted an audience of over 1.5 million.³⁵ Similarly, *Here and Now's* special episode investigating the Handsworth riots attracted an audience of 190,000 in comparison with the 496,000 viewers attracted by *Central Weekend's* special, broadcast at the more popular viewing time of 10.30pm on a Friday evening.³⁶ BBC *Viewpoint's* special episode attracted an audience of around 405,000, despite being broadcast at 10.30pm on a Tuesday evening.³⁷ As Anamik Saha notes in her work on the scheduling of minority programming, the securing of prime time slots was based on what programmes were considered to be 'mainstream' and 'niche',

³⁴ 'Regional TV,' *The Times*, 29 January 1981, 27; 'Television and Radio: Saturday and Sunday,' *The Times*, 9 January 1982, 23.

³⁵ Simon Cottle, *TV News, Urban Conflict and the Inner City* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1993), 40; Peter Dear, 'Today's Television and Radio Programmes,' *The Times*, 4 January 1982, 19.

³⁶ Cottle, *TV News, Urban Conflict and the Inner City*, 203.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

with 'niche' being associated with programmes targeted at black and Asian viewers.³⁸ Success was measured by an ability to 'cross over into the white, mainstream market'.³⁹ This, Saha argues, had a negative impact on minority programming.⁴⁰ Nonetheless, *Here and Now* provides an important example of how forms of regional media could operate differently, depending on their purpose and intended audience. This shows us that alternative voices within regional media were, at times, able to push back against racist reporting if they had sufficient access to platforms of production.

Handsworth: Crime and Unemployment

Handsworth, an inner city area on the outskirts of Birmingham, was an economically deprived area with a high unemployment rate and a large black and Asian population. In 1977, its rows of boarded up houses were described as being 'like bad teeth' by a local police officer.⁴¹ In the same year, the Central Statistical Office in Birmingham estimated that the total population of Handsworth was 48,000, including 12,400 Asians, 5,400 of which were British born, and 12,700 West Indians, 5,700 of which were British born.⁴² John Brown wrote in *Shades of Grey*, his 1977 study on the relationship between black people and the police in Handsworth, that these figures did 'not adequately reflect either the density of the local West Indian youth population or the fact that the majority of these youths are of Jamaican origin or descent'.⁴³ The

³⁸ Anamik Saha, 'Scheduling Race,' in *Adjusting the Contrast: British Television and Constructs of Race*, ed. Sarita Malik and Darrell Newton (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 59.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁴¹ Brown, *Shades of Grey*, 7.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

growing number of black people in inner city areas such as Handsworth meant that they were able to form communities, creating a stronger sense of confidence, and forge collective identities which often rejected white British culture.⁴⁴

The 1980s saw a rise in conflict between police and black communities in Britain, particularly in inner-city areas such as Handsworth.⁴⁵ It was during the 1970s and 1980s that black youth became associated with violent crime and the decline of British society.⁴⁶ John Solomos wrote that 'the construction of the question of mugging and black youth during the early 1970s represents the clearest example of how the politicisation of the issue came about'.⁴⁷ Violence was seen as a result of differing ideas about what constituted fun; the idea that black youths found fun in destructive behaviour was linked to conceptions of black culture as being primitive and aggressive.⁴⁸ This was reflected in press coverage of the 1985 riots, for example *The Sun* described the riots as 'tribal' and the *Daily Express* described 'Zulu style war cries'.⁴⁹ This equation of black youth with violent crimes worked to delegitimise any grievances they felt about police brutality and institutionalised racism.⁵⁰ During the decade, there were riots across the country, in areas such as Brixton, Tottenham, and Handsworth,

⁴⁴ Henry I. Beresford, 'The Growth of Corporate Black Identity Among Afro-Caribbean People in Birmingham, England' (Unpublished PhD Thesis: University of Warwick, 1982), 2.

⁴⁵ Roger Graef, *Talking Blues: The Police in Their Own Words* (London: HarperCollins, 1990).

⁴⁶ Solomos, *Black Youth, Racism and the State*, 155.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 99.

⁴⁸ Jed Fazakarley, 'Racisms 'Old' and 'New' at Handsworth, 1985,' *University of Sussex Journal* 13 (2010): 6.

⁴⁹ John Gaffney, *Interpretations of Violence: The Handsworth Riots of 1985* (Warwick: Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, 1987), 8.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 112.

all of which had large and visible black communities.⁵¹ These outbreaks of riots in inner city areas only served to reinforce the narrative that the black community were violent criminals.⁵²

Nineteen year old Angela was interviewed in 1978 by Claire Short, for 'Talking Blues', a collection of interviews with the black community regarding their relationship with the police, published by the Handsworth-based organisation, All Faiths for One Race, and made available online by the Birmingham Black Oral History Project (BBOHP), a project based in Handsworth.⁵³ She described the difficult relationship between the police and the black community that arose from their different experiences: 'they don't know anything about us and we don't know nothing about them'.⁵⁴ Short's interviews also indicate that black youth felt that the press was not properly representing the situation, but instead giving a white perspective: 'Every time you read the newspaper a policeman get beat up by black people. They only telling one side of the story, which is the white man's side.'⁵⁵ 'Mr A', a parent of two black children, said during his interview for 'Talking Blues': 'It is becoming very difficult to even sleep at nights, without being afraid of a knock on the door or to even a telephone call to say that your son is in jail, or your daughter has been picked up at some youth club.'⁵⁶ As these interviews suggest, local media represented the relationship between the black community of Handsworth and the police from a

⁵¹ Graef, *Talking Blues: The Police in Their Own Words*.

⁵² William E. Nelson and Gideon Ben-Tovim, 'Race, Class, Equal Opportunity Policies, and Local Government: The Case of Liverpool,' in *Race and Ethnicity in Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Georgia Anne Persons (Piscataway, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1999), 58.

⁵³ Claire Short, 'Talking Blues: The Black Community Speaks about its Relationship with the Police,' BBOHP, accessed 3 August 2016, <http://www.bbohp.org.uk/node/30>.

⁵⁴ Short, 'Talking Blues,' 10.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 27.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 32.

white perspective, portraying black youths as criminals and the police as heroes. For example, a 1976 *ATV Today* report described the police as having 'their work cut out trying to maintain good public relations in Handsworth', noting a 'recent flair up in Handsworth in which a constable was injured' which reporter Reg Harcourt claimed did 'not make things any easier'.⁵⁷

Here and Now, however, offered a perspective that was far more sympathetic towards the black community and critical of the police. This is an example of how *Here and Now* challenged *ATV*'s white gaze by bringing issues to attention and making them part of the discourse. Episode 148 of *Here and Now*, which examined the 1984 Police and Criminal Evidence Bill, was broadcast in 1985, four years after Lord Scarman's report on the 1981 riots across the country and shortly before the 1985 riots in Handsworth, a time when tensions between the black community and the police were increasingly high.⁵⁸ In the studio, reporter Mita Hackett interviewed Mark Phillips of the Handsworth Law Centre, regarding the new Police and Criminal Evidence Bill. Hackett asked Phillips to explain the new 'stop and search business', challenging him on new powers given to the police. Phillips told her: 'the powers of the police to stop and search people ought to be made much clearer than they are at the moment and they ought to be extended', so that the police could stop and search somebody on 'reasonable suspicion that they possess an offensive weapon'.⁵⁹ Hackett questioned this with an interrogative tone, asking: 'what exactly is an offensive

⁵⁷ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Unemployment Crisis for Birmingham West Indian School Leavers,' first broadcast on 23 February 1976, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-23021976-unemployment-crisis-for-birmingham-west-indian-school-leavers

⁵⁸ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Programme 148,' first broadcast on 13 January 1985, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-programme-148

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

weapon?', indicating her opposition to the new powers.⁶⁰ The overall message of the interview was that increased police power could lead to further racial discrimination. This was then reinforced by Hackett's interview with Cecil Gutzmore, secretary of the National Campaign Against the Police Bill, which also took place in the studio. Although Hackett interviewed two people, who gave two different perspectives of the Bill, the tone of the report provided a wholly negative representation of the Bill and of the police.

The Bill was also criticised by national news and current affairs programming. For example, an episode of BBC *Panorama* described the Bill as allowing 'excessive force' and ITN interviewed Barbara Cohen from the National Council for Civil Liberties, who said that it increased police power without providing effective safeguard'.⁶¹ Unlike *Here and Now*, however, the national media also provided an alternative viewpoint. For example, ITN also interviewed Tony Judge, editor of *Police and Federation* magazine, who claimed that there would be no increase in police powers without 'a corresponding safeguard for the citizen'.⁶² This suggests that unlike *Here and Now*, national news producers felt it necessary to remain balanced in their reporting of the Bill.

Here and Now also explored the need for more awareness of cultural differences within the probation services and the distrust of magistrates and probation

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ BBC Motion Gallery, *Panorama*, 'The Police Bill: Excessive Force,' first broadcast on 2 July 1984, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/BBC_LCAP427H; ITN Archive, *ITN*, 'Police and Criminal Evidence Bill,' first broadcast on 29 October 1984, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/803432584; ITN Archive, *ITN*, 'Police Powers,' first broadcast on 10 October 1983, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/813019620

⁶² *ITN*, 'Police Powers.'

officers felt by the black community in the West Midlands.⁶³ During the 1970s, there was an increasing awareness of the issues within the probation services, particularly in relation to black communities.⁶⁴ The Handsworth Alternative Scheme, which began in 1979, aimed to present black offenders in a more positive light in court through a consideration of their cultural differences.⁶⁵ On 4 July 1982, *Here and Now* broadcast an item discussing the importance of having ethnic advisors in the probation services.⁶⁶ A white woman, who was interviewed at her desk by reporter, Paula Ahluwalia, claimed that she was the only ethnic advisor currently working in the probation services in the West Midlands, indicating that the probation services did not meet the needs of the region's large black and Asian community. She discussed the 'mood of young people due to unemployment and racial discrimination', suggesting that this may result in increased crime amongst the black community.⁶⁷ Whilst presenting black youths as a potential problem group needing special attention, this report emphasised that this was the result of racial discrimination, unemployment and a lack of understanding of cultural difference. A white magistrate, interviewed in his office, told Ahluwalia that it was easy for magistrates to be unaware of their 'unconscious prejudice absorbed through education' and that as a result of this 'a black offender in a system 99 per cent organised by white people is bound to find himself at a special disadvantage'.⁶⁸

⁶³ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Programme 54,' first broadcast on 4 July 1985.

⁶⁴ Maurice Vanstone, 'Creative Work: a Historical Perspective,' in *What Else Works: Creative Work with Offenders*, ed. Jo Brayford, Francis Cowe and John Deering (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 22.

⁶⁵ National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, 'The Handsworth Alternative Scheme,' accessed 10 August 2016, <http://www.merrisecrooks.com/wp-content/storage/2011/10/hasdoc.pdf>

⁶⁶ *Here and Now*, 'Programme 54.'

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

This interview suggested that the current system was unfairly unbalanced against black people, thus giving a more sympathetic view of black offenders than *ATV Today*.

Another crisis facing the black community in Britain, particularly in inner city areas such as Handsworth, was unemployment. By the late 1970s, male unemployment rates were as high as 50 per cent in some areas of the UK.⁶⁹ Between 1979 and 1981, unemployment rose from 4.9 per cent to 11.6 per cent.⁷⁰ Unemployment was particularly high amongst black youths in inner city areas; Silverman wrote in his inquiry into the 1985 riots that 'the prospects for the black school leaver are very dim indeed'.⁷¹ When, in 1968, the Select Committee on Race Relations was introduced, one of the key focuses of its first inquiry was 'coloured school leavers'.⁷² The reason given for this was that if young people were not provided with fair opportunities at this stage of their lives, it was unlikely that they would get fair opportunities later on.⁷³ Racial discrimination clearly had a significant impact on the development of black youths. A survey carried out by the Policy Studies Institute between 1984 and 1985 found that 'over one third of employers discriminated against the black applicant'.⁷⁴ In an interview for 'Talking Blues', an interviewee named Peter described how he felt about the situation: 'I want to work, but dem do not want to let me work. Dem say I don't want to work but me tell dem say me want to

⁶⁹ Silverman, 'Independent Inquiry into the Handsworth Disturbances,' 19.

⁷⁰ John E Roemer, Woojin Lee and Karine Van Der Straeten, *Racism, Xenophobia, and Distribution: Multi-Issue Politics in Advanced Democracies* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2007), 157.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, 27.

⁷² Solomos, *Black Youth, Racism and the State*, 53.

⁷³ *Ibid*.

⁷⁴ Silverman, 'Independent Inquiry into the Handsworth Disturbances,' 145.

work but dem na give me nothing.'⁷⁵ This lack of employment contributed to the feeling of being an outsider, as demonstrated by Peter's perception that jobs were for 'white people not for black people.'⁷⁶

Mrs M, mother of a black son, expressed the view that the shortage of job opportunities for black youths was the cause of their conflict with the police, as the lack of alternative sources of income encouraged her son to turn to drug dealing.⁷⁷ Similarly, Muhammad, an Asian man who helped out at a youth club, described how unemployment caused West Indian youths to develop bad habits.⁷⁸ David, a young West Indian man said: 'they force I fi hate dem, by forcing I to steal, by forcing I to use violence, by forcing I to commit all sort of 'ism.'⁷⁹ Silverman noted this in his inquiry into the Handsworth riots:

It [unemployment] creates crime. It facilitates the drug-pusher, who finds it an easier way to make a living. Mass unemployment is the greatest obscenity of our industrial area.⁸⁰

When ATV reported on the unemployment problem amongst black youths in Handsworth, their reporting was sympathetic towards black unemployed teenagers, but gave the impression that racial discrimination in employment was not something that definitely existed. For example, Harcourt asked a young black man: 'It's because of your colour is it? That's the only reason? Why do you say that?'.⁸¹ National current affairs programming provided a more sympathetic view of black unemployment. *Once in a Lifetime: A Way Out of Walsall*, a

⁷⁵ Short, 'Talking Blues,' 25.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 10.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 26.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 26.

⁸⁰ Silverman, 'Independent Inquiry into the Handsworth Disturbances,' 89.

⁸¹ *ATV Today*, 'Unemployment Crisis for Birmingham West Indian School Leavers.'

programme broadcast on ITV in May 1985 which examined youth unemployment in the West Midlands town, stated: 'your slender chance of a job in Walsall diminishes if you happen to be black'.⁸² It went on, however, to suggest that many black unemployed youngsters developed an 'inward looking interest in their West Indian heritage' and turned to theft and drug dealing to make money.⁸³ A 1985 episode of BBC's *Panorama*, which examined relations between the police and the black community in Liverpool, emphasised racial tension and showed the black community in a sympathetic light.⁸⁴ Like ATV, however, the programme emphasised that black children were failing to perform well at school and went on to associate black youths with violent crime.⁸⁵

Here and Now, on the other hand, presented racial discrimination in employment as something that was certainly taking place. On 23 July 1981, *Here and Now* included a report on the issue of unemployment amongst young black and Asian people in Nottingham, another area of high unemployment.⁸⁶ The report began with shots of Nottingham's Job Centre, with the song 'get a job' by Birmingham ska band, The Beat, who were known for their protest songs. These opening shots established the issue of unemployment in inner city areas. Later in the report the song 'get a job' was played again while shots of black and Asian youngsters on the streets of Nottingham were shown, showcasing the multi-

⁸² ITV Archive, *ITV*, 'Once in a Lifetime: A Way out of Walsall,' first broadcast on 26 May 1985, www.itvarchive.com/Production/Y/1241/0022/

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ BBC Motion Gallery, *Panorama*, 'Voices from the Ghetto,' first broadcast on 25 October 1985, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/BBC_LCAP548K

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Black Unemployment,' first broadcast on 23 July 1981, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-23071981-black-unemployment

racial character of the city. Reporter Paula Alhuwalia told viewers that ‘ many black youngsters are discovering you can’t beat the recession by getting qualifications’.⁸⁷ A young black girl, spoken to on the street, told her: ‘I have a couple of O levels, four CSEs and a secretarial diploma’, and a young black man said: ‘since I left comprehensive school, I left with six CSEs and one O level and following that I went to Beeston College where I spent three years taking a tech diploma course in electronics’.⁸⁸ This contradicted ATV’s suggestion during the previous decade that it was a lack of qualifications or failure to succeed in the British education system that was causing the unemployment issue.⁸⁹

Later in the report Ahluwalia told the audience: ‘There’s another barrier facing only black youngsters, which pushes their chances of success even further out of reach: racial discrimination.’⁹⁰ Rather than questioning whether racial discrimination existed in employment and offering alternative reasons for high unemployment amongst black youth, this report explicitly stated that discrimination was taking place. Ahluwalia interviewed a white representative from the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), who was asked why so many employers continued to discriminate. He replied: ‘you say employers, that’s a pretty broad statement, it is employees probably, within the companies’.⁹¹ He attempted to downplay the issue, going on to say: ‘but at the end of the day, I mean really what we’re talking about are changing attitudes, winning hearts

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ *ATV Today*, ‘Handsworth Unemployment.’

⁹⁰ *Here and Now*, ‘Black Unemployment.’

⁹¹ Ibid.

and minds'.⁹² Ahluwalia mocked this statement, saying to the audience: 'So the CBI says it's a question of winning hearts and minds. But where does that leave unemployed black youngsters in the meantime?'.⁹³ Overall, the report gave a very sympathetic view of black unemployment, suggesting that more needed to be done by the government and employers to combat racial discrimination and challenging the view that black youths were lazy.

Here and Now represented issues around black crime and unemployment more sympathetically than *ATV* and *Central's* news programmes. The Police and Criminal Evidence Bill was represented in a negative light, focusing on the impact of increased police powers on the black community in Handsworth. Similarly, the probation and criminal justice service was represented as operating unfairly in regards to black offenders, due to a lack of understanding of their cultural differences, as well as unconscious prejudice on the part of white magistrates. Unlike *ATV Today* and *Central News*, which presented the possibility of racial discrimination in employment as something that was open to debate, *Here and Now* suggested that employers certainly discriminated against black youths and that white news reporters failed to understand the severity of the problem. Black viewers' grievances were being acknowledged, contributing to their shared sense of injustice and identity.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

Exclusion from Britishness

After 1945, British national identity was being redefined to address 'questions of who belonged in Britain', creating a 'hierarchy of belonging' in which black and Asian immigrants were seen as distinct from the British way of life.⁹⁴

Wendy Webster writes that 'within the empire, black British subjects were represented as part of 'our people' in a pattern of familial imagery where colonisers and colonised were seen as members of one imperial family'.⁹⁵

However, this inclusion of colonial people was dependent on them being 'contained and controlled elsewhere'.⁹⁶ When large numbers of black and Asian immigrants began to arrive in Britain, they were differentiated from white British people through their customs, values and visual racial differences.⁹⁷

Webster suggests that 'in making the passage from Jamaica to Britain, those on board the *Empire Windrush* had also made a passage to the identity of 'immigrants' who brought with them a 'colour problem', thus this familial imagery was reversed.⁹⁸

In the ten years that followed the arrival of the *Empire Windrush*, which carried 492 Jamaican migrants to Britain in June 1948, around 125,000 more Caribbean immigrants followed.⁹⁹ By the mid 1980s African-Caribbean immigrants and their descendants living in Britain numbered around a quarter of a million,

⁹⁴ Wendy Webster, *Imagining Home: Gender, Race and National Identity, 1945-1964* (London: UCL Press, 1998), 27.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Solomos, *Black Youth, Racism and the State*, 53.

⁹⁸ Webster, *Imagining Home*, 27.

⁹⁹ Claire E Alexander, *The Art of Being Black: The Creation of Black British Youth Identities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 6.

almost half of whom had been born in Britain.¹⁰⁰ However, as Peter Fryer notes in his book *Staying Power*, black people remained 'by definition' permanently in the area of suspicion'.¹⁰¹ Despite being born in Britain, and therefore being British, they were perceived as 'different, separate, incomprehensible' and therefore deviating from the British way of life.¹⁰² From the 1970s, the focus of political debates 'seemed to shift towards the view that black youth were a kind of social time bomb', with focus on concerns about the growth of 'ghetto environments'.¹⁰³ The result of this was the reinforcement of 'common sense ideas of blacks as an enemy within or alien' and young black men came to be perceived as 'children of the ghetto'.¹⁰⁴ These fears led to numerous forms of racial discrimination. A 1981 Home Office study revealed that 'Asians were 50 times and West Indians were 36 times more likely to be victims of racially motivated attacks than whites'.¹⁰⁵

The government's policy on immigration can perhaps be best summed up by Margaret Thatcher's declaration, in 1978, that Britain was being 'swamped' by immigrants.¹⁰⁶ The introduction of the 1981 British Nationality Act saw new links between right of entry and UK citizenship by creating three classes of British citizenship; birth in Britain no longer guaranteed citizenship.¹⁰⁷

Numerous immigration acts made black people feel increasingly unwelcome in

¹⁰⁰ Alexander, *The Art of Being Black*, 6.

¹⁰¹ Peter Fryer, *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain* (London: Pluto Press, 1984), 398.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Solomos, *Black Youth, Racism and the State*, 88.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 89.

¹⁰⁵ Edward Pilkington, *Beyond the Mother Country: West Indians and the Notting Hill White Riots* (London: Tauris, 1988), 90.

¹⁰⁶ Roemer, Lee and Straeten, *Racism, Xenophobia, and Distribution*, 131.

¹⁰⁷ Troyna, *Introduction to Race Relations*, 68.

Britain. When Thatcher made her 1978 speech, claiming that British people feared that Britain 'might be rather swamped by people with a different culture', she implied that non-white immigrants were outsiders and categorically 'un-British'.¹⁰⁸ In her speech, Thatcher claimed that many people had 'seen the whole character of their neighbourhood change' and that they 'felt their way of life had been changed' as a result, suggesting that blackness and 'Britishness' were inherently incompatible.¹⁰⁹ Chris Waters discusses how, in post-war Britain, British national identity was redefined in a way which excluded non-white citizens: 'questions of race became central to questions of national belonging'.¹¹⁰ This has also been discussed by others such as Bill Schwartz, who describes whiteness as being 'only comprehensible in relation to the variety of forms which are deemed to be 'not white''.¹¹¹ These definitions of what it meant to be British, which were forged decades before, formed the basis of the exclusion experienced by black British people in 1980s Britain. Claire Alexander suggests that 'culture' became 'unescapably associated with race' and that a person's physical characteristics became 'the primary signifier of the outsider', causing them to become 'a perceived threat to national identity' and remain outside of the 'realm of national culture and belonging'.¹¹²

Here and Now addressed this by showing examples of successful black people, providing young black viewers with positive role models. On 31 October 1983,

¹⁰⁸ Philip Yale Nicholson, *Who Do We Think We Are? Race and Nation in the Modern World* (London: M. E. Sharpe, 1999), 78.

¹⁰⁹ Alexander, *The Art of Being Black*, 3.

¹¹⁰ Chris Waters, "'Dark Strangers' in our Midst: Discourses of Race and Nation in Britain, 1947-1964,' *Journal of British Studies* 36, no. 2 (1997): 208.

¹¹¹ Bill Schwarz, *The White Man's World: Memories of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 55.

¹¹² Alexander, *The Art of Being Black*, 4.

Here and Now included an item on 'black fashion' in which three black men, who ran a PR company, were interviewed by Vera Gilbert in a boardroom, regarding an upcoming fashion show.¹¹³ This provided a different, far more positive and aspirational image of black people than was generally shown by *ATV Today* or *Central News*. During the interview the men were asked why they chose to have their fashion shows in 'such glamorous venues'; they told Gilbert: 'black people do not, as a general rule, hire the festival hall, hire the Albert Hall'.¹¹⁴ By doing so they created a positive image of the black community and *Here and Now* showcased this. This story, which praised the entrepreneurial spirit of black British people, engaged with Thatcherite concepts of success and enterprise by suggesting that if black people worked hard enough, they could become part of the new inclusive vision of the nation.¹¹⁵ Another example of this, broadcast in 1985, was an in studio interview by reporter Vera Gilbert, with Elaine Foster, a black woman who had been appointed as deputy head teacher of Handsworth Wood Boys' School.¹¹⁶

An item on a hair salon specialising in African-Caribbean hair revealed that despite Birmingham being a multi-racial area, other hair salons in the city did not meet the requirements of black customers.¹¹⁷ The item began with shots of the hair salon and a black customer asking to have her hair relaxed, a chemical process that straightens the hair. A subsequent wider shot showed the salon

¹¹³ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Black Fashion,' first broadcast 31 October 1982, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-31101982-black-fashion

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Francis, 'Mrs Thatcher's Peacock Blue Sari,' 274-293.

¹¹⁶ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Programme 174,' first broadcast on 10 November 1985, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-programme-174

¹¹⁷ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Ebony Hair,' first broadcast on 30 January 1983, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-30011983-ebony-hair

filled with black customers, as reggae music played in the background. White reporter, Hilary Minster, asked a black customer, who was having his hair cut, why he had chosen to come to Ebony salon; he told him: 'not everyone knows how to deal with hair like mine'.¹¹⁸ In other words, white owned salons were not properly equipped to deal with black hair. The owner of the salon, a black woman, was interviewed in an office behind the shop floor. She was asked by Minster why she chose to open a hair salon and she explained that she could not find anywhere in Birmingham to have her hair styled. He questioned the meaning of 'hair relaxing' and the 'special difficulties' with black hair, revealing his lack of knowledge, and thus the general lack of awareness amongst the white public.¹¹⁹ Choosing Minster, a white man, to conduct this interview meant that the interview was conducted from a white perspective and as a result the general ignorance of the white British public, and the need for salons such as this, was emphasised.

This was also emphasised in an item on *Here and Now*, broadcast on 14 March 1982, in which Hilary Minster visited a Caribbean restaurant in Birmingham, owned by Jamaican singer Rustie Lee, who sat with him at a table.¹²⁰ He asked her to 'please guide me through what I'm about to eat', indicating his unfamiliarity with Caribbean food, which did not reach the same popularity in Britain as other cuisine, such as Indian food.¹²¹ Again, Minster's lack of knowledge meant that his questions were asked from a white perspective. It is

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Rustie's Restaurant,' first broadcast on 14 March 1982, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-14031982-rusties-restaurant.

¹²¹ *Here and Now*, 'Rustie's Restaurant'; "Going for an Indian", 867.

possible that this may have been done to encourage the white community to watch the programme to become better informed about the black community. Minster noted that the restaurant was in 'the most fashionable part of Birmingham', asking Rustie if the food was really 'authentically Caribbean' and if she thought there was 'a danger that becoming such a popular restaurant it will become a sort of white's only place?'.¹²² This question implied that, much like Indian food in Britain, Caribbean food could become a 'hybrid cuisine', adapted for a British palette.¹²³ Minster suggested that if the restaurant became popular and desirable by white society, black people would become excluded from it. There was a distinction between white society's acceptance of food and their acceptance of 'the actual people of the food's origin'.¹²⁴ This is an example of the limitations of multiculturalism discussed by Radhika Natarajan in her discussion of the 1965 Commonwealth Arts festival, during which the cultural variations within the empire were celebrated at a superficial level through performative arts, whilst at the same time the UK government was passing laws which restricted the entry of commonwealth citizens.¹²⁵

An item broadcast on 11 September 1983, looked at the Hummingbird nightclub, a club in Birmingham that specifically targeted the black community.¹²⁶ The audience was told that the majority of the club's funding had come from the West Midlands County Council, but that this money had been

¹²² *Here and Now*, 'Rustie's Restaurant.'

¹²³ Buettner, "'Going for an Indian",' 869.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, 866.

¹²⁵ Radhika Natarajan, 'Performing Multiculturalism at the Commonwealth Arts Festival of 1965,' *Journal of British Studies* 3, no. 53 (2014): 714.

¹²⁶ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Hummingbird Nightclub,' first broadcast on 11 December 1983, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-11121983-hummingbird-nightclub

withdrawn due to allegations of financial mismanagement. Reporter Vera Gilbert interviewed the owner of the club, Lloyd Blake, in his office. He told her that the club offered a centre of entertainment for the black community; as he said this shots of a reggae band in the club were played. A black interviewee on the street told Gilbert that he felt the club was good for the community and that it was 'about time we had something like this', suggesting that other clubs did not adequately cater to the needs of the black community.¹²⁷

Gilbert then discussed accusations of financial mismanagement with a white spokesman for West Midlands County Council. He told her that the club was losing money and that there was a lack of business and financial skills amongst the group involved, giving a very negative impression of the club and its owners. However, when club owner, Lloyd Blake, was asked about these allegations, he told Gilbert: 'it's a load of bloody rubbish'.¹²⁸ Gilbert was supportive of Blake and asked the County Councillor: 'are you really considering how the black community feel', going on to say: 'you've given them no hope'.¹²⁹ The item ended with a black man on the street telling Gilbert: 'its not very often you get the opportunity to have a club like that'.¹³⁰ This report was sympathetic towards the nightclub owners and the needs of the black community, indicating that black cultural outlets required the assistance and support of local government to succeed- support that was not currently being given.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

Here and Now challenged the negative representation of black people on television news by showing its audience examples of positive role models and successful middle-class black people. It showed black people creating their own spaces in Britain, but it also suggested that these spaces were under threat. This threat came as a result of either lack of support from white society, or from within the black community, or contrastingly, from the danger of becoming so popular that they become the property of the white community, as demonstrated by Minster's suggestion that Rustie's restaurant was in danger of becoming a 'white's only' place.¹³¹ This emphasised the struggles faced by black people in in Britain, highlighting the importance of cohesion amongst the black community.

Rastafarianism, Reggae and Dub Poetry

In order to claim a certain identity, there must be 'a certain conjuncture or coincidence between what a person claims for himself and where others place him'; when discrepancies between the two emerge, problems of identity begin to arise.¹³² Many young black people in Britain, who had been born in Britain or arrived at a young age, identified as British, however were considered by white British society to be outsiders. Many of these black youths had little knowledge of their home or ancestral cultures or history; as Paul Gilroy suggests: 'West Indians are seen as a bastard people occupying an intermediate space between the Britishness which is their colonial legacy and an amorphous ahistorical

¹³¹ *Here and Now*, 'Rustie's Restaurant.'

¹³² Beresford, 'The Growth of Corporate Black Identity Among Afro-Caribbean People in Birmingham, England,' 43.

relationship with the dark continent'.¹³³ Whilst being referred to by the British media as 'immigrants', despite being born in Britain, their identity 'based on family connections with a specific island community' was rarely acknowledged and they were usually simply referred to as being West-Indian.

The use of the word 'black' to describe those from the West Indies was used effectively by minority groups in Britain to form an alliance between black people from a range of different cultures who formed a collective identity in response to their shared experiences of being black in Britain.¹³⁴ When first arriving in Britain from the West Indies, the majority of a sample asked defined themselves by the island they had originated from, rather than by their race or class, demonstrating a strong connection to their home island.¹³⁵ However by 1976, this had changed dramatically, with most people defining themselves simply as 'West Indian' rather than by their specific island.¹³⁶ This indicated a move towards a collective black British identity.

Britain's black community sought to rediscover their heritage and form a collective identity through art forms such as reggae music and dub poetry, and through Rastafarianism, all of which were showcased on *Here and Now* throughout the decade. For those who felt they had no place in British society, Rastafarianism offered perhaps 'the only identity available to them'.¹³⁷ Stuart Hall suggested that Rastafarianism 'saved the second generation of young black

¹³³Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't no Black in the Union Jack* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1987), 45.

¹³⁴ Tracey J Prince, *Culture Wars in British Literature: Multiculturalism and National Identity* (Jefferson, North Carolina: Mcfarland, 2012), 83.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Short, 'Talking Blues,' 8

people in British society', by providing them with this sense of identity, describing this as a 'cultural revolution'.¹³⁸ Rastafarianism had its roots in 1930s Jamaica but became popular in Britain in the 1970s, in response to the exclusion of many young black men and women from white British institutions.¹³⁹ More than just a religious movement, Rastafarianism was a political movement, which emphasised black pride and African heritage.¹⁴⁰ Kieran Connell notes that Rastafarian desire to return to Africa in Handsworth was an example of what Eric Hobsbawm described as an 'invented tradition'; 'Africa was being viewed in Handsworth through the prism of what it looked like from Jamaica', in order to express their sense of frustration and anger and to form a collective identity.¹⁴¹ This is an example of the imagined communities explored by Anderson.¹⁴² Despite many young black men and women being born in Britain and never visiting Africa, they felt a connection to the continent, and to people they had never met.

Rastafarianism was not well received in Britain; it was a 'spiritual movement and culture that was 'un-British'', and was thus perceived as a direct threat and viewed with a strong sense of suspicion.¹⁴³ This suspicion stemmed not only from their religious beliefs, but also from Rastafarian actions, such as their use of cannabis, which were perceived as being in direct confrontation with British

¹³⁸ Hall, 'Conclusion: The Multi-Cultural Question,' 87.

¹³⁹ Kieran Connell, 'Dread Culture: Music and Identity in a British Inner City,' in *Stories of Cosmopolitan Belonging: Emotion and Location*, ed. Hannah Jones and Emma Jackson (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), 88.

¹⁴⁰ Nathaniel Samuel Murrell, 'Introduction,' in *Chanting Down Babylon: The Rastafarian Reader*, ed. Nathaniel Samuel Murrell, William David Spencer and Adrian Anthony Mcfarlane (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Temple University Press, 1998), 4.

¹⁴¹ Connell, 'Dread Culture,' 88.

¹⁴² Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 49.

¹⁴³ Fazakarley, 'Racisms 'Old' and 'New' at Handsworth, 1985,' 6.

cultural norms.¹⁴⁴ To many white British people, and even to the older generation of West Indians in Britain, this made them less relatable.¹⁴⁵ In 'Shades of Grey', distinctions were made between 'true Rastafarians and the criminalised dreadlock sub-culture in Handsworth'.¹⁴⁶ Brown described them as a 'criminalised sub-culture' who 'drift into lives of idleness and crime'.¹⁴⁷ This reflects the way in which Rastafarians were generally viewed by white society, by many West Indians, and also by both national and local media in the early 1980s.

Here and Now's earlier coverage of Rastafarianism offered a negative representation of the movement, reflecting a lack of acceptance from within the wider black community. An item broadcast on 19 November 1981 opened with shots of West Indian men stood on the street smoking, with reggae music playing in the background.¹⁴⁸ Zia Mohyeddin told the audience:

They're Rastas, Rastafarians, and they call themselves the Jah people. To most of us they're either frightening or bizarre or more likely just mysterious, but they're a large and growing number of people living in our inner cities.¹⁴⁹

This statement presented Rastafarians as the enemy within, as a growing problem with the potential to impact on British society. As he spoke, he stood with his arms tightly folded, suggesting a defensive and nervous attitude, signifying a sense of threat. The camera then showed a crowded living room full

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, 8.

¹⁴⁶ Brown, *Shades of Grey*, 91.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Jah People,' first broadcast on 19 November 1981, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-19111981-jah-people

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

of Rastafarian men, followed by a shot of the doorway in which a number of Rastafarian women stood. A voice over from Mohyeddin explained that reporter, Hilary Minster, had recently visited a 'Rasta's reasoning' in Handsworth.¹⁵⁰ Minster sat on the floor of the living room with his legs crossed; his body language suggested that he felt out of place and uncomfortable, making the men appear threatening.



Shot of Rastafarian men in Handsworth home. MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Jah People,' first broadcast on 19 November 1981, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-19111981-jah-people

A Rastafarian man spoke to Minster about his beliefs and values; Minster appeared sceptical and asked questions such as: 'right, and do you use the bible?' and: 'the fact that lots of people said when he [Haile Selassie] was alive that he stashed away money in Swiss bank accounts and was very cruel to his people, this doesn't worry anyone?'.¹⁵¹ The camera spanned the room, showing the men, who were smoking marijuana, again emphasising their departure from

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

British norms. He also questioned the position of women within the Rastafarian culture, asking: 'are women second class citizens?'.¹⁵² As he asked this, the camera showed a woman hunched on the ground. She appeared uncomfortable with being filmed and with the topic of conversation, creating the impression that Rastafarian women were oppressed.



Rastafarian man interviewed by *Here and Now's* Hilary Minster. MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Jah People,' first broadcast on 19 November 1981, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-19111981-jah-people

¹⁵² Ibid.



Shot of Rastafarian woman. MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Jah People,' first broadcast on 19 November 1981, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-19111981-jah-people

This item created a very negative impression of the Rastafarian faith, emphasising its difference to Christianity, its poor treatment of women, and suggesting that Rastafarians were lazy and used cannabis. *Here and Now's* acceptance of cultures had its limits at the point at which elements of a culture was deemed unacceptable by the standards of its producers and reporters. Minster's insistence on placing cultural norms onto the Rastafarian faith is an example of what Stanley Fish refers to as 'boutique multiculturalism', the admiration and appreciation of a culture at a superficial level, up until the point at which 'some value at their centre generates an act that offends against the canons of civilised decency'.¹⁵³

¹⁵³ Stanley Fish, 'Boutique Multiculturalism, or Why Liberals are Incapable of Thinking about Hate Speech,' *Critical Inquiry* 23, no. 2 (1997): 378.

The item also explored the links between Rastafarianism and Reggae music. Shots of a Jamaican house party showed men and women drinking Jamaican beer, dancing to reggae music and smoking marijuana. Black people were excluded from British institutions and Jamaican blues parties were a reaction to this. Since the 1970s, reggae music played an important role in the formation of a black British culture, particularly when this music was locally produced.¹⁵⁴ Connell discusses the importance of reggae music: 'It was reggae music, both British reggae and imported from Jamaica, which facilitated the turn towards Africa in Handsworth.'¹⁵⁵ Mykaell Riley, vocalist of the Handsworth reggae band Steel Pulse, has written about the importance of music to finding a sense of identity:

Music remained central to who I thought I was, and who I thought I should and could be. It provided the space and the platform to engage in a private yet also public discourse on identity and belonging.¹⁵⁶

Reggae music, which had origins in Jamaica, has been seen as 'largely responsible for a 'Jamaicanisation' of West Indian Britain'.¹⁵⁷ The lyrics were commonly used to send a message about the treatment of black people in Britain.¹⁵⁸ Reggae music was generally represented in a positive way by *Here and Now*. It was played on numerous episodes, including performances by local

¹⁵⁴ Kenneth Bilby, 'Is Reggae to Black British Music as Blues is to Jazz? Caribbean Roots/ Routes in Imaginings of Black British Jazz,' in *Black British Jazz: Routes, Ownership and Performance*, ed. Jason Toynbee, Catherine Tackley and Mark Doffman (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 66.

¹⁵⁵ Connell, 'Dread Culture,' 87.

¹⁵⁶ Mykaell Riley, 'Bass Culture: An Alternative Soundtrack to Britishness,' in *Black Popular Music in Britain since 1945*, ed. Jon Stratton and Nabeel Zuberi (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2014), 104.

¹⁵⁷ Bilby, 'Is Reggae to Black British Music as Blues is to Jazz?,' 67.

¹⁵⁸ Dick Hebdige, *Cut 'N' Mix: Culture, Identity and Caribbean Music* (London: Methuen Publishing, 2003), 85.

bands from the Midlands, representing it as being an important element of black culture.¹⁵⁹



Shot of Jamaican blues party. MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Jah People,' first broadcast on 19 November 1981, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-19111981-jah-people

It is interesting to compare *Here and Now's* early reporting of Rastafarianism with another featured in *Here and Now* three years later, in 1984, also presented by Hilary Minster.¹⁶⁰ Programme 214 began with Zia Mohyeddin in the studio saying:

The Rastafarian community often complain that their media image is a bad one, and they're shown as idle dreamers, unable to organise anything not even themselves. So it's a pleasure this afternoon to present a success story.¹⁶¹

This introduction was notably more positive than the introduction given by Mohyeddin three years earlier, in which he described Rastafarians as

¹⁵⁹ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Programme 155,' first broadcast on 3 March 1985, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-programme-155; MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Programme 172,' first broadcast on 27 October 1985, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-programme-172

¹⁶⁰ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Programme 124,' first broadcast on 8 April 1984, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-programme-124

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

'frightening and bizarre'.¹⁶² The focus of the report was the opening of the Wolverhampton Rastafarian Progressive Association, described by Moyheddin as a 'fine new Centre', which had recently been opened by the Mayor of Wolverhampton.¹⁶³ This difference in tone from 1981 to 1984 indicates a move towards acceptance of Rastafarians from within the black community. This may have been as a result of conscious efforts on the part of the Rastafarian community, in the form of the building of community centres and youth projects, of the work of the Rastafarian Women's organisation, and of Rastafarian groups such as the Rastafari Universal Zion.¹⁶⁴ The public image of Rastafarians was improved during the early 1980s, firstly by Lord Scarman's inquiry into the 1981 Brixton riots, which noted that: 'the Rastafarians, their faith and their aspirations, deserve more understanding and more sympathy than they get from the British people'.¹⁶⁵ Later the same year the Catholic Commission for Racial Injustice published a report on the movement, which urged the authorities not to discriminate against Rastafarians.¹⁶⁶

ATV or Central's regional news reporting made no mention of the Rastafarian faith during the period, however popular attitudes towards Rastafarians can be seen in national press reporting. For example on 26 November 1981 the *Daily Mail* published an article with the headline 'Pat on the Back for the Rastas', which highlighted Lord Scarman's view that 'there was no suggestion that the

¹⁶² *Here and Now*, 'Jah People.'

¹⁶³ *Here and Now*, 'Programme 124.'

¹⁶⁴ Frank Jan Van Dijk, 'Chanting Down Babylon Outernational: The Rise of Rastafari in Europe, the Caribbean, and the Pacific,' in *Chanting Down Babylon: The Rastafarian Reader*, ed. Nathaniel Samuel Murrell, William David Spencer and Adrian Anthony Mcfarlane (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Temple University Press, 1998), 184.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 183.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*.

Rastas were responsible for the riots' in Brixton, demonstrating a move towards acceptance.¹⁶⁷ However the newspaper was a long way from condoning or accepting Rastafarianism, as demonstrated, for example, by the frequent mention of their use of cannabis. For example, an article published on 19 January 1982 explained that whilst the Catholic Church was accepting of Rastafarianism, they would 'not, however, condone the ritual use of cannabis'.¹⁶⁸ When writing about the opening of the Rastafarian Centre in Wolverhampton, the *Daily Mail* focused on the £93,000 of public money used to build it, noting that local Conservative councillors were 'angry that they could not raise their own funds'.¹⁶⁹ Similarly, *The Times* constantly mentioned their use of cannabis, for example an article about the Scarman Inquiry, published in September 1981, stated: 'it was commonly believed that Rastafarians encouraged the smoking of cannabis or ganja as it is known in Brixton'.¹⁷⁰ Whilst *The Times* did highlight the efforts of the Church in 'persuading the Home Office to recognise it [the Rastafarian movement] as a religion', they, like the *Daily Mail*, continued to be critical of their 'use of ganja'.¹⁷¹ National news and current affairs programming also continued to view Rastafarianism with an element of suspicion; for example an ITN report broadcast in October 1985, included interviews with two 'leading members of Handsworth's Rastafarian community' who spoke openly about their use of cannabis. The reporter told the audience: 'smoking ganja is part of their religion, they don't see it as a crime', going on to say that 'most

¹⁶⁷ 'Pat on the Back for the Rastas,' *Daily Mail*, 26 November 1981, 2.

¹⁶⁸ David Durman, 'Let Rastas Use Our Churches,' *Daily Mail*, 19 January 1982, 2.

¹⁶⁹ Aubrey Chambers, 'Fury over £93,000 Aid for Rastafarian Centre,' *Daily Mail*, 4 November 1982, 2.

¹⁷⁰ Lucy Hodges, 'Scarman Inquiry: How the Break Came,' *The Times*, 8 September 1981, 2.

¹⁷¹ Harry Potter, 'Recognition for Rastafarians,' *The Times*, 9 October 1981, 13; J. T, 'A Powerful Force Born of a Quest for Identity,' *The Times*, 11 February 1983, 17.

citizens don't agree' and that the police saw it as part of a 'massive criminal enterprise'.¹⁷² Despite changing attitudes towards Rastafarianism it is clear that the movement still carried negative connotations.

Changing attitudes towards Rastafarianism were far more apparent on *Here and Now*.¹⁷³ Wolverhampton's Mayor, Alfred Laws, an elderly white man, stood in front of a table dressed in a green gold and red tricolour flag. Sitting behind the table were four smartly dressed Rastafarian men, a very different representation to the shot of Rastafarian men sitting on a living room floor. In the Centre, Hilary Minster interviewed Ken Chambers, leader of the WRPA. Rather than challenging Rastafarianism, as he did in the previous report, Minster smiled and asked him how he felt about the Mayor wishing the Centre success. Subsequent shots showed tools and gardening equipment, as Chambers explained that they would have a range of workshops available. Minster was shown smiling in response to this, an acceptance of Rastafarianism that was not seen in the previous report. Young Rastafarian men were filmed playing games in the Centre whilst Chambers told Minster that before the Centre opened they had nowhere else to go, reinforcing its positive impact on the community.

¹⁷² ITN Archive, *ITN*, 'Inner City Riots/ Drugs,' first broadcast on 17 October 1985, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/674154070

¹⁷³ *Here and Now*, 'Programme 124.'



Mayor of Wolverhampton opening Rastafarian Centre in Wolverhampton. MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Programme 124,' first broadcast on 8 April 1984, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-programme-124

Another art form that played a role in the creation of black British culture from the mid 1970s was Dub Poetry.¹⁷⁴ Dub poetry dealt with some of the issues faced by the black community in Britain, such as unemployment, discrimination and police brutality. Many famous dub poets were also involved in political activism and the Black Power movement.¹⁷⁵ The poetry had a performative element much like traditional African-Caribbean poetry and it acted as a celebration of cultural history and difference.¹⁷⁶ Dub poets commonly used Jamaican Creole, which was adopted by many young black people who had been born in Britain despite it not being used by their parents, in an attempt to create a distinct cultural identity.¹⁷⁷ Jed Fazakarley suggests that the use of Jamaican Creole in Britain was 'considered to be a defence against the assimilationist

¹⁷⁴ Christian Habekost, *Verbal Riddim: The Politics and Aesthetics of African-Caribbean Dub Poetry* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1993), 15.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Dilek Sarikaya, 'The construction of Afro-Caribbean Cultural Identity in the Poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson,' *Journal of Caribbean Literature* 7, no. 1 (2011): 161.

¹⁷⁷ Short, 'Talking Blues,' 6.

encroachment of the dominant society'.¹⁷⁸ What was created was a distinct language, which showed features of both Jamaican Creole and British English.¹⁷⁹ This language 'came to represent the 'heritage language' for black British people in general, rather than just those with a Jamaican background'.¹⁸⁰

An item included on *Here and Now* on 20 June 1982, began with the reporter Vera Gilbert telling the audience that Jamaican dub Poet, Michael Smith, used 'street talk of Jamaica in his poems which often reflect the problems of city life'.¹⁸¹ Smith told her about the 'sense of cohesion, in terms of uniting around the common enemy' felt in inner city areas.¹⁸² He smiled and the camera zoomed in on his face, showing a sense of defiance against white authority, helping the viewer to identify more closely with him. Smith was filmed walking through the streets of Handsworth, whilst his poem 'Mi cyan believe it', which spoke of the problems facing the city's black community, played.¹⁸³ While he recited the poem, the audience saw shots of the streets of Handsworth filled with black men and women and number of Sikh men wearing turbans, reflecting the multiculturalism of the city.

¹⁷⁸ Fazakarley, 'Racisms 'Old' and 'New' at Handsworth, 1985,' 8.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Bilby, 'Is Reggae to Black British Music as Blues is to Jazz?', 67.

¹⁸¹ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Programme 52,' first broadcast on 6 June 1982, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-programme-052

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.



Jamaican dub poet, Michael Smith. MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Programme 52,' first broadcast on 6 June 1982, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-programme-052

Gilbert also interviewed another famous Jamaican dub poet, Linton Kwesi Johnson. Johnson was devoted to creating a 'distinctive black cultural identity' as a means to fight racism.¹⁸⁴ Gilbert explained to the audience that he found 'his inspiration in the black community of Brixton' and asked him why he chose to write about the riots.¹⁸⁵ He told her that he wanted to 'celebrate the fact that

¹⁸⁴ Sarikaya, 'The Construction of Afro-Caribbean Cultural Identity in the Poetry of Linton Kwesi Johnson,' 161.

¹⁸⁵ *Here and Now*, 'Programme 52.'

they took the kind of standing against colonial British oppression'.¹⁸⁶ This provided a different representation of the 1981 riots to *ATV Today*. Subsequent shots showed Johnson walking along a riverbank whilst he recited his poem 'the great insurrection'.¹⁸⁷ As he recited the poem, which read: 'It was event of deh year and I wish I had been der when we run riot all over Brixton', images of the riots were played.¹⁸⁸ By showing these images alongside the sound of Johnson's poem, this report provided an alternative representation of the Brixton riots, one that celebrated the fight against white authority.



Shot of 1981 Brixton disorders. MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Programme 52,' first broadcast on 6 June 1982, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-programme-052

At a time in which many young black British people in Midlands communities felt excluded from British society, *Here and Now* showcased black cultural forms such as reggae music, Rastafarianism and dub poetry and provided a space for individuals to share an alternative perspective on events such as the 1981 Brixton riots. In doing so, the programme provided black people with a voice,

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

and played a role in the formation of a collective black identity. The fact that by 1984, Rastafarians were presented more positively on *Here and Now*, reflects changing attitudes towards the Rastafarian community during the period, suggesting a growing cohesion amongst the black community across the Midlands.

'Staying Power' on Television

As shown in the previous three chapters, *ATV Today* did little to educate viewers about black British history, but instead focused almost exclusively on the problems caused by immigration. On a number of occasions, *Here and Now* attempted to combat this by educating viewers about the history of the black presence and contribution to Britain. An example of this was an in studio interview with Peter Fryer, broadcast in 1984, in which reporter Peter Emina questioned Fryer about his book *Staying Power*.¹⁸⁹ In Rob Waters' discussion of *Staying Power* he describes the book as being 'not the first history of black Britain to be published' but 'the first to take an avowedly political stand, and to argue that this history was crucial to the crisis of its contemporary moment'.¹⁹⁰ He notes the importance of *Staying Power* to contemporary understanding of racism in Britain.¹⁹¹ Fryer discussed the contribution black people made to the early days of the British Labour movement and claimed that the government only wanted people in Britain to know the history of the rich, suggesting that the role of black people in British history had been deliberately ignored. Emina

¹⁸⁹ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Programme 134,' first broadcast 1984, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-programme-134

¹⁹⁰ Rob Waters, 'Thinking Black: Peter Fryer's *Staying Power* and the Politics of Writing Black British History in the 1980s,' *History Workshop Journal* 82, no. 1 (2016): 107.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

noted that the book was not only about the history of black people in Britain, but also the history of British racism, asking Fryer: 'do you think the two go hand in hand?'.¹⁹² Fryer replied: 'of course', suggesting the importance of white British people gaining a better knowledge of black history.¹⁹³ By including items such as this, *Here and Now* provided a platform for black British history.

Another example of this was an item broadcast on *Here and Now* on 20 August 1981, during which reporter Paula Ahluwalia interviewed Ziggi Alexander, one of the organisers of the 'Roots in Britain' exhibition, which showcased the history of black presence in Britain since the reign of Elizabeth I.¹⁹⁴ Waters describes this exhibition as being part of a 'heritage boom' which took place in the 1980s, during which numerous projects sought to trace the history of black populations in Britain, including projects run by local history associations in Birmingham, Haringey, Liverpool and Southampton.¹⁹⁵ The year of the exhibition coincided with the 1981 Nationality act, which made black and Asian people feel increasingly unwelcome in Britain, therefore the need for an exhibition such as this was great. The report began with a shot of part of the exhibition, showing a number of photographs documenting black life in Britain. This reiterated Fryer's suggestion that black people played an important and overlooked role in British history.

¹⁹² *Here and Now*, 'Programme 134.'

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Roots in Britain,' first broadcast on 20 August 1981, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-20081981-roots-exhibition

¹⁹⁵ Waters, 'Thinking Black,' 109.



Shot of 'Roots in Britain' exhibition. MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Roots in Britain,' first broadcast on 20 August 1981, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-20081981-roots-exhibition

During the interview, which took place outside of the exhibition, Alexander was asked why she felt that it was important 'for us to learn about the history of black and Asian people in this country?'.¹⁹⁶ She replied:

I think it's important to realise that Britain has had a multiracial society for centuries and that black people made a positive contribution to those societies in the past, particularly as we've had a lot of negative media input. Blacks are always associated with problems.¹⁹⁷

These items provided a different view to what was generally seen in the media about black people during the 1980s, particularly in Handsworth, by emphasising the historic role of black people in Britain.

It is clear that from 1980 to 1985, *Here and Now* represented the black community far more positively than *ATV Today* and *Central News*. *Here and Now* was critical of the police and other institutions and of racism that existed within employment, and sympathetic towards black youths. But unlike *ATV* and

¹⁹⁶ *Here and Now*, 'Roots in Britain.'

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

Central, which generally only showed the black community in relation to problems, *Here and Now* also showcased positive examples of successful black people, as well as black owned businesses. It also, unlike ATV, filmed black people in consensual ways, educated viewers about the history of the black presence in Britain, and showcased black cultural forms such as reggae music and dub poetry.

The 1985 Handsworth riots

At the same time as new 'cultural, musical and linguistic developments' were occurring in Handsworth, social tension was rising.¹⁹⁸ As Short notes in 'Talking Blues', little changed in the black community in Britain between 1970 and 1990, but what did change was 'the mood amongst some black British youth' as they became increasingly 'angry and bitter'.¹⁹⁹ In an interview for the BBOHP, Carlton Duncan warned of the repercussions of a society which 'makes its members feel that they don't belong', warning that 'it can't be a surprise if people who don't feel that the towns, the centres, the buildings, the facilities have anything to do with them set out to destroy them'.²⁰⁰ As Silverman suggested in his report of the 1985 Handsworth riots, the ingredients necessary for rioting to take place include 'a frustrated and angry group who have suffered over a long period of time and are generally alienated from society' and 'a common perception of serious injustices'.²⁰¹ Silverman went on to note that

¹⁹⁸ Bilby, 'Is Reggae to Black British Music as Blues is to Jazz?', 68.

¹⁹⁹ Short, 'Talking Blues,' 85.

²⁰⁰ 'BBOHP Video,' BBOHP, accessed 17 August 2016, www.bbohp.org.uk/node/18

²⁰¹ Silverman, 'Independent Inquiry into the Handsworth Disturbances,' 129.

typical rioters 'do not feel that they are part of the society'.²⁰² These ingredients were all present in 1980s Handsworth.

Not all rioters were black; white youths, who also felt the impact of unemployment in Handsworth, joined in with rioting.²⁰³ Other forms of local and national media however, represented the rioters as being solely young, male, West Indian criminals. For example, an article published in the *Daily Mail* suggested that unemployment did not justify rioting and that the police deserved more support: 'they ought to thank their lucky stars that they've got British bobbies'.²⁰⁴ Another article published the following day alongside a photograph of a black man said that the man had been jailed for one month for carrying a claw hammer.²⁰⁵ Likewise, *The Times* reported that 'mobs' had 'rampaged' through Handsworth, 'burning and looting Asian shops'.²⁰⁶ National television news also created the impression that the attacks were directed against the Asian community. For example, a BBC news report showed shots of burning buildings and cars and featured interviews with a fire officer and an Asian man whose business had been destroyed.²⁰⁷

²⁰² Ibid, 130.

²⁰³ Solomos, *Black Youth, Racism and the State*, 202.

²⁰⁴ Frank Chapple, 'Huffing and Puffing Only Fans the Flames,' *Daily Mail*, 12 September 1985, 9.

²⁰⁵ Aubrey Chalmers, 'Jail for Vigilante Who Carried Claw Hammer,' *Daily Mail*, 13 September 1985, 9.

²⁰⁶ Craig Senton, 'The Handsworth Riots,' *The Times*, 12 September 1985, 2.

²⁰⁷ BBC Motion Gallery, *BBC News*, 'Birmingham Riots Asian Shopkeepers,' first broadcast on 11 September 1985, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/254-85-07EC; BBC Motion Gallery, *BBC News*, 'Handsworth: Night Time Riots Shots and Aftermath,' first broadcast on 10 September 1985, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/253-85-01EC; ITN Archive, *ITN*, 'Birmingham Riots,' first broadcast on 10 September 1985, www.gettyimages.co.uk/license/253-85-01EC;

As Simon Cottle notes, regional television news was able to offer more in depth coverage of urban distress.²⁰⁸ The term 'riot' made captivating headlines in the local press and regional TV news, which reported extensively on the riots. This reporting, whilst being extensive, failed to encompass the experiences of black British youths.²⁰⁹ On the first day of the riots, the *Birmingham Post* used very negative language when referring to the rioters, describing them as 'packs', 'looters' and 'criminals'.²¹⁰ Language about the area also had negative connotations, for example, the city centre was described as a 'no-go area'.²¹¹ None of the reports about the riots in the *Birmingham Post* mentioned the social deprivation in Handsworth and despite an article highlighting the social situation in the West Midlands, there was no indication that this could be linked with the outbreak of riots.²¹² There was a brief mention of racial tension, however this was blamed on tensions between the black and Asian communities and followed by discussion of the carnival being an indicator of racial harmony.²¹³ Interviews with figures of authority, such as politicians and the police, put the events down to criminality.²¹⁴ The *Birmingham Mail* reported the riots in a very similar way, describing the rioters as 'trouble makers' and failing to mention any social issues that may have led to the riots.²¹⁵ Kieran Connell explores the use of photographs used by the press to demonise Handsworth's black community in the days that followed the riots, discussing the tensions surrounding black photographer Pogus Caesar's attempts to provide an

²⁰⁸ Cottle, *TV News, Urban Conflict and the Inner City*, 38.

²⁰⁹ Fryer, *Staying Power*, 395.

²¹⁰ 'City Mobs Run Riot,' *Birmingham Post*, 10 September 1985, 1.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² 'Great Divide,' *Birmingham Post*, 10 September 1985, 1.

²¹³ 'History of Violence in the Volatile Suburb,' *Birmingham Post*, 10 September 1985, 1.

²¹⁴ 'Firemen Caught in Mayhem,' *Birmingham Post*, 10 September 1985, 3.

²¹⁵ Birmingham Library, 'Riot of Death,' *Birmingham Mail*, 10 September 1985, 1; 'Blaze Havoc,' *Birmingham Mail*, 10 September 1985, 1.

alternative representation through photography.²¹⁶ Connell argues that in many ways, these image 'corresponded to the dominant 'front page' perspective of the riots.²¹⁷

Central News represented the riots in a similar way to the local press. A report broadcast on the day of the riots showed images of burnings cars and buildings, as reporter Richard Barnett told viewers that shops were 'firebombed and looted', that the area had 'become an inferno', and that 'at times the fire was almost out of control', creating a sense of panic.²¹⁸ His use of language, describing the sound of exploding gas cylinders as being 'like gunshot' associated the riots with criminal behaviour.²¹⁹ The police were represented in a positive light. For example, Barnett emphasised that they needed to be 'protected by helmets and Perspex Shields' and Superintendent Donald Wilson told Barnett that no police force 'in the world' could have kept up with the rioters.²²⁰ When asked if he had any idea why the riots started, Wilson told Barnett: 'no, we haven't any idea at all. We've just had a very peaceful carnival as you know', reinforcing the message that the riots were simply the result of criminal behaviour.²²¹ Barnett also suggested that the police had 'gone out of their way to foster good relations in Handsworth', asking: 'has tonight destroyed that?'.²²² This again created a positive impression of the police and a negative image of the rioters. Black community leader, Gus Williams, who was

²¹⁶ Kieran Connell, 'Photographing Handsworth: Photography, Meaning and Identity in a British Inner City,' *Patterns of Prejudice* 46, no. 2 (2012): 144.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Central News*, 'Handsworth Riot,' first broadcast on 10 September 1985, www.macearchive.org/films/central-news-10091985-handsworth-riot

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Ibid.

filmed in front of a crowd of black men, was depicted as being aggressive and angry. Asian shopkeepers, on the other hand, were portrayed as victims, for example a young Asian man, whose shop had been destroyed in the riots, told Barnett: 'they are going after our shops'.²²³ The riots were represented in this way on numerous reports broadcast on Central in the days that followed. One report highlighted the drug problem in Handsworth, associating this with West Indian youths through visual depictions of them smoking marijuana.²²⁴

Both *Central News* and *Here and Now's* special programmes dedicated to the riots included in studio debates. On the surface, each of these debates appeared balanced. They each gave space for a range of opinions from representative from the police, the local council and community workers. However, closer examination reveals that the two reports provided very different stories about the cause of the riots. The special edition of *Central News* dedicated to the riots, presented by Bob Warman, began with Warman in the studio discussing the death of two Asian men, followed by shots of their grieving relatives on the streets, again representing the Asian community as victims of the riots.²²⁵ In the studio, Warman interviewed the Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Mr Bill Coombes, who described the riots as 'an attack on law and order'.²²⁶ Warman chaired a debate in the studio between Howard Reid from Handsworth Law Centre; David Webb, former community policeman for Handsworth; and Dick

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Central News*, 'Handsworth Background Report,' first broadcast on 10 September 1985, www.macearchive.org/films/central-news-10091985-handsworth-background-report

²²⁵ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Central News*, '*Central News* Special: The Handsworth Riots,' first broadcast 1985, www.macearchive.org/films/central-news-special-the-handsworth-riots

²²⁶ Ibid.

Knowles, the leader of Birmingham City Council. Knowles expressed some sympathy for the black community in Handsworth, noting: 'if you've got youth unemployment running at 50.5 per cent in the area, all the work and the considerable sum of money that is put into this area, is at a loss'.²²⁷ Warman responded to this defensively, saying: 'So you're saying the city can't do any more, it's done its bit, its put its money in there.'²²⁸ Webb was asked about his frustration when trying to 'patch up' relations in Handsworth, suggesting that the police had done all they could to ease racial tension.²²⁹

Howard Reid, a black community leader, was asked the most interrogative questions of the three men. Warman asked him if he thought that it was a criminal element that caused the riots and whether racial tension existed between the Asian and West Indian communities. When Reid told him that it did not, he replied: 'But it was the Asian shops that got fired last night, was it not?'.²³⁰ This debate, as well as the report overall, created the impression that the riots were the result of criminal behaviour and tensions between the black and Asian communities.

Programme 167 of *Here and Now*, broadcast almost two weeks after the riots, was 'a special programme devoted to the tragic situation' in Handsworth.²³¹ The episode opened with Mohyeddin in the studio, who told the audience:

'Handsworth has always been held up as an example of good relations enjoyed

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Programme 167,' first broadcast on 22 September 1985 www.macearchive.org/Archive/Title/here-and-now-programme-167

between all the races', asking 'so, what went wrong?'.²³² Vera Gilbert, who was also filmed in the studio, told the audience that since the events, black people in Handsworth had become 'increasingly suspicious of the press' and that there was 'also suspicion and fear of the police' and fear of 'reprisals from white groups'.²³³ This provided a different perspective on the riots, presenting the black community as victims of media manipulation. She spoke to an anonymous Asian man, who told her:

I don't condemn what happened right, because what happened was anger against, you know, poverty, unemployment, housing and all the rest of it. It wasn't anger, it wasn't directed against the Asian community right.²³⁴

By speaking about the causes of the riots and suggesting that the attacks were not directed at Asians, he gave an alternative view of the relationship between West Indians and Asians.

Gilbert also interviewed Bini Brown of the Afro Caribbean Self Help organisation. He discussed the class divides between the Asian and West Indian communities, saying that the problem was not with working-class Asians but with:

striving up and coming middle-class Asians, who were in Africa and was thrown out of Africa by various African governments, who have come over here and set up these shops, and some of these shops right, especially with the Asian shop owners, who have these syndicates I would call them. They been collaborating with the police and saying that they want to put down the black community.²³⁵

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ *Here and Now*, 'Programme 167.'

This suggested that divides in the community centred on class, as well as race, indicating that Thatcher's emphasis on the middle class reinforced divisions amongst black and Asian communities.²³⁶

He went on to accuse Asian business owners of dealing heroin, saying that he blamed the police because 'they know the pushers, and the informers and the pushers work hand in hand'.²³⁷ He went on to claim that the discovery of a house dealing heroin and cocaine had not been publicised, complaining that: 'all we hear is about the villa cross', a reference to the publication of information about cannabis use within the West Indian community.²³⁸ This, again, was critical of the police, Asian business owners, and the local press. Brown went on to discuss the tension between police and black youths, saying that it is was a problem in 'the general community, young and old' not just drug dealers, suggesting that the police were treating the black community unfairly.²³⁹ Unlike *Central News*, which presented these tensions as the fault of the black community, *Here and Now* suggested that the problem was the fault of the police and the press.

Gilbert then interviewed Robert Frater of the Afro Caribbean Teacher's Association regarding recent improvements in Handsworth. He told her that although he had seen 'tremendous changes' in the houses in Handsworth due to large sums of money being spent on renovating the area, 'most, if not all of the

²³⁶ Francis, 'Mrs Thatcher's Peacock Blue Sari,' 274-293.

²³⁷ *Here and Now*, 'Programme 167.'

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

²³⁹ *Ibid.*

workers have been white'.²⁴⁰ This issue was also highlighted by All London Teachers Against Racism and Fascism, who wrote in their 1985 newsletter: 'for all this talk about 20 million that has been spent on Handsworth, you need to ask questions about who spent it and how it was spent.'²⁴¹ Frater's interview indicated that despite the appearance of improvements in Handsworth, the black community was not seeing any of the benefits.

Following this, Peter Emina was in the studio with Superintendent Martin Burton of Handsworth Police, Councillor C. Kirk, chairman of the Performance and Review Committee and J. S. Taunque, Vice Chairman of West Midlands County Council. Emina began by asking superintendent Burton about accusations that the police were already aware of drug dealers in Handsworth. Burton quickly changed the subject, saying:

Let's not lose sight of the fact, and we've listened very carefully to what's been said by the speakers so far, but nothing has been said about the criminal activity that took place on last Monday night and last Tuesday night.²⁴²

Burton was visibly unhappy with the way in which *Here and Now* had reported the riots. He went on to say: 'the level of collaboration that you're being led to believe exists between the police and the pushers is a total nonsense' and that their efforts were focused on catching people who 'move large amounts of drugs in and out of the area'.²⁴³ As he said this, the camera showed Emina, whose facial expression suggested that he was unconvinced.

²⁴⁰ *Here and Now*, 'Programme 167.'

²⁴¹ Black Cultural Archives, Brixton, BCA/5/1/35, 'ALTARF (All Teachers Against Racism and Fascism) Newsletter,' no.17, October 1985.

²⁴² *Here and Now*, 'Programme 167.'

²⁴³ *Ibid.*



Here and Now's Peter Emina interviewing Martin Burton of Handsworth police. MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Programme 167,' first broadcast on 22 September 1985, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-programme-167

Emina pushed him on this issue, saying: 'the feeling amongst a lot of people is that the police are well aware of who the major traffickers in the area are who are dealing in harder drugs'.²⁴⁴ Burton responded defensively, arguing: 'no I don't think that over the recent months that that is really a rather valid point'.²⁴⁵

Emina asked Councillor Taunque about his thoughts on the 'drug problem', referring to the problem amongst the Asian, rather than the West Indian community.²⁴⁶ He told Emina that if any Asians were drug pushers, it was 'the job of the police to arrest them', implying that the police were not doing their job properly.²⁴⁷ He went on to claim that members of the black Community

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

Relations Council 'never went there to show their sympathy with those people'.²⁴⁸ Emina's body language suggested that he did not agree with this statement. By showing this response, Taunque's negative claims about the Black Community Relations Council were called into question.



Here and Now's Peter Emina interviewing Councillor Taunque. MACE, University of Lincoln, Here and Now, 'Programme 167,' first broadcast on 22 September 1985, <http://www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-programme-167>

Emina continued to defend the black community, telling him:

I understand though that a lot of black people in the community itself are as upset over what has happened as the Asians, and in fact a group of people, Asians and Afro-Caribbeans, wanted to lay a Wreath at the post office recently.²⁴⁹

He then moved on to asks him what he thought about 'the Police Committee vindicating the police action on the day'.²⁵⁰ Taunque told him that he strongly criticised the way that the police handled the situation and that he 'didn't appreciate the softly softy approach', an example of the wide spread criticism

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

met by the police following the riots.²⁵¹ Emina then asked Councillor Kirk, who was responsible for a new neighbourhood office in Handsworth, why it had opened 'all of a sudden in Handsworth' and whether it was 'just a piece of opportunism', implying that the council had not done enough.²⁵² He told Emina that it represented 'an acceleration' in their efforts.²⁵³

The report ended with shots of a Handsworth street, whilst Robert Frater told viewers: 'if you haven't got bread to feed your family, if you as a person haven't got food to eat, what do you do?'.²⁵⁴ This statement reiterated the representation of the rioters seen throughout the report. The overall message was very different to that given by *Central News*, which presented Asian shop owners as victims and black youths as criminals. Gilbert's interviewees criticised media representation of the riots and suggested that Asian business owners were to blame for drug problems in the area, rather than the black community. Emina's in studio debate was very different from Bob Warman's debate on *Central News*. Emina was very critical of all three interviewees, giving the impression that the negative comments made by Councillor Taunque about the black community were wrong, and suggesting that not enough was done prior to the riots to help the black community in Handsworth.

Conclusion

During the 1970s and 1980s, public concerns about immigration shifted from a focus on those who were entering the country, to those who were forming

²⁵¹ *Here and Now*, 'Programme 167'; Black Cultural Archives, Brixton, BCA/5/1/35, CARF Media Project, 'Reporting Handsworth,' *Searchlight* 125.

²⁵² *Here and Now*, 'Programme 167.'

²⁵³ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

communities in Britain's inner city areas.²⁵⁵ Black youths were excluded from white society and this sense of exclusion often led to a desire to reconnect with their Caribbean roots and to discover Africa, through cultural forms such as music, dialect, poetry and Rastafarianism. In doing so, they created a strong sense of community cohesion, which, in the face of racial discrimination, police brutality, and a shared sense of common injustice, led to the rejection of British society in the form of rioting.

Here and Now is a unique example of a form of regional media that was made by, and specifically for black and Asian people. It primarily focused on ethnic minority arts and culture, with the addition of the occasional more serious political story, attempting to aid this community formation by educating its audience about the history of the presence of black people in Britain and providing black viewers with positive role models to combat the wholly negative representation of black people by other forms of local and regional media. Through its more serious reports, such as those on the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill, the probation service, and racial discrimination in employment, *Here and Now* tackled the issues facing the local black community. This offered a very different representation to that which was given in the local press and *Central News*. It presented black and Asian viewers as being part of the local communities in which they lived. This shows how different forms of local media were able to operate in different ways depending on their purpose and audience.

²⁵⁵ Solomos, *Black Youth, Racism and the State*, 43.

Unlike *Central News*, which was created by white journalists for a local white audience, representing immigrants from a white perspective, *Here and Now* targeted a black and Asian audience and represented life in the Midlands from a local black and Asian perspective. As a result, it portrayed black culture in a far more positive light. It contributed to the development of the black perspective in the Midlands by showing immigrant communities as more than simply objects of the cameras white gaze. The representation of Rastafarians in 1981 demonstrated the limits of *Here and Now's* acceptance of multiculturalism; the fact that by 1984, Rastafarians were represented in a completely different way, by the same programme, and the same reporter, is an indication of how far the Rastafarian community had come during the period. They had reached acceptance from within the black community due to the emergence of a collective identity, which centred on reconnecting with Africa and on reactions to events such as the 1981 Brixton riots.

When rioting broke out in Handsworth in 1985, *Central News* responded by showing images of burning buildings, linking black youths to criminal behaviour and representing Asian business owners as victims. *Here and Now*, however, gave a different perspective of the riots, emphasising issues with the police and criticising local press depictions of the riots. Due to their exclusion from other forms of local media, ethnic minorities had to create their own media in order to have their voices heard. It is clear that from 1980 to 1985, the depiction of the black community on *Here and Now* was very different from that of *Central News* and the local press, revealing how significantly different forms of local and regional media could differ depending on their audience.

Conclusion

On 24 February 1985, Central Television broadcast programme 154 of their ethnic minority arts and culture programme, *Here and Now*. The episode examined issues surrounding British immigration laws, focusing on various cases including that of Bangladeshi widow, Afia Begum, who was being deported following the death of her husband.²⁵⁶ The overall message was that British immigration laws were unfair and racially discriminatory, a message corroborated by Alex Lyon, former Labour minister, who told reporter Paula Ahluwalia that a 'racist element' was 'built in to immigration control'.²⁵⁷ The programme went on to challenge popular stereotypes of Asian women with shots of female Asian protesters holding banners which read: 'Sari squad says Afia will stay.'²⁵⁸ This extremely negative portrayal of British immigration laws and positive image of Asian women exemplified *Here and Now's* approach towards race, which marked a departure from the more problematic way in which race and immigration had been represented on ATV during the decades before. *Here and Now's* positive depiction of the 'sari squad', for example, was markedly different from the patronising way in which Asian women were represented on *ATV Today* during the 1970s. This reflected changing attitudes of broadcasters towards race, resulting from the rise of what has been referred to as 'political correctness', a term which has a long history but came into popular use in Britain during the 1980s, due to Conservative criticism of the

²⁵⁶ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Here and Now*, 'Programme 154,' first broadcast on 24 February 1985, www.macearchive.org/films/here-and-now-programme-154

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

'loony left'.²⁵⁹ It saw an increased emphasis on 'offensive attitudes, prejudiced attitudes, and insulting behaviour towards the marginalised', focusing on the use of language and policies that are inoffensive to disadvantaged groups, including black and Asian communities.²⁶⁰

In a period in which the British public was encountering mass colonial immigration for the first time, news coverage of immigration between 1960 and 1985 developed alongside changing public attitudes towards race. The development of racism in British society took place as a collective and local process through which the status of immigrants was being defined and redefined in opposition to whiteness on both national and regional levels. As John Solomos notes, the shift from 'a preoccupation with immigration per se' to 'a concern with the development of black communities already settled in the UK' began during the mid-1970s.²⁶¹ This was reflected in the clear differences between the visual representations of race and immigration on ATV in the 1970s, which showed crowded streets filled with immigrants, and earlier reporting in the 1960s, which often used close up shots of windows and messy back yards, shots of quiet streets, and shots of immigrants cooking foreign foods inside their houses, representing the hidden threat of immigration to the boundaries of the home.

²⁵⁹ Tracey J Prince, *Culture Wars in British Literature: Multiculturalism and National Identity* (Jefferson, North Carolina: Mcfarland, 2012), 303.

²⁶⁰ Geoffrey Hughes, *Political Correctness: A History of Semantics and Culture* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 8.

²⁶¹ John Solomos, *Black Youth, Racism and the State: The Politics of Ideology and Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 43.

The rise of 'political correctness' in the 1980s had an impact on the way in which broadcasters approached race. For example, in his discussion of racial sitcoms, Schaffer notes that there was an 'increasing uncertainty' surrounding the telling of racial jokes on television from the 1970s, resulting in complaints from programme makers about the impact of 'political correctness'.²⁶² *Here and Now* reflected this shift in the attitude of both British broadcasters and the public towards Britain's black and Asian community from the 1960s to the 1980s, however ATV's and later Central's news programme continued to present local black and Asian communities in problematic ways. When rioting broke out in Handsworth in 1985, for example, *Central News* represented the rioters as aggressive West Indian men, emphasising links to drug dealing. From the late 1970s, black youths became associated with unemployment and violent crimes such as mugging.²⁶³ Throughout the 1980s, ATV and Central's news programmes presented the black community as a threat, both reflecting and shaping changing public attitudes towards race. Visual imagery used by ATV reinforced stereotypes of black youths as criminals, with close up shots of cannabis smoking and shots of burning cars and buildings. This suggests that although British broadcasters were beginning to acknowledge the need for better representation of black and Asian communities during the 1980s, regional television news continued to present black and Asian people according to their stereotypes and exclude them from the local communities in which they lived. *Here and Now* did, however, allow black and Asian communities in the

²⁶² Gavin Schaffer, *The Vision of a Nation: Making Multiculturalism on British Television* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 179.

²⁶³ *Ibid*, 122.

Midlands to push back against this racist regional reporting by creating their own media.

Regional television, introduced to British screens in 1954, was created to serve the important purpose of reflecting the needs of the communities that it represented. This study has argued, however, that ATV and the local press did not properly represent the large black and Asian communities that lived within the Midlands region. ATV presented immigrants as outsiders from the local area; its news programme was aimed at a white audience and depicted elements of immigrant culture as incompatible with local traditions and the local way of life. The contribution of immigrants was overlooked and instead ATV portrayed black and Asian communities according to their stereotypes, focusing on the negative impact of local issues such as housing, disease, and education. Throughout the period of this study, interviews by ATV reporters used language that emphasised the local issues caused by immigration. For example, the white housewives in Smethwick were asked: 'What's bothering you?', inviting them to share their concerns, school teachers and local education officials were constantly asked questions such as: 'How serious is the language problem?', and when reporting on the arrival of Ugandan Asians, the question: 'Can Leicester cope?' was used repeatedly.²⁶⁴ Whilst many of these reports gave the impression of balanced reporting by interviewing individuals with opposing

²⁶⁴ MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Learn English at School,' first broadcast on 13 August 1963, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-13081963-learn-english-school; MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Hillcrest Hospital, Leicester,' first broadcast on 25 August 1972, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-25081972-hillcrest-hospital-leicester-ugandan-asian-refugees; MACE, University of Lincoln, *Midlands News*, 'Smethwick Race Question,' first broadcast on 7 December 1964, www.macearchive.org/films/midlands-news-07121964-smethwick-race-question.

points of view, the choice of questions asked by the reporters had a considerable impact on their overall message.

As well as conducting formal interviews, responses of ordinary white local residents to the arrival of immigrants into their communities were documented on ATV through their use of vox pops. Vox pops provided local white people with the opportunity to share their concerns about immigration. These concerns tended to hinge on local issues and often expressed frustration that those outside of the area did not understand the problems faced by local people. This can be seen throughout this study, for example, in vox pops in Smethwick following the election of Peter Griffiths in 1964 and in vox pops on the streets of Leicester about the arrival of Ugandan Asians.²⁶⁵ The vast majority of interviewees were white, thus deeming the perspective of immigrants as less relevant and reinforcing their exclusion from the local community. Language used by local residents in vox pops, such as 'they' and 'them' to describe immigrants reinforced this further. On the rare occasions in which immigrants were interviewed, they were often asked more difficult questions than white interviewees, often resulting in negative representations of immigrant attitudes.

ATV's coverage of race and immigration differed, at times, significantly from that of national television news and current affairs programming. Not only did ATV report on local issues far more extensively than BBC News and ITN, but it also, at times, framed these issues differently. National current affairs

²⁶⁵ MACE, University of Lincoln, *ATV Today*, 'Ugandan Asians in Leicester,' first broadcast on 8 November 1972, www.macearchive.org/films/atv-today-08111972-ugandan-asians-in-leicester

programmes produced by both the BBC and ITV, such as *This Week*, *World in Action* and *Panorama* provided a form of investigative journalism not offered at a regional level, often providing a very different interpretation of local issues than ATV. For example, ITV's documentary *The Negro Next Door*, broadcast whilst the Marshall Street campaign was taking place, supported by ATV, presented concerns about housing as racially prejudiced.²⁶⁶ The arrival of Ugandan Asians was presented far more sympathetically on ITV's *This Week* and *World in Action* than it was on ATV.²⁶⁷

As well as examining regional television news, this study has also examined the role of the local press, arguing that important links existed between different forms of local media. ATV used the local press in their selection of news stories, meaning that local newspapers played a crucial role in their framing of race and immigration. ATV reinforced the message of the local press through a visual medium, showing viewers the visible impact of immigration on their local environment. The local press continuously emphasised the threat of immigration on local neighbourhoods and streets in a way that was more extensive and differed in significant ways from the national press, presenting immigration as a far more immediate threat to the reader's local area. Chapter one argued that the national press was far more sympathetic towards immigrants living in overcrowded conditions than the local newspaper, the

²⁶⁶ BFI Player, *This Week*, 'The Negro Next Door,' first broadcast in 1965, <https://player.bfi.org.uk/rentals/film/watch-negro-next-door-1965-online>

²⁶⁷ BFI Player, *This Week*, 'Exodus- Uganda,' first broadcast in 1972, <https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-exodus-uganda-1972-online>; BFI Player, *World in Action*, 'See it for Yourself!' first broadcast in 1972, <https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-see-for-yourself-1972-online>

Smethwick Telephone.²⁶⁸ Unlike the *Telephone*, which presented immigrant health as a direct threat to the local area caused by overcrowding on local streets, the national press focused on the need for more checks on entry, presenting health as a national issue.²⁶⁹ This is a pattern that continued throughout the study. When reporting on immigrant education, for example, the national press focused far more on national government opinion and presented dispersal of children as unfair, unlike the *Express & Star*, which despite its appearance of impartiality supported dispersal and reported extensively on the issue.²⁷⁰ Even the *Leicester Mercury*, which shared the same ownership as the *Daily Mail*, framed the arrival of Ugandan Asians differently to the national press.²⁷¹

Previous studies of race and post-war immigration have, with few exceptions, concentrated on national identity and on race relations within London, overlooking crucial regional differences. This study addresses within the work of scholars such as Bill Schwarz, Paul Gilroy and Wendy Webster, amongst others, who have examined the impact of decolonisation and post-war immigration on British national identity, arguing that immigrants were not only excluded from the nation but also from the local communities in which they

²⁶⁸ 'Colour: Council is Urged to Act Now: Overcrowding Menace to Public Health,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 2 July 1961, 1; 'Immigration from 25 Countries Sets Bedford a Big Problem,' *The Times*, 27 December 1962, 4.

²⁶⁹ 'Check All Migrants for TB Demands Doctors,' *Daily Mail*, 7 December 1961, 1; 'Immigrants Who May Bring Disease: Big Problem of Control,' *The Times*, 20 January 1960, 7; Sandwell Community Archives, Smethwick, 'Tuberculosis- Enemy in Retreat,' *Smethwick Telephone*, 10 June 1960, 5.

²⁷⁰ Wolverhampton City Archives, Wolverhampton, 'Disperse Migrants,' *Express & Star*, 14 February 1968, 9; Brian Macarthur, 'Ghetto Schools' a Lesson in Racial Harmony,' *The Times*, 17 October 1968, 4.

²⁷¹ Leicester Record Office, Wigston, Walter Terry, 'Talks to start on Expelled Asians,' *Daily Mail*, 7 August 1972, 1; 'Whitehall Told: No More- Leicester Is Full up,' *Leicester Mercury*, 31 August 1972, 1.

lived.²⁷² It was through local media that fears about the impact of immigration on issues such as housing, health, employment, and education were articulated. This study argues that within the Midlands, a region with one of the highest immigrant populations, local identities were constructed through regional and local media in response to and in opposition to the visible presence of non-white immigrants in local towns, neighbourhoods, and streets.

Studies of mass media have tended to focus on national identity, primarily examining the BBC and overlooking ITV and thus the role of ITV's regional channels.²⁷³ This study has addressed this relative absence by examining previously unexplored regional television news material held at the Media Archive for Central England, arguing that regional television news played a crucial role in the formation of local identities, defining the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion along racial and local lines. Television undoubtedly played a significant role in public understanding of post-war immigration. This role that has been explored by a growing field of historians, who have examined representations of immigrants on British television.²⁷⁴ These scholars, however,

²⁷² Bill Schwarz, *The White Man's World: Memories of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Camilla Schofield, *Enoch Powell and the Making of Postcolonial Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Jordanna Bailkin, *The Afterlife of Empire* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2012); Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't no Black in the Union Jack* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1987).

²⁷³ Andrew Crisell, *An Introductory History of British Broadcasting* (London: Routledge, 1997); James Curran and Jean Seaton, *Power Without Responsibility: The Press, Broadcasting and the Internet in Britain* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1981); John MacKenzie, 'In Touch with the Infinite: The BBC and the Empire, 1923-53,' in *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, ed. John MacKenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986); Thomas Hajkowski, *The BBC and National Identity in Britain, 1922-53* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).

²⁷⁴ Darrell Newton, *Paving the Empire Road: BBC Television and Black Britons* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011); Gavin Schaffer, *The Vision of a Nation: Making Multiculturalism on British Television* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Sarita Malik, *Representing Black Britain: Black and Asian Images on Television* (London: SAGE, 2002), 56; Stephen Bourne, *Black in the British Frame: The Black Experience in British Film and Television* (London: Continuum, 2001).

have focused on national television, overlooking the important role of regional television in the formation of public responses to post-war immigration. By looking at race, regionality and mass media in the same frame, this study has significantly found that regional television news played a crucial role in public responses to immigration, which differed, at times, from the role played by Britain's national media. By examining local media and race, this study provides a holistic way of understanding Britain and public responses to post-war immigration.

One result of the difference in local and national reporting of race, this study has argued, was a rise in local support for anti-immigrant politicians. This study examined a number of instances in which immigration became a political issue at a local level, beginning in Smethwick in 1964 with the first time that the issue was successfully utilised for significant political gain. Each of these case studies shows that local politicians drew upon local concerns about race and immigration that had been reinforced by local media. Chapter one examined the role played by local media in the rise in racial tension in Smethwick from 1960 to 1965. It argued that local media played a significant role in anti-immigrant Conservative candidate Peter Griffiths' success in the 1964 General election by fuelling local anxieties about race. Griffiths' win demonstrated how extreme-right politicians could successfully exploit concerns fuelled by local media in order to gain significant local support. ATV played a role in the legitimisation of Griffiths through their choice of questions in interviews with local conservative politicians as well as through their use of vox pops.

In 1968, Enoch Powell, who had been MP for Wolverhampton since 1950, entered the national political scene when he made his famous 'Rivers of Blood' speech in Birmingham. Unlike Griffiths, Powell gained support across the nation; chapter two argued that like Griffiths, he did so by drawing upon local concerns about immigration that had been fuelled by local media in the years before. Local media also played a role in the legitimisation of Powell. Unlike the national press, television news and current affairs programming which, whilst reflecting a desire to remain neutral, were often critical of Powell, both the *Express & Star* and ATV's reporting was imbalanced in his favour.

Powell's support helped to legitimise a new form of popular racism that was exploited by far right groups such as the NF during the following decade. The NF's support varied dramatically across the country and chapter three argued that their high level of support in Leicester was due in part to the role played by the *Leicester Mercury* and ATV. As was the case in both Smethwick and Wolverhampton, on-going local issues involving immigrants were reported on extensively and framed as a direct threat to the local area. Both the *Mercury* and ATV presented the NF as a legitimate alternative to the mainstream political parties. Again, this differed significantly from the approach of the national press, including the *Daily Mail*, which shared the same ownership as the *Mercury*, which was extremely cautious about appearing to endorse the NF. It also differed from the approach of national television broadcasting which tended to be far more critical of the NF, emphasising their links to fascism. This suggests that local media felt a greater responsibility to act as the 'voice' of local communities. What this shows us is that that an examination of local as well as

national media is crucial in order to understand the development of public responses to the extreme right in post-war British communities.

The findings of this study reveal that pockets of support for extreme right wing politicians emerged at a local level, which in the case of Griffiths went entirely against national and even regional trends. Histories of twentieth-century British politics, which have viewed the nation as a homogenous whole and suggested that patterns in electoral behaviour have been uniform across the nation, have often overlooked important regional and local variations.²⁷⁵ Anti-immigrant politicians such as Griffiths and Powell were able to use local media to draw upon cross-class concerns about the impact of immigration on local communities. This regional variation in voting behaviour can be seen most clearly in a contemporary context in the result of the 2016 EU referendum, in which London was the only English region to vote to remain, whilst the West and East Midlands had the highest 'leave' vote. The referendum result demonstrates the potential impact of these overlooked British regions on British politics and emphasises the need for historians of twentieth-century Britain to examine regions outside of London.

When examining ATV's regional news reports, this study took into consideration the impact of various cinematic techniques such as their use of camera angles, visual imagery and interviewers' questions, providing a methodology for future studies of regional television news. For example, this

²⁷⁵ David Butler and Donald Stokes, *Political Change in Britain: Basis of Electoral Choice* (London: Macmillan, 1969).

study focuses solely on representations of race, provoking further study on the intersectionality of race and gender. Studies of gender and post-war immigration have discussed how experiences of male and female immigrants differed significantly.²⁷⁶ When ATV depicted immigrants on screen they often did so in ways that were not only racialised but also gendered, something which could be explored further in future work. This study also provides a framework for examining the development of identity in regions outside of London and could be expanded on geographically through an examination of race on ITV's other regional news programmes, providing a more complete understanding of the development of public responses to post-war immigration.


To conclude, throughout the period of this study, local media was representing race in a way that differed to that of the national media; local media reported on local issues not only more extensively, but also at times far less sympathetically. By not representing immigrants as part of the local communities in which they lived, ATV played a crucial role in the exclusion of black and Asian communities. The effect of this was the uneven development of racial tension between British communities, allowing far right politicians to gain popularity within local areas by exploiting cross-class local anxieties about immigration. The findings of this study highlight that by overlooking regional variation, or by making

²⁷⁶ Evan Smith and Marinella Marmo, *Reorienting the South Asian Female Body: The Practice of Virginity Testing and the Treatment of Migrant Women* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Kaveri Sharma and Aisha K. Gill, 'Protection for All? The Failures of the Domestic Violence Rule for (Im)migrant Women,' in *Violence Against Women in South Asian Communities: Issues for Policy and Practice*, ed. Ravi K. Thiara and Aisha K. Gill (London: Jessica Knightley Publishers, 2010), 213; M. Page Baldwin, 'Subject to Empire: Married Women and the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act,' *Journal of British Studies* 40, no. 4 (2001): 522-556; Philippa Levine, 'Sexuality and Empire,' in *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, ed. Catherine Hall and Sonya Rose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 122.

assumptions about the nation based on evidence found in London, scholars of twentieth-century British history have overlooked crucial regional differences. By examining the local and regional context of post-war immigration this study provides insights into public responses to post-war immigration and the uneven development of racial tension across the UK.

Appendices

Appendix One: ATV Reporting of Immigrant Education, 1963-1973.

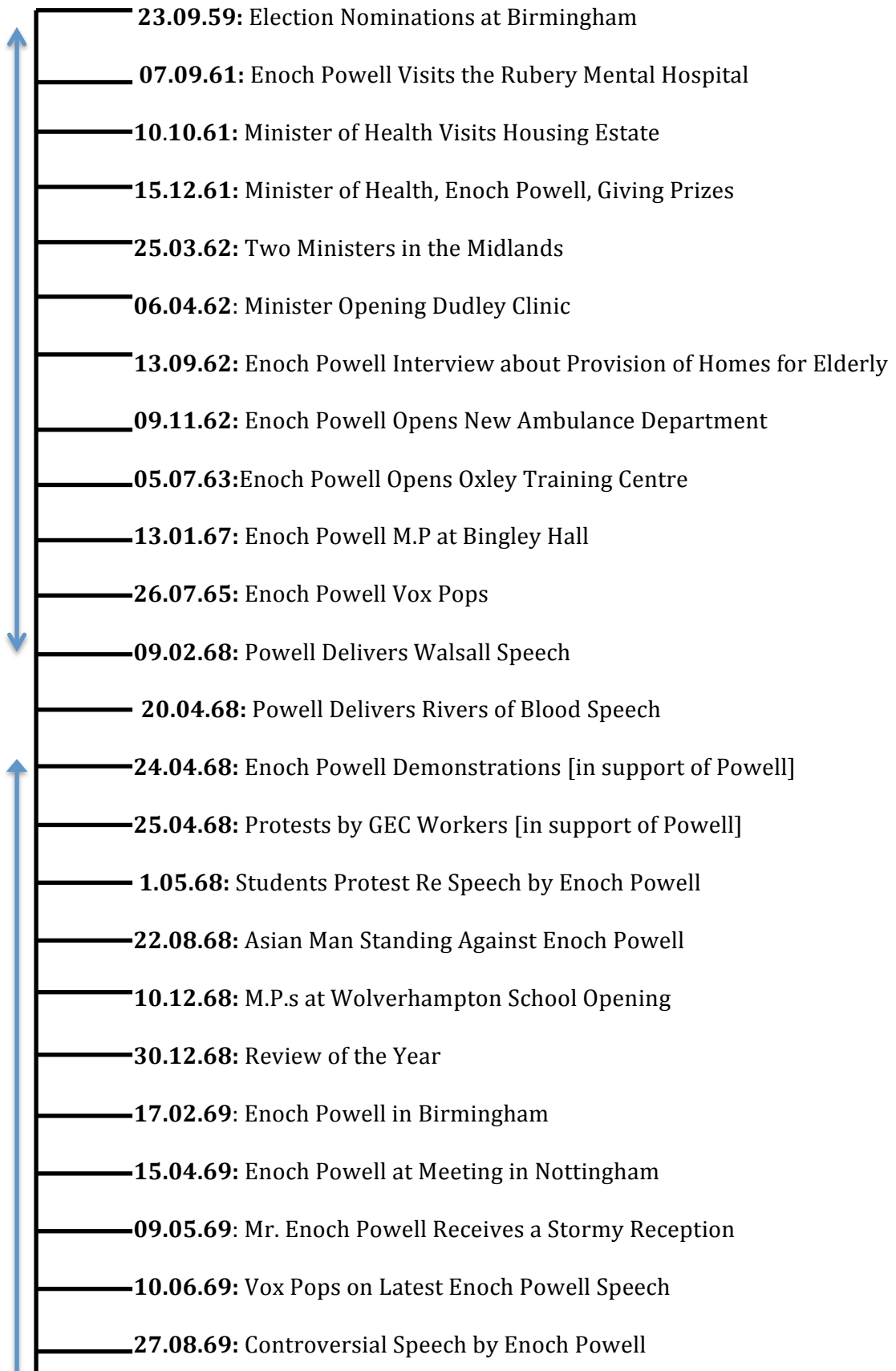


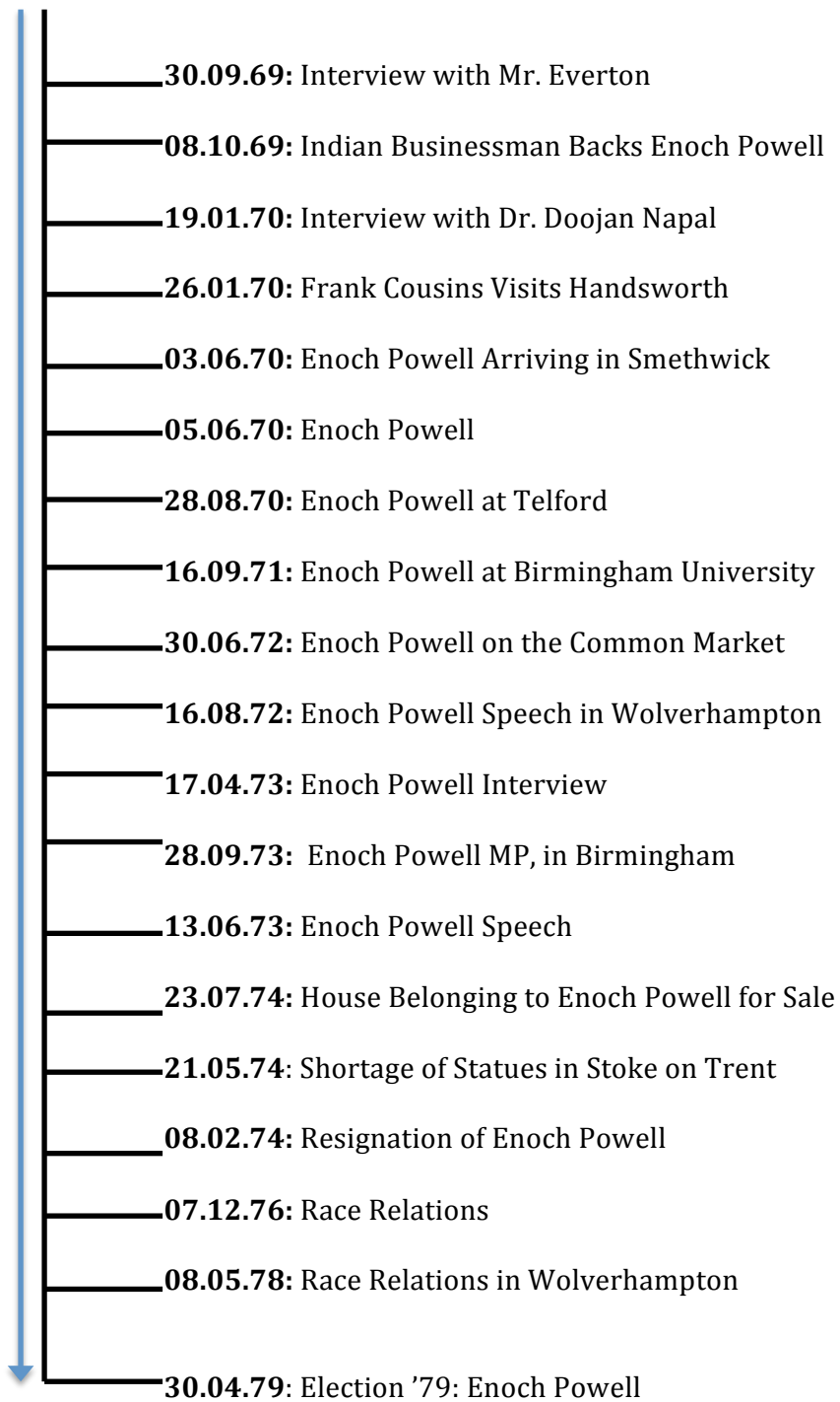
13.08.63:	Learn English at School
21.05.65:	Anthony Crosland in Birmingham
02.11.65:	Grove Primary School
08.11.65:	Interview with Headmistress of Multi Racial Primary School
26.04.67:	Lord Mayor, Lady Mayoress Presenting Prizes, Sparkbrook
18.07.67:	Headmaster to Retire
24.10.67:	Multi-Racial Nursery School Opened up in Birmingham
9.02.68:	Powell Delivers Walsall Speech
20.2.68:	Immigrants and Education
20.4.68:	Powell Delivers 'Rivers of Blood' Speech
23.04.68:	Lack of School Places for 5 Year Olds
16.05.68:	Edward Short M.P Tours Birmingham Schools
16.05.68:	Edward Short Interview
06.06.68:	David Ennals Minister for Race Relations and Immigration
21.06.68:	David Ennals in Coventry
29.08.68:	Preview of New School in Wolverhampton
10.12.68:	M.P.s at Wolverhampton School Opening
13.12.68:	Handsworth Junior School Headmistress Retires
10.01.69:	Interview Re Plans for School for Immigrant Children
30.06.69:	Minister of State for Education Visits Derby Schools
13.10.70:	School Places for Immigrant Children
17.05.1971:	Gloucester Centre to Teach Immigrant Children in English
06.08.71:	Holiday School Set Up For Immigrant Children
03. 12.73:	Clapham Terrace Primary School, Leamington

Appendix Two: ATV reporting of Sikhs, 1960-1979

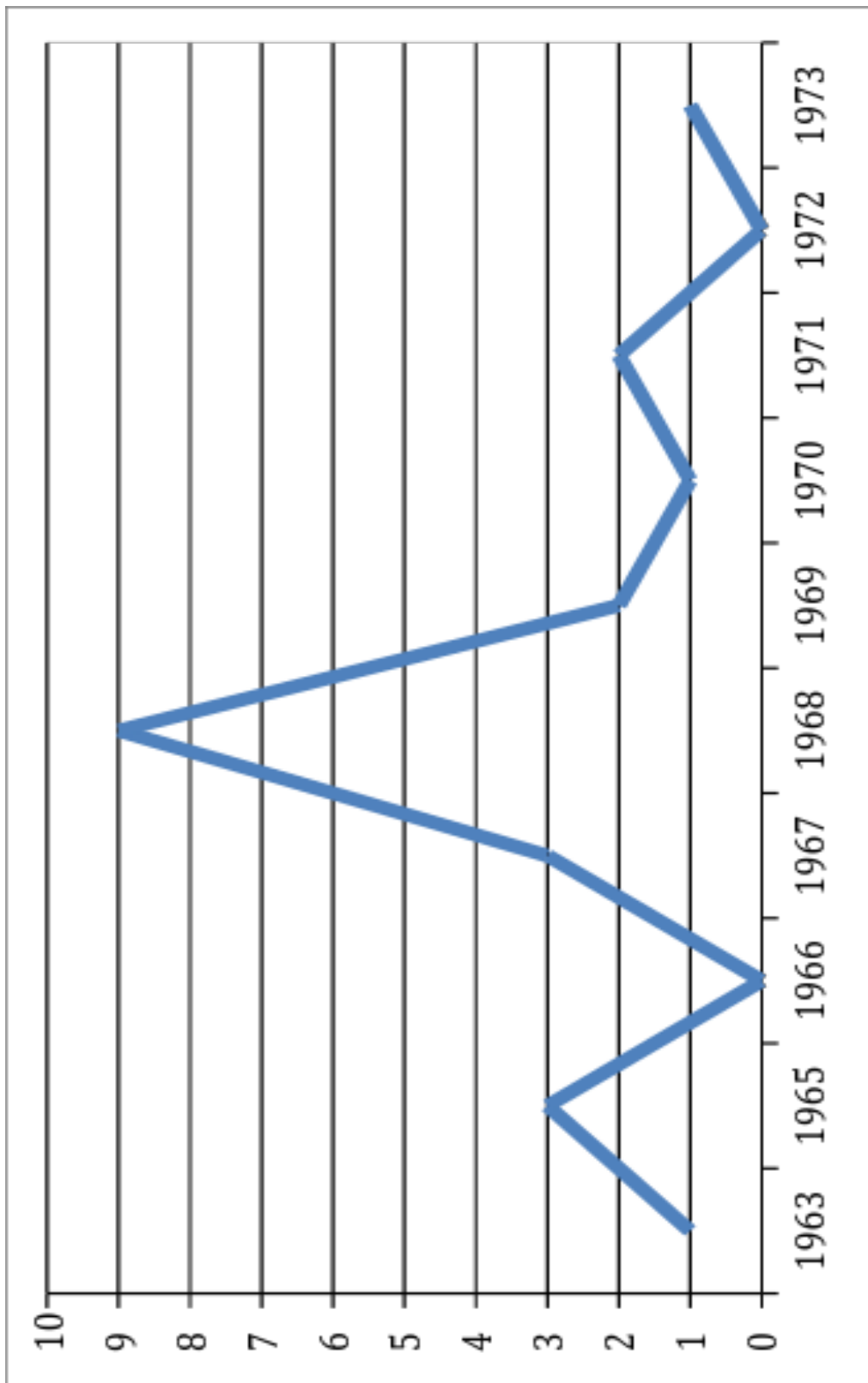
27.03.63:	Sikh Bus Conductor
12.08.63:	Sikh Temple Gurdwara Opened at Nottingham
09.05.66:	Sikh Temple Painted with Swastikas
17.07.67:	Sikh Refused Work
14.08.67:	Wolverhampton Bus Dispute
16.11.67:	Sikh Temple in Balsall Heath
29.12.67:	New Sikh Temple at Wolverhampton
08.01.68:	Meeting of Sikhs in Wolverhampton
9.02.68:	Powell delivers Walsall Speech.
11.03.68:	Paint thrown at Sikh Temple in Smethwick
11.03.68:	West Bromwich Bus Conductor
20.04.68:	Powell Delivers 'Rivers of Blood' Speech.
23.01.69:	Wolverhampton Sikh, Singh Jolly.
07.11.69:	Opening of a Sikh Temple at Coventry
28.01.70:	Leicester's First Sikh Traffic Warden
08.04.70:	Leicester's First Sikh Policeman
22.04.71:	Leamington Spa Race Relations
30.07.71:	Sikh Sports Event at Smethwick
04.10.72:	Sikh Baptism Ceremony at Smethwick Temple
23.02.73:	Sikh Temple at Walsall
08.03.73:	Leicester's First Sikh Traffic Warden on Duty
01.06.73:	New Motor Cycle Helmet Law and British Sikhs
01.05.74:	Fire at Sikh Temple in Leamington Spa
17.03.75:	First West Midlands Policeman to Wear a Turban
30.07.79:	Sikh Game
31.07.79:	Asian Community Centre

Appendix Three: ATV Reporting of Enoch Powell 1959-1979





Appendix Four: ATV News Reports on Immigrant Education



Appendix Five: Programmes 1to 179, September 1980 to December 1985

Topic	Number of episodes
Music	80
Sport	24
Dance	21
Film & cinema	16
Arts & Crafts	15
Health/ disease/ disability	15
Theatre	14
Non fiction writing	13
Poetry	9
Food	8
Fiction writing	8
Art, culture, and history exhibitions	8
Fashion/ modelling	7
Immigration/ nationality laws	5
Rastafarianism	4
Probation/black offenders/ police	4
Race relations/CRE	4
Magic/ escapology	4
Radio	3
Racial bias in national media	3
Asian festivals	3
Education	3
Riots	3
Arranged marriage	3
Asian women	3
Anti-racist/ civil rights campaigning	3
The National Front	2
Photography	2
Television	2
Unemployment	2
First impressions of Britain	2
Black owned businesses	2
Comedy	2
Consumer rights	2
Black hair	2
Department of Health and Social Security	2
Story telling	2
Buddhism	2
Sikh men	2
The Church	2
Housing/ homelessness	2
The Caribbean	2

Illegal immigrants	1
Trade unions	1
Racism in children's books	1
China town	1
Fostering	1
Gypsies / travellers	1
Magazines	1
Ventriloquism	1
Toys and gifts	1
Textile design	1
Gurkha army regiment	1
Vietnamese boat people	1
Asian businessmen	1
Art therapy	1
State benefits	1
Japanese face reading	1
Circus	1
Black professional women	1
Black beauty contest	1
Charity	1

Appendix Six: Programmes 179 to 314, January 1985 to April 1990

Topic	Number of episodes
Music	78
Dance	30
Arts & crafts	24
Theatre	20
Film / cinema	19
Food	13
Sport	13
Fashion	11
Television	10
Non fiction writing	10
Poetry	10
Health/disease/disability	9
Fiction writing	8
Black/ Asian owned business	8
Photography	5
Magazines	5
Racism/ racial equality	5
The Caribbean	5
Black professional women	4
Art, culture and history exhibitions	3
Immigration law	3
Police/ black offenders	2
African-Caribbean Self-help organisations	2
Comedy	2
Mime artists	2
Education	2
Carnival	2
Mime artists	2
Civil rights campaigning	1
Palm reading/ astrology	1
Magic	1
Ethiopia	1
Dating agencies	1
Charity	1
Trade unions	1
Islamic Research Centre	1
Chinese broadcasting	1
Youth Training Scheme	1
National press	1
Puppetry	1
Yoga	1
Asian women	1

Aromatherapy	1
1981 riots	1
Social security	1
Black hair	1
Fostering	1
Asian immigration	1
Circus	1
Interior design	1
European single market	1
Community leaders	1
African National congress	1

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