An examination of imagery used to represent fundamental British values and British identity on primary school display boards.

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Abstract

It is observable that display boards are being applied widely by primary schools as visual representations for teaching and learning about the stated fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The research presented by this article is based upon analysis of 27 display boards from primary schools across England, including findings from in-depth interviews with three primary school teachers. We wanted to identify and to understand how discourses of British national identity such as monoculturalism and multiculturalism are reified by schools and teachers through the imagery used on primary school display boards in the representation of fundamental British values. Our research makes an original contribution to the debate on teaching and learning about national identity, by offering empirical evidence both of representations of fundamental British values and of teacher interpretations of the policy.

Key words: national identity, fundamental British values, Monoculturalism, Multiculturalism, Imagery.

Introduction

Primary schools and their teachers in England and Wales are expected by statute to uphold, actively promote and not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs (Department for Education (DfE) 2014; Teachers Standards, 2011). However, it is argued as a professional duty imposed upon them by policymakers without professional dialogue (Elton-Chalcraft, et. al., 2017; Lander, 2016). The focus of this research is on primary schools' and teachers' responses to the policies of fundamental British values. The primary school is identified by this research as a site of representation for providing powerful grounds on which political and dominant cultural discourses of national identity can be reified as a regime of truth (Foucault, 1980). We present, examine and critically analyse those choices

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through theoretical lenses associated with power, national identity construction and representation. Data generated by this research arrives also from professional dialogue with primary school teachers, where they articulate their understanding of fundamental British values and British identity via imagery used on primary school displays boards.

Our sense of curiosity on approaches to practice concerning fundamental British values have been heightened over the last four years by our professional visits to a diverse range of primary schools. We began to share in our observations that display boards were being used more increasingly to represent fundamental British values since the introduction of the DfE (2014) policy. It was a British values primary school display board based on white-British artist Grayson Perry's '*Who are You?*' (Higgins, 2014) which increased our interest and motivation to conduct this research. That primary school display board represented fundamental British values and British identity through images of Queen Elizabeth the second; the red routemaster London Bus; a cup of tea; Winston Churchill, William Shakespeare; John Lewis (a department store) and a bulldog. We noticed the overbearing white-British imagery and considered that dominant monocultural representation of Britishness and British values as being problematic in a continuous developing 21st century multicultural British society. It made us curious to know more about the power of the school display board as a tool for promoting discourses visually to enable the reification of political agendas for education (Foucault, 1972). We conceived the view that an examination of the imagery used from primary school display boards depicting fundamental British values as British identity would help to bring to greater attention the most frequent use of images and any group of images which were more dominant than others. It was an approach to our thinking from which the first key aim of the research emerged through the question: What are the most frequently used images on primary school display boards to denote fundamental British values, in representation of British identity?

We were interested in the implicit nature of the images, by their representations of fundamental British values and British identity, and where they could arguably be positioned with or against contested concepts for teaching and learning about

nationalism and British identity i.e. monoculturalism and multiculturalism (Race, 2015). We also perceived that engaging in professional dialogue with primary school teachers, to gain their perspectives of fundamental British values as represented by images on display boards could offer some understanding of the nature of British identity being promoted by primary schools. It was an approach to our thinking which related to the second key aim of the research through the question: Which images do teachers interpret as being most and least representative of fundamental British values in the representation of British identity?

This research situates itself with the works of Osler (2008); Crick (2008); and Starkey (2008) all of whom examined the role of education in promoting national identity and citizenship. Although it has been ten years since their arguments and comments were shared, our research aims to extend on their observations and considerations. It does this by seeking to understand how responses by teachers to citizenship education in the primary school are being made through the policy of fundamental British values for generating a connection to notions of Britishness and British identity.

Social policies for education on national identity

Race (2015) provides an in-depth discussion on a range of social policies such as Assimilation, Integration and Multiculturalism, implemented by successive governments to assist with addressing immigration to Britain and the dilemma of teaching about national identity through education. Assimilation is identified as regarding 'diversity as a problem and cultural differences as socially divisive' (Coelho, 1998: 19). Assimilation as a one-way process of social change in Britain meant that minority-ethnic immigrant groups were expected to adapt to white-British majoritarian cultural norms (Gillborn, 2008; Moncrieffe, 2017).

Integration as a process of adaptation and acculturation required the incorporation of diversity into the mainstream, in seeking to addressing the dilemma of national identity through education (Coelho, 1998; Modood, 2007; Race, 2015). However, it is suggested by Race (2015) that although integration implies a two-way process with

cultural diversity, like Assimilation, it is still a one-way process controlled by institutions such as the nation state and government run offices for education.

Multicultural policies of education have aimed to adopt an inclusive approach to ethnic diversity and national identity by having a perspective which understands humans as being culturally embedded; and seeing cultural diversity is desirable (Banks and Banks, 2007; Parekh, 2000). However, there have been conflicting views on the outcomes of multiculturalism and its ability to offer true inclusion for all (Tomlinson, 2015; Gillborn, 2008). For example, following the widespread minority-ethnic group uprisings in Britain during the early 1980s, where white-British institutions such as the government and police were challenged on discrimination and racism (Moncrieffe, 2017, 2018), the emerging policy rhetoric of multiculturalism of *Education for All* in the Swann Report (1985) is argued to have failed to filter into the consciousness of society and education system (Gilroy, 1987). It is suggested that 'tokenistic inclusion of Black Studies, Asian Studies and Ethnic Studies' needed to go much further to promote more than a harmonious and 'well-integrated' society Singh (in Race, 2015: 9).

Britishness and British identity

In the wake of a terrorist attack on British people in Britain associated with British born Muslims (more commonly known as 7/7) in July 2005, Gordon Brown the New Labour Chancellor, spoke of the need to reinforce what he called Britishness suggesting it would serve as a platform to build stronger social cohesion amongst British people (Brown, 2006). Critical responses towards Brown's (2006) vision of teaching and learning about Britishness are found in Osler's (2009) responses and concerns about the potential reinforcement of an essentialist version of British identity through an unproblematic and Anglocentric lens and narrative, rather than a complex process reflecting on Britain as a community of communities. Maylor (2010) shares a similar view, in suggesting that defining a British identity both in policy and schools, could lead to problems where teachers' and pupils' understandings of Britishness offer different constructions. Colls (2011: 575) argues that when there are competing definitions of Britishness, it becomes a problematic notion and a slippery subject. Brown's (2005) speech followed on from a government report where

it had been stated that communities in Britain were being 'polarised along ethnic, racial or religious lines' (Home Office, 2001: 10). However, research by Heath and Roberts (2008) and Foresight Future Identities (2013) emphasised that no specific minority groups had been identified as not having or ascribing to a British identity. This appears contrary to the political discourses of apparent community and social segregation (Blair, 2006) which suggested that minority ethnic groups were resistant to a sense of British identity and needed to be targeted in relation to their lack of national loyalty (Keddie, 2014: 3).

The emergence of 'fundamental British values'
Former Prime Minister David Cameron (2010-2016) blamed state policies of multiculturalism for failing to shape a common sense of British identity and for causing the rise in extremism and radicalisation in Britain (Cameron, 2011). However, it is argued that the perceived lack of a sense of shared British identity has not been due to the failure of multicultural social policies but a result of other social and political factors including white-British majoritarianism and institutional racism (Conversi, 2012; Gillborn, 2008; Kapoor, 2013; Pathak, 2008). Cameron's (2011) speech where he discussed the failure of state multiculturalism should be considered as a significant moment where the proposed notion for teaching and learning about fundamental British values in schools emerged (Race, 2015). He spoke of believing in 'certain values [and a country] that actively promotes them' Cameron (in Race, 2015: 129-130).

The concept of fundamental British values was applied as a definitive educational policy through *The Prevent Strategy* (2011) with a key aim: to stop young people in education from becoming radicalised and to develop 'a sense of belonging and support for our core values' (Prevent, 2011: 3.6). The values are taught through spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) education (DfE, 2014). The document states that schools should promote fundamental British values by 'actively promoting the values … challenging opinions or behaviours in school that are contrary to fundamental British values' (DfE, 2014: 5). Under David Cameron's Coalition Government (2010-2015) the revised Teachers Standards (2011) included a new section in Part 2 of the document which made it a statutory duty for teachers to

uphold fundamental British values (Teachers Standards, 2011). In response to this, Lander (2016) suggested that social contexts and political discourses had been manipulated where:

> […] the preparation of teachers to teach in a culturally diverse society has been preceded by the vilification and ridicule of multiculturalism […] set against the backdrop of the 'war on terror' (Lander, 2016: 276).

Further concern comes from Elton-Chalcraft, et. al. (2017: 30) who argue that: 'the role of the teacher has been conceived and imposed with respect to fundamental British values and counter-terrorism within a vacuum devoid of professional dialogue'. They suggest that an assumption has been made by policymakers that teachers will know how to promote and articulate fundamental British values without seeming to indoctrinate or promote jingoism in schools and classrooms (Elton-Chalcraft, et. al. 2017). It is a view that relates to Keddie's (2014) study, where it was found that some teachers' narrow conception of British culture is racialised in its apparent privileging of national identity along lines of geography/tradition (e.g. place of birth, monarchy, pride in British achievements) rather than values of democracy.

The power of visual discourses

Foucault (1972) argues that it is important to think about power relations when looking at what is made available through discourse, and this includes the visual. Knowledge is discursive, and a hegemonic discourse will lay claim to a truth, leading to social constructions of difference and authority and social inequality (Rose, 2012). It is suggested that a 'depiction is never just an illustration…it is the site for the construction and depiction of social difference' (Fyfe and Law, 1998: 1). The concept of cultural reproduction (Bourdieu, 1989) suggests that social disadvantages and inequalities are maintained and furthered through the hidden curriculum transmitting the norms, values and beliefs of the dominant group or culture. According to Hall (1997) discourses encompass different modes of communication practices which systematically construct our knowledge of reality, making itself persuasive in creating and reproducing knowledge or truths within a culture or society. Foucault (1972) presented on the capability of a discourse in becoming a regime of truth. That is, a dominant interpretation of phenomena by which majority viewpoints become influenced and situated with, to the extent that they champion and preserve the

discourse as hegemony and common sense (Gramsci, 1971; Schneider, 2013). In casting this critical lens as a gaze on the educational policy of fundamental British values (DfE, 2014), it can assist with examining the extent to which primary schools and teachers by their interaction with political, social and educational discourses may become subjects of those discourses; how they can potentially become disciplined into certain ways of thinking and acting, thus potentially reifying the discourse as hegemony (Gramsci, 1971). Where dominant discourses are in the beginning located and fed through socially powerful organisations and institutions, such as the media and through government, they can emerge through policy enactment in education and in schools. Primary schools are powerful sites in which dominant discourses applied as common-sense perspectives can be articulated for shaping how the social world should be understood (Tonkiss,1998 in Rose, 2012). Foucault's (1972) perspectives discourse are applied by this research in examining the power of imagery used as representations of national identity on primary school displays boards. These perspectives are applied to the monoculturalism and multiculturalism debate.

Methodology

The research consisted of two stages of data collection and analysis:

1. Stage One: Internet search of primary school display board imagery representing fundamental British values.
2. Stage Two: Semi-structured interviews with teachers concerning the imagery used on display boards to represent fundamental British values.

Stage One: Internet search

The purpose of the internet search was to observe and to analyse how primary schools were communicating discourses on British identity through imagery on display boards to represent the meaning of fundamental British values. We conceived that identifying and analysing what are the most widely used images would provide a view of the dominant discourses being communicated. Our approach was positioned with Panofsky's (in Rose, 2012) theory of iconography, an approach to the examination and analysis of imagery that can provide an interpretation of cultural significance, and where the intrinsic meaning of an image as

a statement can reveal underlying principles and attitudes. By focusing on imagery and context to explore interpretative power, we saw our application of iconography as a form of discourse analysis (Rose, 2012).

We used the internet search engine 'Google images' and applied the search terms: 'display boards of fundamental British values.' In our recognition that internet searches are random, and that information is being both uploaded and removed perpetually from the internet on a daily basis, we carried out our search over the course of one week. We selected forty display boards from the websites of primary schools which were in the South East of England; the Midlands; the North West of England; London and the North-East of England. Each display board included the title phrase 'British Values'. Each display board also contained the fundamental British values of statements of 'democracy', 'the rule of law', 'individual liberty', 'mutual respect', and 'tolerance' of those with different faiths and beliefs (DfE, 2014). Our focus was on visual imagery that was being used to represent the fundamental British values. Written statements or words used to represent the fundamental British values were not the focus of this research. We ensured that the images used on each display board selected were clearly visible for examination and analysis. We discounted all display boards where the imagery was unclear. Our narrowing of the sample reduced the display boards to a total of twenty-seven.

Imagery used on each of the display boards were firstly identified and categorised into three main groups as representations of national symbolism: national symbols; cultural symbols; and cultural icons (Elgenius, 2005; Smith, 2015). Elgenius (2005: 25) argues that national symbols such as flags are physical manifestations which reify 'nation-ness' so that it is visible and tangible. Therefore, the national flags and emblems which appeared from the search were categorised as 'National symbols'. Hall (1997: 14) discusses culture as being forged by shared maps of meanings that use symbols to organise and regulate social practices. Symbols representing cultural ceremonies, religion, traditions, rituals and values were grouped into 'Cultural symbols'. We applied the concept of using history and historical space in the formation and maintenance of national identity (Smith, 1993). Cultural artefacts and icons that members of a culture identify with as being representative of that culture,

such as monuments, statues, well-known people, buildings and architecture, landscape and the capital city, we categorised as 'Cultural icons'.

Next, the frequency of each individual image that was used 'at least once' on a display board was noted. For example, the image of the Queen Elizabeth the second was used on eighteen, out of the twenty-seven display boards analysed. In taking this approach we applied a degree of subjectivity in deciding what images denoted a cultural symbol, or cultural icon. Although this could be criticised as being subjectively biased in our categorisation, it was an approach that reflected the relativist perspective by which the research is framed (Cohen et. al, 2011).

Stage two: Semi-structured interviews

The research sought from primary school teachers their perceptions and meanings made of the images that were being used on display boards as visual representations of fundamental British values. It is a methodological positioning linked to the phenomenological lens of Schutz (1962; 1967) which presents on how individual human beings give meaning to their realities i.e. examining, analysing and presenting personal expressions of meanings made about the imagery used to project the phenomenon 'fundamental British values'.

Three primary school teachers agreed to take part in this research. This was a sample drawn by the convenience of our primary school visits. They are known in this research as Teacher A, Teacher B and Teacher C.

Teacher A is female and of Afro-Caribbean ethnic origins. She works in an urban 'multicultural' state-school (government funded) of approximately 300 children aged 3 to 11 years old. The support staff and teachers at her school are also of broad and diverse multicultural ethnic backgrounds. She was involved in the discussion for the construction of her own school's Fundamental British values display board. She teaches PSHE with her Year 5 class. Teacher B is female and of White-British ethnic origins. She works in a rural private school (non-government funded) of 150-170 children aged 3 to 13 years old. White-British is the dominant ethnic background of the children, teachers and support staff at her school. She was not involved in the

discussion and construction of her school's Fundamental British values display board. She teaches PSHE to her Year 4 class. Teacher C is female and of a White-British ethnic background. She works in a rural state-school (government funded) of approximately 120 children aged 3 to 11 years old. White-British is the dominant ethnic background of the children, teachers and support staff at her school. She was involved in the discussion of but not the construction of her school's Fundamental British values display board. She teaches PSHE with her Year 6 class. All the teachers in the research are aged over 40 years old.

A uniformed approach to questioning was applied through the semi-structured interviews where open-ended questions provided the space for each teacher to talk more freely about their meaning-making. Although set questions can expose a limitation to this approach where standardised wording may constrain the questions and answers (Patton, 1980), we considered that a uniformity in the patterns of responses to the questions would help with the organisation and analysis of the data. The twenty-seven fundamental British values display boards used in the research were numbered 1 to 27, and using an internet random number selector, RandomResult.com, five were randomly selected. These display boards were used as stimuli for the semi-structured interviews. The teachers were asked about the meanings that they made from the images on the five display boards.

In recognising the data emerging from the teachers' responses, we applied a method of thematic coding. Coding of themes entailed our focus on significant phrases and individual words articulated by the teachers which related to notions of British values in relation to British identity. We were open to these responses and coded themes both deductively and inductively, according to how the data spoke to us. We recognised a pattern in discussion of multiculturalism being indicative of developing a national identity framed by a sense of belonging and cohesion amongst ethnically diverse national citizens (Parekh, 2008; Race, 2015), and we applied the code 'MULTI-CULT' in relation to the data. We recognised a pattern in discussion of the teachers expressing notions of assimilation to a dominant discourse of British identity and monoculturalism, and as a signifier we applied the code 'MONO-CULT'. Data emerging from the teachers' responses that were indicative of hegemonic cultural

reproduction were marked by the code 'CULT REPRO'. We saw data emerging in the teachers' responses to the construction of a shared sense of nationalism and British identity based on civic values and on ethnic values respectively (Heath and Roberts, 2006; Ignatieff, 1993; Smith, 1993), and the codes 'CIVIC NAT' and 'ETHNIC NAT' were applied in relation to this. Data emerging from the teachers' responses that were indicative of minority-ethnic groups being 'othered' by imagery representation were marked by the code 'OTHER'.

Findings

In presenting our examination and analysis of the data from the 'Internet Search', we focused on the apparent trends emerging from our coding and categorisation of imagery used on primary school display boards. Following on, we blend our presentation and analysis of data from 'Semi-Structured Interviews', through a discussion of key themes emerging from our processes of coding and categorising.

Table 1 (below) shows emerging from this research the frequency of images used for representing fundamental British values on primary school display boards:

	Table 1 Images for representing fundamental British values on primary school display boards			
Frequency	**Imagery**	**Category**	**Number of display boards with at least 1 image of this displayed**	**Percentage of display boards with this image**
1st	British Union flag	National symbol	27	100%
2nd	The Queen	Cultural icon	18	67%
3rd	Religious symbols	Cultural symbol	15	56%
4th	Holding/touching hands	Cultural symbol	13	48%
=5th	Red routemaster bus	Cultural icon	10	37%
=5th	Winston Churchill	Cultural icon	10	37%
=7th	Queens Guard	Cultural icon	9	33%
=7th	The poppy	Cultural symbol	9	33%
=7th	Houses of Parliament	Cultural icon	9	33%
10th	Red telephone box	Cultural icon	7	26%
11th	Cup of tea/teapot	Cultural symbol	5	19%
=12th	Tower Bridge	Cultural icon	4	15%
=12th	Fish and chips	Cultural symbol	4	15%
=12th	Scales of Justice	Cultural symbol	4	15%
=12th	Other members of the royal family	Cultural icon	4	15%
=12th	Cricket/Football/ Wimbledon tennis	Cultural symbol	4	15%
=17th	David Cameron	Cultural icon	3	11%
=17th	NHS/Firefighter	Cultural symbol	3	11%
=17th	Policeman/woman	Cultural symbol	3	11%
=20th	William Shakespeare	Cultural icon	2	7%
=20th	London Eye	Cultural icon	2	7%
=20th	Stonehenge	Cultural icon	2	7%
=20th	Red pillar post box	Cultural icon	2	7%
24th	Others*	Mixture	1	4%
	**Images which appeared on one display board only: St. George; bulldog; Paddington Bear; Mo Farah; The Beatles; a ballot box; judge; shamrock; daffodil; London Underground sign; Nelson Mandela; a bowler hat; Theresa May; Harry Potter; Jason Kenny (British cyclist).			

Ethnic nationalism

More than fifty per cent of the images from the twenty-seven display boards were classified as cultural icons (Elgenius, 2005; Smith, 2015) e.g. Queen Elizabeth the second, routemaster bus, former Prime Minister Winston Churchill, Queens guard, Houses of Parliament, red telephone box, cup of tea, Tower Bridge, William Shakespeare, red post box, etc. Of the cultural symbols, the image of holding hands was the most commonly found on almost fifty per cent of the display boards, followed by images of religious symbols. Cultural symbols such as the red poppy, were seen on over thirty per cent of the display boards. Other cultural symbols such as a cup of tea, fish and chips, and representations of sports such as tennis, football and cricket were identified on between fifteen and twenty per cent of the display boards. Significantly, over eighty per cent of the twenty-seven display boards with cultural icons and symbols presented ethnocentric white-British identities and histories to represent notions of fundamental British values.

When a random selection of the display boards (see Appendix 1) were put to the teachers, responses from them emerged to show congruency in their perspectives that images being used were unrepresentative of the stated fundamental British values (DfE, 2014) but more representative of what they considered to be dominant stereotypical cultural and ethnic images of England related to what might be seen in London through tourism:

> They represent what you see if you went to London if you went to Buckingham Palace and then see the guards…black cabs in London… Tower bridge is in London…well they represent London from a tourist perspective almost if you went into a tourist gift shop these are the stereotypical images of London (Teacher A responding to Display Board 2, Appendix 1).

> Illustration of a soldier, red bus, cricketer, Winston Churchill in profile, the royal crown, one more picture of the Queen, then a picture of a soldier and a bus, a London taxi, so British values with those sort of images, I'm not sure it says anything about values, it's really typical English things that you would see and associate with Britain (Teacher B responding to Display Board 17, Appendix1).

> Like Winston Churchill, historical things, you might say that are not necessarily values of today (Teacher C responding to Display Board 17, Appendix 1).

A national identity framed by ethnic nationalism is spoken of as being an exclusive, backward looking that uses ethnic criteria to emphasise pride in Britain's history (Heath and Roberts, 2008). Teacher A also comments below on the images from display board 17 (Appendix 1) seeing them as cultural symbols of British elitism and power linked to an imperial past, and being reinforced in the present by the display boards:

> Cricket as a sport is played in countries who were part of the British Empire, the crown there as well, this display board it almost to a certain extent reminds me of a UKIP statement, things that they want to be maintained…but has nothing to do with what these words and British values, …more to do with a statement of power, what is seen as culture and history' (Teacher A responding to Display Board 17, Appendix 1).

The interpretations and meanings made of the images by Teacher A position display board 17 (Appendix 1) aiming to represent British values through images related to British cultural imperialism from the past, acting as a guide to knowing about British identity in the present, and maintaining its form.

Monocultural representations of 'whiteness'

A pattern in the teachers' responses emerged to indicate their view of dominance in white-British people being used as imagery to represent fundamental British values on display boards. Teacher A saw the images as symbolising power and elitism rather than being associated with fundamental British values:

> Powerful icons of Britishness, the Queen, Churchill, they are symbols of power and elitism and easily recognisable by people around the world really (Teacher A responding to Display Board 7, Appendix 1).

From the twenty-seven display boards, all images of cultural (British) icons are white-British people in positions of privilege and power: Queen Elizabeth the second; former Prime Ministers Winston Churchill and David Cameron; Prime Minister Theresa May; national playwright William Shakespeare; and the Queen's guard. There were just two identifiable non-white British exceptions: one image of Olympic athlete Sir Mo Farah, and one post-apartheid image of South African President Nelson Mandela. Imagery of law enforcers such as the white policeman and white policewoman and a white male judge, framed together on the display boards with images of white British cultural icons such as Queen Elizabeth the second and Prime

Ministers David Cameron, Theresa May and Winston Churchill, appeared to impose the sense of a dominant white-British monocultural, power-base and perspective for the meaning of British culture and identity. Teacher C noted images of white policemen and women on the display boards (Appendix 1) and articulated the need for a more ethnically diverse representation:

> Yeah more police presence, different coloured policemen (Teacher C, responding to display boards, Appendix 1).

Conversi (2012) suggests that a monocultural national identity is produced through assimilation to a dominant and exclusive narrative of British identity, where the practice of ethnic discrimination supresses and 'others' minority presence (Mann, 2004). Where dominant representations of cultural symbols and icons are of a white-British monoculture, the theoretical lens of 'Whiteness' can be applied to explain the hegemonic functions of fundamental British values display boards. Frankenburg (1993: 526) writes 'Whiteness signals the production and reproduction of dominance rather than subordination; normativity rather than marginality, and privilege rather than disadvantage.' 'Whiteness' as power and authority is being reinforced by the dominance of white-British identities on fundamental British values display boards in the primary school.

Othering

Stokes and Gabriel (2010) describe the process of casting a group, into the role of the 'other' and establishing one's own identity through opposition to and, frequently, vilification of this 'other'. A sense of this emerged as a pattern of observation in the teachers' responses to denote othering of minority-ethnic groups on the fundamental British value display boards:

> There is a black hand in the top in the middle, but I don't know what it's actually doing, black boy and Asian adult, not sure what British values they are supposed to represent. I don't know how much children will get out of this one except for maybe reinforcing stereotypes of minority-ethnic people in Britain' (Teacher A responding to display board 7, Appendix 1)

It seems to be more multicultural with the images of a black football player. But that particular image doesn't really represent the words of tolerance, equality and respect. I mean, it's just a football player who happens to be black…' (Teacher A responding to display board 11, Appendix 1).

The observations and meaning made of the images by Teacher A is that images of minority-ethnic people have no clear identifiable purpose for being on the display boards in relation to fundamental British values. In contrast, images of white people are shown in positions of law enforcers and authority to indicate the fundamental British value 'Rule of Law' (DfE, 2014). It positions minority ethnic people as the impotent 'other', and it relates to what Singh (1993 in Race, 2015), argues as being a tokenistic representation of minority ethnic groups.

Assimilation

Teacher C discussed the need for assimilation and acceptance to dominant forms of British history, culture and society, if new people are to come and live in Britain:

Winston Churchill put him on…on number 11, black silhouette of the Queen they are part of the system and what you accept if you come to live here, and they are in the past anyway so they are part of the history side of things...' (Teacher C, responding to display board 11, Appendix 1)

Teacher C also supports the idea that fundamental British values are necessary for a formation of a cohesive sense British identity:

It goes deeper than this, this is just the poster but you've got to learn what it's like to really come up against somebody else's belief and when it doesn't really acknowledge British values and how are we going to deal with it? You've got to first of all know what the British values are (Teacher C, responding to display board 11, Appendix 1).

These statements from Teacher C highlight the concerns of Elton-Chalcraft, et. al. (2017: 31) in what they see as 'an assumption that the shared values of Britishness are synonymous with a strong society and that society is weaker where different values exist'. Teacher C suggests that teaching and learning about fundamental British values will bring about a sense of belonging and connection amongst the 'other' to a British identity by their assimilation to a dominant British culture. Teacher C's comments relate to Coelho's (1998) argument that assimilation regards diversity as a problem and cultural differences as socially divisive.

Multicultural British identity

In their discussion of the display boards (Appendix 1), a pattern in the teachers'
responses emerged to denote the representation of multiculturalism as an inclusive
British identity through the fundamental British value display boards:

> I like the idea of different faces representing multiculturalism and diversity as it gives a sense
> of pluralism there… that's much more inclusive than the others (Teacher A, responding to
> display board 11, Appendix 1).
>
> [it] looks like children's hands reaching into the middle altogether in a sort of image of unity
> (Teacher B, responding to display board 11, Appendix 1).
>
> I like the children of mixed race on the bus'[….]'you do need everybody pulling together
> (Teacher C, responding to display board 25, Appendix 1).

The concept of multiculturalism was also interpreted by all the teachers in their
interpretations of display board 11 (Appendix 1) representing the fundamental British
values of 'mutual respect', 'tolerance' and 'individual liberty' (DfE, 2014):

> Maybe it's more of an overarching word for tolerance, respect' (Teacher A).
>
> Children's pictures depicting diversity and tolerance with holding hands' (Teacher B).
>
> […] you mustn't get rid of their individuality' (Teacher C).

Their responses refer to multiculturalism as a form of inclusivity, in relation to
national identity and built predominantly on civic values. Their views relate to
theories of multiculturalism discussed by both Banks and Banks (2007) and Parekh
(2000) as having a perspective which understands humans as being culturally
embedded.

Civic nationalism

A pattern in the teachers' responses emerged to denote a sense of civic nationalism
being articulated as British identity through the fundamental British values display
boards. In their discussion of display board 11 (Appendix 1), the teachers were in
agreement that the image of 'holding hands' (Appendix 1) which meet on top of a
flag of the British union flag was the most successful in representing most of the key

terms related to fundamental British values (DfE, 2014), for sharing a cohesive sense of connection and belonging to British identity:

> With those hands in the middle that touch in the centre of the flag represents a form of humanism and diversity that I guess those words respect, tolerance, democracy all symbolise (Teacher A).

> This one is very good on mutual respect the image of the hands joining in the middle er…I like this one because it's the coming together (Teacher B).

> Because that says more, every colour hand…so if you are wanting to talk about British values in that one, that's the one that says most things, democracy, fairness, individual liberty and tolerance, mutual tolerance…I think that's a good one (Teacher C).

Heath and Roberts (2008) discuss a primarily civic national pride being interpreted as one that is achieved through Britain's welfare state and political institutions. This was reflected in the teachers' comments where they placed high significance in the representation of fundamental British values and British identity on the images of the police, firefighters and the National Health Service (NHS) on display board 7 (Appendix 1):

> The image of the policewoman, the fire fighter and the NHS represents institutions that we as tax payers pay into to support and maintain the nation so I would definitely keep that one (Teacher A).

> Workers who sort of safeguard the country and the people…policewoman, fireman, nurse (Teacher B).

> Policeman, firefighter, that's good, showing caring jobs and different races, maybe make that more obvious by blowing it up.' (Teacher C).

All three teachers identified on display board 7 (Appendix 1) religious symbols being applied to represent the fundamental British value of 'mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths' (DfE, 2014). It was also suggested that there needed to be more images showing diverse representations of religion in Britain to emphasise the pluralistic nature of British identity:

It doesn't fully reflect British society. There's no image of a Sikh temple or a Muslim place of worship or a picture of the Quran so there's very little of that (Teacher A).

I can't see any Muslims on this one or different faiths or on the previous one (Teacher C).

Across the twenty-seven display boards, images of religious symbols and holding hands, were the third and fourth most frequent images respectively appearing alongside images of the scales of justice (=12th) and the police (=17th). These images construct a shared British identity based on civic values (Ignatieff, 1993) which Heath and Roberts (2008: 3) suggest are more inclusive, and countries that have more strongly civic conceptions also exhibit high levels of good citizenship.

Discussion

Our examination and analysis of data shows teachers producing a mixture of shared and competing responses in their interpretations of fundamental British values for constructing a sense of British identity. The responses of Teacher A to the images of fundamental British values display boards suggest alignment with knowing British identity through the discourses of multiculturalism, pluralism and cultural diversity (Race, 2015). It relates to civic values for the construction of a British identity. Teacher A raises concerns about the dominant white-British images being used on display boards and their potential in shaping exclusion of minority-ethnic groups. Teacher B's responses relate to notions of civic values for the construction of a British identity (Ignatieff, 1993) but are also indicative of ethnic values, Teacher B represents the hybrid nature of British identity that Heath and Roberts (2008) discuss as the most common form, based on both civic and ethnic values, and this highlights a possible tension with the principally civic nature of fundamental British values. Teacher C, like Teacher B, seemed to acknowledge both ethnic and civic values in knowing British identity but was predominantly positioned with the importance of ethnic values (Igtnatieff, 1993). Teacher C produced responses in relation to the notions of 'othering' and 'assimilation' and this can be associated with ethnic nationalism (Ignatieff, 1993, Race, 2015).

In responding to the interview questions: which of the display boards they felt most and least represented fundamental British values, all three teachers agreed that display board 11 (Appendix 1) was most representative. All images on this display board were interpreted by the teachers as being inclusive, multicultural and representing a diverse sense of shared British identity. The image of holding hands touching in the middle of the British union flag was interpreted by the teachers as representing unity and the fundamental British values of 'individual liberty' and 'mutual respect and tolerance' (DfE, 2014). All teachers articulated words and phrases aligned closely to the notion of civic nationalism. Interestingly, the cultural symbol of holding hands was the third most dominant image on the twenty-seven display boards. Display board 11 (Appendix 1) does not display any images of white cultural icons, such as Queen Elizabeth the second, Winston Churchill and Shakespeare; neither does it display cultural icons and cultural symbols related to the city of London or traditional 'English' celebrations and foods. All three teachers agreed that display board 17 (Appendix 1) was least representative of British identity, as they did not identify any of the images on this display board as being representative of the fundamental British values. The teachers interpreted these images as being stereotypical representations of England, or more specifically of London. Significantly, examples of these images from display Board 17 are found on over 80% of the twenty-seven display boards of fundamental British values in primary schools analysed in this research and are representative of the following: Queen Elizabeth the second; cricket/football; Queens Guard; red routemaster bus; Winston Churchill; the red poppy; 'Keep Calm and Carry On' poster; and black taxi cab. The teachers' responses to these images link with the cultural reproduction of whiteness thorough monoculturalism. They invoke notions of ethnic nationalism as the concept by which a powerful discourse of British identity can be transmitted under the guise of fundamental British values.

Concluding comments

This study has foregrounded its aims to provide an opportunity for teachers to reflect on images of icons and symbols used on primary school display boards of fundamental British values to represent British identity. When given this opportunity, teachers interpreted most of the dominant images of common icons and symbols of

traditional British culture as not representing fundamental British values. The display board chosen by all teachers as being least representative of fundamental British values used images which were icons and symbols of an ethnocentric traditional and stereotypical white-British culture. Our research has identified a clear pattern in primary school fundamental British values display boards imagery as generally projecting dominant white-British majoritarian perspectives and discourses of British identity (Conversi, 2012; Pathak, 2008). We suggest that the continued uncritical use and endorsing of such images to represent fundamental British values by teachers serve to maintain the power of exclusive monocultural white-British identities and perspectives, upheld as the "norm", to the general exclusion of minority-ethnic British identities and perspectives. In this way, a 'regime of truth' (Foucault, 1972) for knowing about Britishness and British identity through a white-British perspective is maintained. Our research suggests that *The Prevent Strategy (2011)* in its policy directives on the teaching and learning of fundamental British values has served to produce responses in practice by schools through displays boards which validate and spread 'whiteness' as power, dominance, normativity and privilege (Frankenburg, 1993). Arguably, it is a policy which by its uncritical enactment can be referred to what Gillborn (2008, p.4) describes as 'business as usual' forms of racism.

Notes on contributors

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Audrey Moncrieffe is a primary school teacher with over twenty years of teaching experience in urban and rural primary schools, with both dominant multicultural and dominant monocultural backdrops.

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Appendix 1

Primary School Display Board Images selected using RandomResult.com

2	
7	
11	

17	
25	