Multiculturalism, 'race', 'post-race': Implications for pedagogy

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Published version deposited in CURVE November 2012

Original citation & hyperlink:

Cowden, S. and Singh, G. (2012) 'Multiculturalism, 'race', 'post-race': Implications for pedagogy' in S. Garner and S. Kavak (Eds). Draft Workshop Proceedings: Debating Multiculturalism 2 (pp: 11-24). London: The Dialogue Society.

http://www.dialoguesociety.org/publications/academia/768-debating-multiculturalism-2.html

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Workshop Proceedings

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Debating Multiculturalism 2

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Workshop Proceedings:
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**DIALOGUE
SOCIETY**
LONDON 1999

First published in Great Britain 2012

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Contents

Part 3: MULTICULTURALISM IN THE UK - I

Part 4: MULTICULTURALISM IN THE UK - II

Part I
MULTICULTURALISM IN THEORY

Multiculturalism, 'Race', 'Post-race': Implications for Pedagogy

Stephen Cowden[1] and Gurnam Singh

Introduction

"Racism is not a static phenomenon, but is constantly renewed and transformed." Frantz Fanon (1970 p.41)

In the above quote Frantz Fanon, the Martiniquan psychiatrist, philosopher and revolutionary reminds us that any attempts to theorise and talk about racism and therefore by association 'race'- and for that matter other aspects of human oppression and difference - are fraught with difficulties. This is not only because of the elusive and contested nature of the concepts involved, but, most critically, the subjectivity of those doing the theorising inevitably becomes part of the discussion (Singh and Cowden 2010). This is particularly so when one additionally invokes the discourses of 'post-race' alongside 'race'. In opening a discussion like this we recognise that there are some dangers; for example, are we simply engaging in ungrounded rhetorical speculation about 'how nice it would be if we could all be kinder to each other'? Or more significantly, as Tim Wise (2010) has recently outlined, is the term 'post-race' being used as a means of denying the on going significance and impact of racism, and thereby denying in repudiating the importance of anti-racist struggles? If the idea of 'post-race' potentially represents a conceptual turn or even

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more profoundly a paradigm shift, what is this toward? A useful starting point for our discussion comes from the work of W. E. B. Du Bois. The argument in his 1903 book *The Souls of Black Folk* about the 'colour line' represented one of the most influential and powerful framings of 'race' throughout most of the early 20th Century in the US and the post-colonial world. What is much less well known is Du Bois' later questioning of his own concept in the early 1950s following a series of visits to post war Poland. Reflecting on his experience in an essay for Jewish Life magazine entitled "The Negro and the Warsaw Ghetto," Du Bois outlines how the inhumanity of the Warsaw ghetto and the experience of the Jewish population invoked him to revise his idea about the contours of 'race';

> In the first place, the problem of slavery, emancipation and caste in the United States was no longer in my mind a separate and unique thing as I had so long conceived it. It was not even solely a matter of colour and physical and racial characteristics, which was particularly a hard thing for me to learn, since for a lifetime the colour line had been a real and efficient cause of misery. (Zuckerman 2004 p.45)

Coming out of the bitterness and brutality of the experience of racism in the US it was not just an intellectual and political challenge, but also a personal challenge to conceptualise the racialisation of 'white' people through Nazism and anti-semitism. The key point here is that the challenges in considering the idea of 'post-race' came from the starting point of anti-racism, of 'post-race' as an elaboration of anti-racism.

In that sense we have two broad aims in this discussion. In the first half we offer a contemporary reading of what we have called the discursive field of 'race – post-race', with a particular emphasis on the relationship between multiculturalism and 'race'. Firstly we discuss the way this field has been "renewed and transformed" by contemporary events; in particular the 'war on terror', the rise of religious authoritarianism, and the construction of Muslims as the other to the 'civilised world'. These events we argue have created an impasse for the state policy of multiculturalism whereby it has become trapped in the logic of assuming an equivalence between diversity on the one hand and social justice on the other. It is this concern that becomes the starting point for asserting a pedagogy of 'post-race'. While much of this paper is theoretical, in order to avoid remaining within an entirely abstract realm, we end the paper with a discussion of a short course we developed and delivered for the West Midlands Probation service staff on the "Preventing Violent Extremism" Agenda in which we sought to adopt a 'post –race' pedagogical perspective.

Multiculturalism and 'Race'

Whilst ideas about human difference arguably form a permanent feature of all human history, the idea of 'race' is a much more recent phenomena (Husband 1987). Broadly speaking, in terms of the systematic study of 'race' one can identify three pivotal points. The first can be understood as the emergence of scientific racism from the late eighteenth to the mid- twentieth century. The 'race' studied here was essentially a 'science' of physical differences, designed to explain and justify racist practices; in particular slavery and colonisation. The second key moment is represented by the emergence of political movements within European colonies and amongst oppressed so called 'racial' or 'national' groups in the colonial centre – the work of W.E.B. Du Bois is a classic statement of this position, and this lays the ground for modern anti-racism and anti-colonialism. It is also worth noting here that discourses of 'race' and 'nation' during this period and subsequently tend to become conflated (Anderson 1991). The third pivotal moment follows the revelation of the horrors of the Nazi racial state, resulting in the mass slaughter of Jews and other minorities on the ground of 'racial' impurity. It is through the impetus of these latter two moments that the international academic community rejected the 'scientific' basis of race and racial difference, and sociology of 'race' emerges for the first time (Hall 1980). This rejection of the notion of 'race' as a marker of human biological and/or moral superiority and inferiority has been crucial in allowing the concept to be understood through sociological categories such as ideology, social construction or as set of discourses. Seen in this way 'race' becomes 'racialisation', through which meanings become conferred on physical or cultural differences (Miles 2003).

The contemporary conception of Multiculturalism also becomes possible at this point, and what emerges is a kind of 'Enlightenment strategy' where the task becomes one of not ignoring 'race' but rather exposing and undermining the notion of superior or inferior 'races' by demonstrating the falsehood of these claims. While the prevailing attitudes and policies seeking to address the presence of racialised minorities had historically been accompanied by more exclusionary forms of nationalism, manifested at both state (in the form of immigration laws) and non-state (in the form of racist and far-right political movements) levels, this new approach to cultural diversity offered the prospect of an altogether positive view of cultural pluralism. Not withstanding the critiques of it by more radical black and anti-racist movements (see for example CCCS 1982; Sivanandan 1985; 1990), the concept of multiculturalism was hugely significant as an umbrella term for a broad progressive consensus around issues of 'race', hence its importance at the level of state policy.

Whilst this strategy of seeking to shift the social conception of 'race' to a benign marker of human difference, or in later variant, a celebration of human diversity, have been very significant there were some crucial weaknesses within this. Given that the idea of 'race' has historically been reliant on notions of superiority and inferiority, there was always a danger that supposedly 'benign' markers of difference could mutate into forms that are anything but benign. Nothing illustrates this more significantly than the shifting significance of "faith" as a marker of social difference within multiculturalist discourse. In the 1980s, concerns around 'faith' were present, but remained a minor issue as secular anti-racist ideas provided the backbone of these arguments. However as secular anti-racist movements went into decline, the definition of multiculturalism became increasingly dominated by religious and faith-based definitions of ethnicity. The situation today is one where the anti-racist element within Multiculturalism, concerned essentially with a critique of power, has been replaced by an orthodoxy within which the celebration of cultural and religious diversity is seen as an end in itself. As we have argued elsewhere (Singh and Cowden 2011) this has allowed new forms of community mobilisation around religious identification to become predominant within the cultural and political representation of ethnic minority communities, opening what we called a 'fault-line' within an earlier policy consensus around multiculturalism. These fault-lines were no more exposed than after the news that it was homegrown Islamist militants who had bombed London on 7/7. Politicians and commentators across the political spectrum not only blamed multiculturalism for this, but also reminded ethnic minority communities that they should stop living in the specificity of their cultural and religious ghettoes and start learning to be "British". Hence in the context of the "war on terror", the rise of global religious extremist movements, and the fracturing of the progressive consensus around multiculturalism, caused in part by its colonisation by religious movements, multiculturalist discourse found itself a hostage to arguments that it had at best legitimised segregation and at worst been complicit in terrorist bombings.

Post-race

It is in precisely the context of the crisis of consensus around Multiculturalism that we wish to examine whether a post-race paradigm offers a way forward. The appeal to this idea comes from the simple proposition, well made by Nayak, that 'there is no such thing as race' (2006 p.411). That is not to say that 'race' is absent from the individual and collective imaginary of society, which as Gilroy (2000) is at pains to remind us retains a powerful allure. However, it is also worth noting that the discursive field of 'race' is not in any what uniform or fixed. The starting point of 'post-race' thinking that we want to propose is that in addition to opposing racism one should also seek to assert a more positive conception of humanity. Following both Fine (2007) and Sen (2006) we would assert that such a conception needs

to have a material and affective dimension; material in the sense that it needs to address the questions of political, economic and social discrimination and justice, and affective in that it requires the cultivation of a new consciousness. Fine (2007), using Arendt's notion of '*worldiness*' characterises this consciousness as one that 'refuses to rationalise the division of life of the mind into reified faculties or its separation from the life of work and politics' (2007 p.131). This is analogous to the rejection of the reification of 'race', on which racism and even some versions of anti-racism (See for example Gilroy 1990) rest, and the elective affinity between ideas of post-race and conceptualisations of cosmopolitanism.

In seeking to define our conception of 'post-race' we also need to distinguish our position from recent critiques, in particular Tim Wise (2010), who offers a trenchant critique of the discourse of "post-racial politics" in contemporary political and policy rhetoric in the US. He attacks Barack Obama's presidency for the way it combines a "rhetoric of racial transcendence" with a "public policy of colour blind universalism" (2010 p.16). In practice Wise argues that this has resulted in a failure to address the continuing problems of poverty, worklessness and incarceration amongst African-American communities in US cities, but also that this language of "colour-blindness" leaves the government without a narrative to counter the strident re-assertion of racist pathologisation, coming from groups like the "Tea Party". For us, 'post-race' must not mean a reversion to colour blind policies of previous decades, but needs to focus on processes of 'racialisation'. While "post-racial liberalism" undoubtedly entails a denial of the entrenched nature of the racialised class structure of neo-liberal capitalism in the US, we feel this analysis needs to be broadened out to incorporate the reconstruction of conceptions of 'race' around the narrative of "Islam versus the West", a crucial justification for the US and British government's invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan. As writers like Noam Chomsky and Edward Said have eloquently reminded us, racism always develops as a leading principle of thought and perception in the context of colonialism (Chomsky 2003; Said 1997). Hence while we strongly agree with the tenor of Wise's attack on "post-racial liberalism", we feel he focuses too narrowly on one area of "race-based injury", rather than looking at this in the context of the social, ideological, psychological and historical mechanisms that give meaning to racialised thought and practice across the body politic.

Implicit within our discussion so far is the idea that this conception 'post-race' is not necessarily new in itself, but rather a new synthesis of existing positions outlined below which we characterise as the field of 'race – post-race':

1. Liberal Multiculturalist – As noted above liberal multiculturalism began as an 'enlightenment' strategy which in its early stages appeals to universal ideals, which are important in the context of 'post-race'. However as its focus shifted toward

the promotion of ethnic and 'cultural' particularity, it increasingly appealed to cultural relativism rather than universality. This appeal to relativism represents an impasse for multiculturalist discourse, leaving it on one hand unable to counter the charge of being an accomplice to religious extremism, but on the other, unable to provide the ground from which one might challenge contemporary reassertions of 'racialised' national identity.

2. Xenophobic Nationalism – This tradition has been present in the UK for most of the twentieth century, and despite the influence of multiculturalism at the level of policy, immigration law continues to be justified on the basis of arguments around 'race' and nation (Gilroy 1986). While the mainstream appeal of this was widely regarded as being defeated by political mobilisations, particularly by black communities and anti-racist activists, in the 1970s and 1980s (See Sivanandan 1990; CCCS 1982), the 'war on terror' has given these ideas new respectability, with a focus on Muslims as Europe's racial other. In the UK this is reflected in far-right origin and neo-fascist politics (such as the British National Party and English Defence League), but in northern Europe particularly key anti-Islamic arguments have come both from liberals (such as Pim Fortyn in the Netherlands) and from mainstream conservatives (such as Angela Merkel in Germany).

3. Critical Race Theory (CRT) – This begins in the work of US based legal theorist Derrick Bell who emerged as a critic of liberal gradualist approaches to persistent racial inequality. His key concern was understanding why the moral and political victories of the Civil Rights movement had had such marginal impact when it came to the implementation of real changes. CRT argues that a key reason for this is that key structures both in thought and institutional practice are constituted through 'race' and are therefore inherently resist conceptions of racial equality. In the UK this work has been developed by David Gilborn and Richard Delgado, who equally criticise the liberal multiculturalist view that 'race' can be transcended through appeals to reason, education and through gradualist shifts in state policy. CRT emphasises that the failure of these initiatives can only be accounted for through the pervasive nature of racism; which they argue must be given its due analytic primacy before we can move beyond it. The central problem for this position is its pessimistic view of social change, whereby 'race' becomes a kind 'black hole' from nothing can escape. We would argue that the weakness of this approach is firstly in the way it treats 'race' as a standalone category which can be analysed separately from a wider context, and secondly that its focus on the power and persistence of racism ignores the significance of past attempts at creating non-racial forms of social solidarity, and thereby closes this off this as an avenue which can be developed in the future.

4. Cosmopolitan-Humanist – This is a title we have given to a diverse body of work that is primarily identified with theorists like Paul Gilroy, Anthony Appiah, Jason Hill, Amartya Sen and Robert Fine. While all of these represent distinctive contributions in their own right rather than a conscious school of thought like CRT, we have grouped them together on the basis of an expressed concern with the way supposedly anti-racist initiatives, policies and political movements seeking racial equality end up re-inscribing 'race' in their very discourse. This is a critique levelled which has been levelled at both liberal multiculturalism and CRT. These writers are distinctive for the way they emphasise the importance of human sameness, and with an insistence that the rejection of the division of human beings according to arbitrary conceptions of 'race, religion, ethnicity must be undertaken *a priori.* This is exemplified in Paul Gilroy's argument for "Planetary Humanism" (2000) and Jason Hill's argument that becoming a "cosmopolitan" involves moving beyond "blood identities" (2009). While we regard this work, much of which takes the form of a philosophical rather than a properly sociological critique, as valuable for the way it places the possibility for transcending racial identities on the agenda, it's weakness lies in the gap between these utopian impulses and any discussion of a social practice through which these concepts might be articulated or realised – how, in other words, does one moves from the brutal reality of the racialised subject and inequalities, to this cosmopolitan 'state of grace'?

5. Marxist Race-Class Synthesis – Growing out the work of A. Sivanandan and the Institute of Race Relations, as well as the earlier work of Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy, this perspective is essentially concerned with the relationship between 'race', class and the critique of capitalism. Hall exemplified this in his argument that 'race' needed to be understood essentially as 'modality' of class. While these thinkers saw that 'race' could be relatively autonomous at the levels of ideology for example, it always needs to be understood in the light of capitalist power structures and the politics of class. This position was eclipsed in the late 1980s with the decline of Marxism and concurrent rise of postmodernism, however it has been powerfully re-stated recently by Carter and Virdee who argue that if Sociology is to 'provide a more relevant account of the phenomena of racism and ethnicity' it needs to bring 'an emancipatory working class subject (one that is 'white' but also increasingly 'black' and 'brown' in the core of the capitalist world economy) back into their accounts of racism and anti-racism' (2008 pp.675-676)

With the obvious exception of Xenophobic nationalism, one would be able to extract to a lesser or greater degree, commitments towards post-race futures i.e. where racism, if not defeated becomes diminished. As Nayak points out, in recent times there has emerged 'a new cluster of ideas around performativity, identity and the body are crystallizing into an identifiable post-race lingua franca' (2006 p.414).

He argues that the impetus for 'post-race' comes from positions that combine the process of facing up to 'race' whilst at the same time rendering it mute. However, he is particularly critical of social constructionist accounts which, through their 'anti-foundational' ethos, far from hastening the death of 'race' have become completely reliant on 'the idea of race as some kind of ontological category, a real foundation for what one "is" (2006 p.415).

In order to avoid the problem identified by Nayak here, we would propose a new orientation towards Marxist 'race'/class arguments, that focus on the primacy a materialist account of 'race' in the context of global political economy, coupled with a moral imperative towards the transcendence and ultimate death of 'race' envisaged by Gilroy in his book *Against Race: Imagining political culture beyond the colour line (2000)*. Although requiring much more work, we argue that it is possible to bring together a properly sociological focus on analysing things as they really are in the life-world of the particular communities that we are working with (Habermas 1987) with a sense of immanence and utopian possibility. If these two sets of discourses appear to us as incompatible it may be that we need to be reminded that, as H.G. Wells put it, "the creation of utopias and their systematic critique is the proper object of Sociology" (cited in Levitas 2010).

Post- and Pedagogy Race

In spite of the fragmentation of discourses regarding the question of how 'race' is be outlined and conceptualised, the question remains as to the best way forward for those that are seeking to construct pedagogical strategies for undermining racism remains as important as ever. We now want to focus on how conceptions of 'post-race' might be developed at the level of pedagogy, giving a practical example of work we carried out with Probation Officers in the West Midlands.

At the centre of the expression of 'post-race' at the level of pedagogy is the creation of a context which enables racialised subjects to step through and beyond racially constructed subjectivity. However, anyone who has ever attempted this will know that this task is anything but simple or straightforward, and in seeking to understand this level of 'difficulty' we would return to the work Fanon in *Black Skin White Masks* (1986), particularly his discussion of the trauma caused by the imposition of racialised identities. It follows that the transcendence of these cannot take place without addressing that trauma. We also argue that this is the case for a both a white as well as a black person, or more broadly the dominant and the dominated 'other'. Paulo Freire, in his seminal text on critical pedagogy and emancipatory education *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) characterised the oppressed as having what he called a 'double consciousness':

> …the oppressed suffer from the duality which has established itself in their innermost being. They discover that without freedom they cannot exist authentically. Yet although they desire authentic existence, they fear it. They are at one and the same time themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness they have internalized. (Freire 1970 p.30)

We argue that the desire to transcend 'race' evokes the same combination of yearning and resistance, and this understanding needs to be at the heart of pedagogical strategies whose objective is to allow people to, as Freire says, "regain their humanity" (1970 p.30). In this sense, we would use the idea of 'post race' as a heuristic tool, a basis for developing a pedagogy of 'hope' which offers an understanding of the construction of 'race' as essentially a misrecognition of material social relations, but at the same time, creates space for people to see themselves anew outside the real and symbolic violence of racialised categories within the space of the classroom. At the heart of such as pedagogy is the desire to promote critical dialogue, reflexivity and political awareness whereby learning becomes not a means to an end but an end in and of itself.

We contrast this with the dominant diversity based approaches, which are often expressed in terms of 'managing difference', 'cultural sensitivity' or a celebration of origins. For us these can be characterised with the pedagogical practice Freire calls the "Banking" method where students are told what to think – and in the context of the difficulty associated with classroom discussions of 'race' this often turns into an exercise in imposed "political correctness" where instead of learning about each other through dialogue, students learn what words not to use in class. Additionally, strategies based on the celebrations of origins can be regressive, not least for those people whose 'diversity' falls outside that which is being celebrated. And in this sense these strategies can act to reinscribe racialised subjectivity in their very process, in spite of being formally "anti-racist".

For us the pedagogical challenge is about the way one links diversity and sameness. Appiah in his book *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers (2006)* talks about the importance of conversation in transcending boundaries of identity, 'be they national, religious or something else'. For Apphia conversation is not only a 'literal' act but 'also a metaphor for engagement with the experience and the ideas of others' (2006 p.85). In this sense post-race pedagogical strategy needs to be orientated towards nurturing cosmopolitan identities which, as Sen notes do not have to be seen as "eliminating other loyalties" (2006 p.185) - there is nothing inherently wrong with people being able to identify with their particularities as they are manifested socially. But we would see the post-race element manifested through the way teachers should seek to give students permission, and thereby to develop the confidence, to move between and beyond those categories. Henry Giroux has

characterised this process as "Border Crossing" (1993). A border in this sense is an inherited enclosed psychic space in which one resides; becoming a 'border-crosser' allows one to articulate a critical distance from aspects of one's inscribed identity/ world view. As the metaphor suggests it implies stepping away from one's secure location but, as Giroux notes this allows students the opportunity to enter "new spaces in which dominant social relations, ideologies and practices are able to be questioned" (1993 p.178).

In offering a practical illustration of how this approach can be manifest in pedagogical practice we reflect on some training that we provided for the West Midlands Probation Service regarding the Home Office's "Preventing Violent Extremism" (PVE) Agenda. This came about as a result of an earlier session the group had received which they felt, far from throwing greater light onto the problem of violent extremism, ended up reinforcing a series of stereotypical representations of Muslims as dangerous, and therefore justifiably a "suspect community". The key issue here was the way the PVE Agenda was presented uncritically to the Probation Officers, as a set of prescriptions that the Government felt would enhance community and social cohesion. Again we would see the key problem here as the way the binary between Muslim/Non-Muslim was offered as common sense, and thereby fixed. The irony was that this training was supposed to be about "promoting diversity", and this exemplifies the very problem discussed earlier about the way and uncritical rendering of 'diversity' discourses can end up reinscribing racialised differences. In the attempt to address a legitimate and important contemporary issue, the training came to be experienced by the group, who were mixed group in terms of ethnicity, gender and religion, as contributing to a racialised binary amongst them.

In terms of our process we initiated, we began by situating the question of what constitutes "violent extremism" in history, pointing to the origins of terms like "extremism" and "fanaticism" in responses to the French Revolution. The became a backdrop to a discussion about political leaders and movements, such as Nelson Mandela, Martin McGuiness, Udam Singh, who were seen both as "terrorists" and "freedom fighters" respectively; the former two have interestingly enough gone on to become statesman. The approach we adopted was to use these figures to open up a discussion about who defines the distinction between moral and immoral ways of being and doing, and who defines the conceptualisation of the racialised other (Rattansi 1994).

Our role was not simply to say that these were "good" black or anti-colonial 'others', an approach that we see as the hallmark of "politically correct" diversity based, which simply invert otherness (Malik 1996). What we sought to do by contrast was to ask students to consider the circumstances which lead to political leaders such as those mentioned to advocate the use of violence as political weapon; in this way we

sought to reintroduce questions of moral agency into the discussion. Alongside this we also asked participants to think about the ideas that these political movements were part of. Where did Nelson Mandela's ideas about a non-racial South Africa come from? Where did Martain McGuinesses' ideas about Northern Ireland being the "occupied six counties" of Ireland come from?

This allowed us to draw out the distinction between anti-colonial movements and their aims and aspirations, and the aims of religious fundamentalist movements, which were essentially concerned with the corrupted or *jihali* nature of modernity (Meek 2007) This allowed participants to understand, for example, the issue of gender not simply as being about the liberated West versus the backward East, but about women's struggles for justice and how ideas of honour ("*izzat*") are often used to oppress. Our approach sought to avoid reducing the purveyors of violent extremist ideas as 'mad' people; we wanted rather to enable participants to consider, debate and critique these. One of the notable features of this discussion was the way it conferred agency on participants regardless of their faith background, 'race' or gender – it came to be space where the authoritarian discourse of Islamic fundamentalist movements was able to be problematised by the group, while at the same time allowing participants to be equally able to express concern with the way these issues were being dealt with by PVE agenda. We see this as an example of 'post-race' pedagogy in that it sought create a critical dialogue in which people were able to move out of their socially prescribed positions, and express their ideas as concerned citizens and professionals, rather than as "white", "Muslim" etc.

Henry Giroux has characterised teachers who uphold an emancipatory ideal of education as "transformative intellectuals" (1993). We see the question of intellectuality here linked to us taking our theoretical position very seriously, and using this as a mean toward us to take a critical stance toward our own practice, as well as the practice of others when engaging in debate and inquiry. Training and teaching concerned with issues of oppression, has historically relied on a discourse of the truth of "experience". Peter McClaren and Tomaz Da Silva have sought to problematise this by noting that:

> A major consideration for the development of contextual critical knowledge is affirming the experiences of students to the extent that their voices are acknowledged as an important part of the dialogue; but affirming students views does not mean that educators should take the meaning that students give to their experiences as face value, as if experience speaks romantically or even tragically for itself. The task of the critical educator is to provide the conditions for individuals to acquire a language that will enable them to reflect upon and shape their own experiences, and in certain instances transform such experiences in the interests of a wider project of social responsibility. (1993 p.49)

We see this as an important reminder for educators to themselves take responsibility, as much as they can, for the conditions under which students learn.

Conclusion

We began by discussing the current impasse of Multiculturalism, and it is this context that we see 'post-race' as a paradigm which offers trenchant opposition to racialised violence but also a vision around which progressive forces within disparate communities can coalesce. We see this coalescence as necessarily taking political struggles beyond identity politics toward a greater prize; that of universal social justice. There may be a moment emerging, associated with the Arab Spring and the more recent crisis of fundamentalist movements, which opens up new possibilities for the reinscription of a new Enlightenment, which would not be a reassertion of a European hegemonic Universalism, but something more profoundly inclusive. Our hope is that as a consequence of a series of crises associated with neo-liberalism and the attendant fragmentation of communities, coupled with democratic impulses across the world, new possibilities from below are emerging which offer novel ways of thinking about post-'race' collectivities.

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Workshop Proceedings

multiculturalism

This publication comprises the papers accepted for the second of two academic workshops on the theme of 'Debating Multiculturalism' organised by the Dialogue Society in spring 2012. The Dialogue Society is organising this second workshop through its Birmingham Branch in partnership with Keele University and Fatih University.

The papers presented here are draft papers submitted and printed in advance of the workshop. They address a question of acute contemporary relevance: should multiculturalism be jettisoned as a failure or defended as the path to a flourishing diversity? The 'state multiculturalism' publicly criticised last year in David Cameron's Munich Speech was a UK example of European government policies embodying a concern to ensure respect for the cultural and religious identities of minorities. Cameron is one of a number of prominent voices in the European political mainstream who claim that multiculturalism has failed to counteract fragmentation and extremism. Meanwhile, proponents of multiculturalism continue to urge that to abandon multiculturalism would be to abandon an achievable future of genuine equality, mutual respect and creative intercultural symbiosis.

Exploring multiculturalism across Europe as well as in the UK context, these papers bring the perspectives of academics and practitioners to bear on this eminently topical and crucially important debate.

DIALOGUE
SOCIETY
LONDON 1999