Black History Month and Black History with Key Stage 3 Students in English Secondary Schools: A Critical Race Theory Approach

Nadena Doharty

PhD Education, Keele University

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to explore Key Stage 3 (KS3) students' experiences of Black History Month (BHM) and Black History (BH) with a particular focus on African and Caribbean students in two English secondary schools. African and Caribbean students are focused upon because they have consistently been problematised in political discourse as an underachieving group, and academic studies reveal they experience studying history negatively. This thesis is set within the context of challenges associated with teaching 'Black' children in English schools since the 1950s and, changes to the history curriculum in 2013 which means schools no longer have to teach BH.

At Limehart Secondary School, 25 students and three history teachers participated in the research. At Parsley High School, 23 students and one history teacher participated in the research. The empirical research was split into two phases. Firstly, I conducted participant observations during BHM/BH lessons and events. Secondly, I conducted focus groups and interviews with KS3 students and their history teachers. These methods were employed to understand the current institutional pedagogies for teaching BHM/BH, what KS3 students and their history teachers understand the purpose of BHM/BH to be, how students of African and Caribbean descent experience BHM/BH and, to what extent Black students have individual or collective agency to determine the approach to BHM/BH.

Drawing on Critical Race Theory, the key findings suggest that racism is a normal and embedded feature of the history curriculum including BHM/BH. As BH was never fully integrated at both schools, engagement with it was reduced to a compensatory and deficit-informed approach. This created a racialised and hierarchical understanding about Britain's past and who should be defined as British. The originality of this thesis is achieved by positioning in-depth accounts of Black students' negative experiences of studying BHM/BH, within wider institutional and ideological racisms.

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Chapter 1: Thesis aim and rationale

The aim of this thesis is to explore Key Stage 3 (KS3) students' experiences of Black History Month (BHM) and Black History (BH) with a particular focus on African and Caribbean students in two English secondary schools. The empirical research focuses principally upon African and Caribbean students in education as they have often been problematised in political discourse and highlighted in government statistics as an underachieving group since the 1950s. More recently, the Department for Education (DfE) showed that Black Caribbean students in particular are the lowest performing group (2013a; 2014a; 2015) and academic research into persistent racial inequalities in education for Black students revealed they have negative experiences of schooling. The evidence pointed to micro-level (teacher) racism; institutional constraints limiting their academic capabilities; facing a narrow Anglo-centric curriculum; being placed in lower-academic sets and examinations; and being subjected to 'racialised disciplinary measures' such as permanent exclusions (Wright, 1986; Gillborn, 1990; Sewell, 1997; Gillborn and Mirza, 2000; Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Blair, 2001; Gosai, 2009; Carlile, 2012).

One area in which Black students expressed negative experiences of schooling, and that constitutes the focus of this thesis, is within the history curriculum. At KS3, Black students have explained that the history curriculum focuses too heavily upon topics such as slavery, thus reiterating a victim-centred narrative for BH (Traille, 2006). Black History, through multicultural education has been recognised in England since the 1980s, though there is no singular narrative for its introduction into English schools. Rather, BH developed out of competing and contested sites of struggle between Black parents and Black communities, teachers and pressure groups, and national government. It is because of these competing

interests and a lack of commitment on the part of national government to statutorily embed BH that it has always suffered from the lack of a clear, antiracist framework. Therefore, the findings of this thesis support previous academic research, which reveals that multicultural teaching such as BH has often been reduced to a *compensatory* approach, reducing its role of anti-racism to changing individual, prejudicial attitudes (Stone, 1981). By focusing on 'exotic' Black lifestyles, traditions and musical tastes, racism at institutional and ideological levels has not been addressed. Although BH has occupied a politically contentious space over the past 50 years in England, the taken-for-granted narrative at national policy level is that BH serves an anti-racist and equal opportunities' function simply by its integration, with no evidence that it changes the educational experience and academic trajectory of Black children, nor makes substantive changes to structural inequalities.

To achieve its aim, the thesis will focus on the following research questions within the research schools:

1. What are the current institutional pedagogies for teaching BHM and BH?
2. What do KS3 students and their history teachers understand the *purpose* of BHM and BH to be?
3. How do students of African and Caribbean descent in secondary schools experience BHM and BH?
4. To what extent do Black students have individual or collective agency to determine the approach to BHM and BH?

Black History Month – Its emergence in the U.S.

In 1926, Dr. Carter G. Woodson founded what started as a weeklong series of events, marking the achievements and contributions of African-Americans in the United States. Termed "Negro History Week," the intended purpose of it was to "confront the contradiction of being Black in "Democratic America" . . . as a reaction to American racism and as an attempt to defend Black humanity" (*Black History Bulletin*, 2002:39). The weeklong series of events was extended to a month in 1976. February was the chosen month because abolitionist Frederick Douglass, writer Langston Hughes, and President Abraham Lincoln were born during this month. Dr. Woodson's rationale for focussing on achievements and contributions are outlined in his book, *The Mis-Education of the Negro*, where he illustrates the importance of confronting as soon as possible the myths that control future thinking and action for Black people to prevent them living out a self-fulfilling prophecy. Defending against White racism was increasingly necessary in Britain too, but it would be several decades later when BHM was officially recognised.

Black History Month – Its emergence in England

Akyaaba Addai-Sebo is the person responsible for BHM in England. Working at the Greater London Council (a body responsible for strategic planning across Greater London from 1965-1986), Akyaaba had experience of Negro Week. The situation of a colleague's son asking his father why he 'couldn't be White' set off a chain of events leading to the inception of BHM in England. Akyaaba and his sympathisers developed a strategic plan at the Greater London Council (GLC), and in 1986-7, financial and legal approval was garnered to fund seminal projects in London and elsewhere to provide information on Black contributions to British society and empower Black students with knowledge about

their heritage. The success of these weeklong events resulted in a drive to institutionalise and formalise BHM officially in England. Lady Thatcher during her time in office abolished the GLC, but the newly formed London Strategic Policy Unit (a successor of the GLC in researching and collecting statistics on Council policies) drew together cross-party political support and in July-August 1987, an African Jubilee Year Declaration was sent to all London boroughs and across the country. It is unclear how many boroughs signed, but certainly the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) did, along with support from other groups opposed to racism in education, such as the National Association for Multiracial Education (NAME), All London Teachers Against Racism and Fascism (ALTARF), and the National Union of Teachers (NUT) (Grosvenor, 1997). The declaration formalised October for BHM in England and October was chosen because of its significance in African traditions: of harvest (rebirth), tolerance and reconciliation (*Every Generation Media,* 2013).

By signing the declaration, it demonstrated a recognition of the

> contribution of Africans to the economic, cultural and political life of London and the UK . . . and it called on the boroughs to recognise this fact and take their duties as enjoined by the Race Relations Act very seriously and also to intensify their support against apartheid . . . to do everything within their powers to ensure that Black children growing up here in the UK did not lose the fact of the genius of their African-ness (Zamani, 2004:33).

Although BHM sounds like racialising history, Akyaaba stresses this title is only used because of the Western obsession with 'racialising humanity' (ibid, pg.35). BHM

developed in tandem rather than in *conjunction* with BH in English schools as LEAs were decentralised; however, the Black communities' struggle was instrumental to the introduction of BH in the National Curriculum.

Black History's relationship to the National Curriculum in England

Black History emerged as resistance from African diasporic communities to a system that portrayed Blackness as culturally, economically and politically redundant. In education, there was a clear failure accurately to recognise at all Black peoples' presence in history textbooks. However, the development of BH has always been uncertain and without a clear focus because it emerged through competing pressures during the 1970s. For national government, culturally pathologising Black children (viewing them in terms of a cultural deficit) led to BH's compensatory approach in English schools something which was fiercely contested by Black communities as they attempted to develop their own version to counter White racism. BH has continually suffered a lack of a clear antiracist framework embedded statutorily, and thus, continues to be vulnerable to national policy changes. The lack of clear definition leaves pedagogical approaches to BH open to teacher *interpretation*. Relatedly, BH's institutionalisation in the National Curriculum legitimised a racialised view of history in which BH could be positioned as distinctly different from mainstream (read: White) history, something that is not subject to the same, overt racialisation.

This thesis contributes to the growing literature on the presence of institutional (organisational arrangements, policies and procedures), rather than solely individual (teacher) racism in the English education system (Fuller, 1984; Wright, 1986; Mac and

Ghaill, 1988; Gillborn, 1990, 1995; Mirza, 1992; Sewell, 1997; Blair, 2001; Rollock, 2007; Gosai, 2009; Maylor et al., 2009; see page 124 for a fuller discussion). In addition to these areas is the identification of *pedagogical* approaches to BHM/BH and their congruence with institutional and national policy level racism, as this is a powerful way to demonstrate the multifaceted, multi-layered manifestation of racism. I draw on the conceptual tools of Critical Race Theory (outlined and discussed further in Chapter 3) to support my theoretical assumption that the KS3 history curriculum, of which BH is part, is underpinned by conscious and unconscious racism legitimated by institutional and ideological deficit notions of Blackness. Put another way, this thesis illuminates the processes and practices in the classroom, wider school and national policy level that contribute to Black students' negative experiences of history at KS3, identifying how the structural privileging of White interests legitimises classroom acts.

Establishing the motivation for study

The researcher's roots can be found in the Caribbean on her father's side and the Caribbean and Asia on her mother's side. It was only upon encountering England that my parents were *made* Black. The recording of peoples from Africa and the Caribbean as 'Black' in government statistics further legitimised this racialisation. In school, I sat through what was known as BHM and BH lessons every year and we studied the *same* topics: African slavery and US Civil Rights. Ostensibly this was our history: it encompassed all Black peoples from the African diaspora, gave the class an opportunity to learn about racism and celebrate the achievements of equality in the present. I was never convinced. And I was frustrated by the repetitive focus on Black African slavery and token U.S. Civil Rights pioneers such as Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. Where was any

mention of Caribbean histories? Or different African histories? Or Black British histories? It was as though 'we' were invisible and offered no contributions to Britain that were worthy of acknowledgement and recognition. We were constantly made to feel our immigrant status as intruders rather than contributors. Therefore, I concur with Sarup who argues the incorporation of BH in school "reflects a White view of Black cultures as homogenous, static and conflict-free. It is preoccupied with exotic aspects of cultural difference and ignores the effects of racism" (1991:31).

My race consciousness – the awareness of racial inequalities at interpersonal, structural and ideological levels – was awakened during my undergraduate degree at Goldsmith's College, University of London. I read Sociology and Politics and began reading more about race and racism. I decided after my first degree that I would complete a Masters, also at Goldsmith's College, in Politics, where race never left the lens through which I viewed the world. In particular, Sivanandan's book, *A Different Hunger: writings on Black resistance* (1982) reignited my frustrations with racism in schools and after my teacher training in FE, I was successful in securing a PhD studentship at Keele University based upon my research interest.

Cultural and political context

The empirical study is small; however, it raises important questions about enduring racial inequalities, the education of Black children and wider attitudes towards non-White British people's contributions to the development of multicultural Britain. These questions have implications for education policies as well as national policies elsewhere. The research is particularly timely because from September 2014, former Secretary of State, Michael

Gove's revisions to history at KS3 effectively erased BH, statutorily. What this means is that there is now no statutory place for BH as there was in the previous history curriculum of 2008 (QCA, 2007). The implication is that students could effectively see an end to BH altogether.

Multiculturalism, out of which BHM/BH emerged in education in the 1960s and 1970s, is defined by Warmington as the "overlap between the politics of recognition and the politics of redistribution" (2014:73). BH in some schools was the recognition of diversity in wider society and also within classrooms, but as I further explain in Chapter 2, it has always suffered from a lack of commitment statutorily within national policies and competing demands from interested groups. Accused of adopting a compensatory approach to teaching about more diverse narratives, BH has been adopted by schools to reduce prejudicial views and teach the White about the Black (Carby, 1979; Stone, 1981). The dismantling of progressive statements around multiculturalism has been assertive and sustained, particularly since global hypersensitivity about the threat of Muslim extremism in the popular imagination since September 2001.

In England, political fears from successive governments about multiculturalism have resulted in policy attempts to create 'community cohesion' – a sharing of common values and relations for people of different backgrounds. Essentially, this approach resulted in a reversal of what New Labour perceived to be divisive and dangerous multiculturalism because of communities living 'parallel lives' (Cantle, 2001). This position was backed by future Prime Minister, David Cameron, who was clear that the state needed to move away from the 'wrong-headed doctrine of [state] multiculturalism' as it undermined social cohesion and communities sharing a collective identity (*The Guardian, 2008a)*. Thus,

multiculturalism, and by extension BH, remains ever vulnerable to changes at national policy level to this day.

Despite BH only being made compulsory in 2008, it was removed during revisions made to the KS3 history curriculum. Gove stated in 2009 that Britain has lost a "shared access to the intellectual capital we have built up over the years [which] helps bind society together" and a society that has a

> widespread understanding of the nation's past, a shared appreciation of cultural reference points, a common stock of knowledge on which all can draw, and trade, is a society in which we all understand each other better, one in which the ties that bind are stronger and more resilient in times of strain (Royal Society for the Arts, 2009: 4).

This implies that only a certain type of British history has the 'cultural capital' worth learning about in schools and the revisions are clear indication that BH does not possess the same cultural value (Bourdieu, 1986). This logic implies that the study of history could provide a socially cohesive function if all members of society are able to share an ostensibly common (White) British identity. The position of BH is, therefore, precarious: integrated to provide evidence of supporting the liberal values of equality of opportunity and antiracism but never fully integrated within the British narrative.

Method

The methods chosen were consistent with exploring KS3 students' experiences of BHM/BH, with particular attention paid to centring the lived experiences of African and Caribbean students. Consequently, the methods comprised of participant observations, qualitative focus groups and semi-structured interviews at two secondary schools in the North of England. The empirical research was conducted from September-November 2014 at "Limehart Secondary School", and November 2014 and April-June 2015 at "Parsley High School" (both pseudonyms). Limehart Secondary School is a Foundation School and a total of 25 students, and three teachers participated in the research. Parsley High School is an Academy school and a total number of 22 students, and their main history teacher participated in the research. I conducted focus groups with KS3 students at both schools. Although I have included in my analyses the teaching of BHM/BH amongst all Key Stage 3 students, I centred the analysis primarily on African and Caribbean students to understand their experiences of studying BHM/BH; the purpose of BHM/BH in their schools and what they felt the impact on social cohesion and antiracism might be as a result of the KS3 history revisions. I also wanted to understand the extent to which they could impact – individually or collectively – on the approaches to BHM/BH and whether this contributed to their experiences of studying history.

In addition, I interviewed history teachers in the research schools to understand their rationale for keeping BH at their school, their decision-making around the topics chosen for BH *and approaches* for engaging with it, their reflections on the revisions to history, and what the impact of these revisions might be on anti-racism and social cohesion. It is important to consider the wider history of my research sites in order to understand why BH

may or may not be engaged with in particular ways and to provide some context to the classed and raced demographics in these classrooms. Schools reflect and are reflected by wider communities in which they are situated and BH, I would suggest, was kept in both schools because of its need to reflect and represent wider Black peoples living in the areas surrounding them. Both schools are situated in the same city in the North of England but differ in their locality and more crucially, experience of migration, settlement, racial tensions, and reputation. Further information about the specific research sites are provided in Chapter Four.

During the 1950s and 1960s, this city in the North of England saw waves of migrants from the Caribbean settle along with Indian and Pakistani migrants to work in the mills and other manual labour professions. Bangladeshis and Sri Lankans migrated in notable waves during the 1960s and 1970s and African peoples during the 1990s. Since the 1980s and 1990s especially, the area in which Parsley High School is situated has been synonymous with gun violence and drug trading as a response to minorities suffering high levels of unemployment, deprivation, racism, and increased police targeting and brutality among the local, largely Black peoples of South Asian and Caribbean origin.

Perceptions fuelled by moral panics of Black peoples as 'innately criminal' informed government policies on race including racial profiling through 'sus' laws, which disproportionately targeted Black men of Caribbean and Asian origin (Hall et al., 1978; Cohen, [1972] 1980; Gilroy, 1987). Resentment amongst Black communities exploded into violent action across the major cities, including the city where both research schools are located. Today, a multi-agency approach to tackling what is perceived to be gang crime is still in operation in this city to safeguard children from being recruited into gangs and work

with local communities to build trust between authorities and residents. In addition, large regeneration projects of the city have also helped to reduce this type of crime as well as an increased police profile, which prosecuted many of the most prolific gang members.

Theoretical and methodological approach

This research was guided by Critical Race Theory (CRT) and the methodological approaches were underpinned by a critical race analysis. There are four conceptual tools I draw upon throughout the thesis to analyse the multi-faceted nature of racism as it was mediated by the research schools. Operating at micro-level (classroom) during BH, racism is supported and legitimated by institutional and national policy processes and structures that privilege White interests. Therefore, the first concept, '***racism as normal***' reflects the ubiquitous nature of racism in English society, saturating all institutions including education (see page 79 for a fuller discussion). At micro (classroom) level, this is often delivered in the form of racial microaggressions - subtle put downs directed towards Black students based upon their perceived inferiority. As these racialised notions inform teachers' approaches towards teaching BH, racism becomes reinforced through routine or 'everyday' practices in the classroom (see page 80 for a fuller discussion). Secondly, the adherence politically to the liberal values of equality of opportunity and antiracism through '***colourblindness***,' masks White beneficiaries (see page 93 for a fuller discussion). Thirdly, where advancements in addressing racial inequalities have been achieved, this has largely been predicated upon Whites also benefiting from these advances through processes of '***interest convergence and divergence'*** (see page 89 for a fuller discussion). Lastly, centring the lived experiences of those facing marginality through ***'counter-narratives'*** is useful in race scholarship and activism for illuminating the multifaceted nature of racism

and the seemingly colour-blind practices and policies that contribute to racial inequalities in education (see page 95 for a fuller discussion).

Originality of thesis

In England, there is a lack of research about BH in schools; even where researchers have explored this, the data are often small-scale, focused on history more broadly, and sometimes, Black students are subsumed under the category 'minority ethnic' (Traille, 2006, 2007; Grever, Haydn and Ribbens, 2008; Maylor, 2010; Hawkey and Prior, 2011; Harris and Reynolds, 2014; Bracey, 2016). Institutional arrangements entrench and reproduce Black students' negative experiences of studying history (Troyna, 1984; Richardson, 2007); therefore, this thesis provides an in-depth study of Black students' experiences of BHM/BH from a Critical Race Theory perspective since the watershed moment of KS3 history revisions in 2013.

This area of research is significant because of the renewed political narrative about Britishness informing the topics being chosen to study British history. The wider KS3 history curriculum is contentious because Britishness is assumed to be colourblind and instead merely the value-free study of British history. However, the topics of study chosen are deeply inscribed with the study of White British history, which in effect, makes Whiteness synonymous with Britishness. On the other hand, BH faces colour-consciousness, which is the recognition of a racialised group and this has the consequence of positioning Black students as outside, rather than integral to, the British narrative. There remains a gap in the literature exploring how Black students' negative classroom experiences of BH should be positioned within a broader appreciation of institutional and

ideological racism. These wider influences continue to view and perpetuate understandings about Black students and, thus, their history as deficient.

Use of terminology

Throughout this thesis, the racial category Black is used to refer to African and Caribbean students; however, the researcher recognises that "as a way of categorising people, race is based upon a delusion" (Banton and Harwood, 1975: 8). Race does not exist within any scientific or biological categories (Rex 1986) and, therefore, it is widely accepted that this term is socially constructed. Blackness in this thesis refers to persons of African and Caribbean descent who not only self-identify as 'Black', but share the cultural practices and traditions of the African diaspora. In CRT literature, the study of Blackness must centre upon the image of Black people and their cultures in wider society as in countries saturated by racism, Blackness is central in defining relationally what Whiteness is not (Espinoza and Harris, 2000; Rich, 1986; Wellman, 1993). This centrality has another consequence of positioning other non-White groups such as South Asians who also appear in this thesis, and similarly do not possess racial prejudice (personal value systems) *and power* (institutional behaviour) to be 'read' as Black because White supremacy "is unequivocal in its political capacity to name whites as the group enforcing its racial power" (Leonardo, 2009:121).

The category 'White' refers to people who self-identify as White British/European descent and 'non-White,' refers to those who are not ethnically White British/European. Although all whites do not benefit from Whiteness (processes and structures that secure White domination), "all whites benefit from racist actions whether or not they commit them and

despite the fact that many work against them" (Leonardo, 2009:111 see page 28 for a fuller discussion).

I likewise reject the established political discourse on racism being the result of individual prejudices and not reflective of wider structural and ideological racism. I draw upon Solózano's definition of racism that consists of at least four dimensions including: "a micro and a macro component, institutional and individual forms, conscious and unconscious elements and a cumulative impact on both the individual and group" (1997: 6). Therefore, if BHM/BH provides antiracist and equal opportunities' functions in education, analyses of racism cannot exclude discussions of power, including a move towards the fundamental redistribution of power. Analyses of racism should focus on "the interpersonal, institutional, [and] state . . .'levels' (Sarup, 1991:33). Consequently, in investigating the current institutional pedagogies for BHM/BH, I observed teaching approaches and methods; how BHM/BH was approached; the topics covered; who decided the content for BH and what these decisions were based upon; who was involved in the decision-making process; and the institutional/policy factors guiding those pedagogical approaches and decisions.

The current statutory requirement for schools to teach Fundamental British Values is ostensibly to create a greater climate of social cohesion. Currently, schools could draw upon BHM/BH as evidence of supporting equality of opportunity, antiracism and social cohesion by having it in the first instance. By not engaging with the significance of taught topics due to a clear definition and antiracist framework, BH teaching could avoid having to explore "the economic position of Black people in relation to White people; differences in access to resources; discrimination in employment, housing and education . . . [or] takes

no note of the power relations between White people and Black, both past and present at all" (Sarup, 1991:31).

Therefore, it is important to explore the role of BHM/BH from the perspective of students and teachers and to determine whether that role is being fulfilled. Lastly, I use the term individual or collective agency to refer to the extent to which Black students might possess individual or collective power *or powerlessness* to contribute to BH and whether this impacts upon their experience of studying it.

Structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 2 is split into two parts: the first part traces the emergence and introduction of BHM/BH in English schools; and the second part provides a literature review on BH's relationship to the National Curriculum. Academic studies on Black students' experiences of studying it, identifies the gap in the literature.

Chapter 3 outlines the theoretical framework guiding my research, namely Critical Race Theory, and explores the usefulness of this framework in centring the experiences of Black students during BHM/BH. Critical Race Theory is an excellent theoretical lens for researching racial inequalities as it identifies that classroom practices have an institutional and ideological root based upon the ideology of White supremacy. Any findings of racism in the classroom cannot be divorced from widening the lens of analysis *outside* the classroom walls.

Chapter 4 outlines and provides justifications for the methodological approaches - Critical Race Ethnography and counter-narratives - guiding my research. I then provide an outline of the methods used to answer my research questions, the problems encountered during my research, and information on the research sites.

Chapters 5 and 6 present my data findings and analysis and both are split into two parts. In the first part, I thematically outline the ethnographic data and in the second part, I thematically outline the interview data obtained at both schools during BHM and BH.

The final seventh chapter provides a summary and conclusion of this thesis. I explore the commonalities and differences at both research sites, answer the research questions based on my empirical research findings, and end with highlighting the originality of this thesis, with reflections on the implications for future policy-making.

Chapter 2: Black History in English schools: the historical context and literature review

Introduction

Multiculturalism, out of which BH emerged and developed in the mid-1970s-1980s, is described today as the "orphaned child of British social policy . . . so deeply mired in a discourse of derision;" however, less is known about the circumstances resulting in its introduction to English schools (Warmington, 2014:72). There is no one singular narrative or coherent framework at national policy level for the aims and direction of BH; rather, BH developed out of competing interests and Black communities' struggle. BH has continued to suffer a lack of structural embeddedness at national policy level and Black students continue to explain that racism guides their educational journeys, including during the study of history at Key Stage 3 (KS3).

The aim of this chapter is to trace the emergence of BHM/BH in schools and to review what the literature reveals about students' experiences of BHM/BH within schools. A consistent theme across the policy and academic literature centres on the role of racism as an enduring feature. In other words, racism at micro (classroom), meso (institutional) and macro (national policy) levels are a consistent and enduring feature of the English education system. Everyday racism – the unquestioned and routine saturation of racism at multiple levels – has impacted upon Black students since the late 1950s to the present day, affecting their academic potential and experience of school, including BH. This chapter contains two sections. The first section draws upon and applies concepts of Critical Race Theory (CRT) to an overview of the emergence of BH and Black History Month (BHM),

identifying key phases, successive governments' policies and resistance from Black communities and pressure groups relevant for teaching BH and BHM in schools. Broadly, these phases and policy approaches at national policy level centred around 1) how to manage rising numbers of immigrant children and 2) how to *institutionalise* plurality amidst rising Black discontent. I will show that these approaches overlapped during the mid-1970s in the 'phase' of multiculturalism, and led to the introduction of some elements of BH in English schools. This discussion will lead to outlining the institutional pedagogies for teaching BH, the debates from the political Left and Right concerning the role of a multicultural education, and the emergence of BHM. The first section ends by exploring the position of BH within the National Curriculum and post-multiculturalism in order to understand why multicultural education is so deeply discredited at national policy level.

The second section will provide a literature review of BH in the National Curriculum. Academic literature in this area challenges the dominant ideology of the education system being a site of equal opportunities by illuminating the structural privileging of Whiteness through the history curriculum. White privilege is achieved through the ideological selection of material that makes Britishness synonymous with White British history. This section then provides an overview of academic *studies* exploring Black students' experiences of studying history, revealing the consistent ways they express negative experiences as a result of the marginalisation of Black History. Any study of the marginalisation of Black children should avoid homogenising their experiences or attainment as they do not share the same patterns of underachievement across ethnic and gender lines (DfES, 2006); however, in schools, they are viewed as such and, thus, negatively received, irrespective of class background (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000; Maylor,

2014). The chapter ends by highlighting the gap in the literature about Black students' experiences of the history curriculum and makes a case for utilising narratives from Black students in order to offer fresh insight into the 'old' problem of racism in English schools.

The usefulness of applying concepts of Critical Race Theory to racial inequalities in education

CRT offers a useful lens for understanding, exploring, and resisting various types of racism in education. CRT illuminates the processes at micro (classroom), meso (institutional and policy) and macro (ideological) levels, which secure the domination of those racialised ('made up') as White. Non-White 'races' are positioned as inferior to the dominant White culture and therefore, according to CRT, are able to explain the various contours of racism because they do not possess White racial power (Mills, 1997). A critical race perspective suggests their voices should be centred (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002) and valued in order to go beyond government rhetoric and taken-for-granted assumptions about the liberal nature of the English education system and pursue with more accuracy an antiracist future.

The key concepts that allow me to make sense of successive governments' policies and approaches from the 1950s to the present day toward the acknowledgement and incorporation of multiculturalism are White supremacy, interest convergence/divergence, and racism as policy. Critical race scholars value taking an historic approach to the development of education policies to illuminate the contradictions inherent within seemingly liberal, equal opportunities discourse and curricula. By doing so, it is possible to expose White beneficiaries by analysing how the curriculum has been constructed to racialise or 'other' non-White students, either through distortion, exclusion or erasure.

Based on a review of the literature on Black students' experiences of the history curriculum in England, findings reveal that they continue to bear the brunt of being racialised at KS3. Whilst there may not be a conscious attempt to disadvantage Black children, race inequality in education is certainly one of its central and defining features.

In popular discourse, White supremacy is a term commonly used to refer to the ultra-right wing. It is reserved for an exceptional, small group of fanatics. This is not the definition accepted and used here. Instead, the English education system and specifically policies concerning the history curriculum at KS3 provide evidence of acts of White supremacy. Leonardo (2009) develops this idea by explaining the nuances and connectedness of Whiteness and White privilege. Whiteness is a racial discourse of domination (or supremacy) that makes possible the privileges bestowed upon White people (White privilege). As Leonardo argues, "White racial supremacy revolves less around the issue of unearned advantages, or the state of being dominant, and more around direct processes that secure domination and the privileges associated with it" (2009:75). In other words, successive governments prioritise policy decisions and outcomes that benefit White Britons, thus revealing that racism has been institutionalised and legitimated (see a more extensive discussion of this on page 203).

Interest convergence/divergence is a useful concept coined by US legal scholar, Derrick Bell for understanding how powerful Whites in government maintain and perpetuate a racist education system. Black demands for greater racial equality will be accommodated "only when [these interests] have converges with the interests of whites" (2009:76). Gillborn explains that interest convergence is not a rational process between White power-holders and Black protest movements; rather, victories in education, such as the

incorporation of some elements of BH during the 1970s were not achieved without Black protest and mobilisation. In this situation, "for White interests taking some action against racism become the lesser of two evils because an ever greater loss of privilege might be risked by failing to take no action at all" (Gillborn, 2014:29). All White people do not benefit equally from the education system structured upon white supremacy; however, by virtue of a system designed to protect and sustain the middle and upper-class White population, all White people are *implicated* within the process.

Interest divergence is not a reversal to interest convergence, but an approach used to gain wider White support for curtailing the pursuit of racial justice. As Gillborn explains, "White elites will perceive an even greater need to placate poor whites by demonstrating the continued benefits of their whiteness" (2014:30). In education since the 1980s, the neoliberal approach to ostensibly raising standards, provided an opportunity for White policy-makers and the wider media to prioritise White working-class boys, the 'real' underachievers (Gillborn, 2010; I discuss this more extensively on page 91). Both interest convergence and divergence have the consequence of ensuring that education policies are saturated with racism and manifest as what Gillborn terms, 'racism as policy' (2014). Put simply, racism as policy has become a normal and embedded feature of the English education system because evidence shows that historic approaches towards providing a curriculum underpinned by equality of opportunity has prioritised White students through curricular and assessment decisions, been constructed to promote dominant White culture, and marginalise Black students by failing to address structural and ideological racism. It is to the emergence of multiculturalism and a multicultural education that I now turn to provide evidence of this.

<u>Section 1</u> – The emergence of Black History Month/Black History: Government recognition of diversity in English schools

When migrant families came in larger waves to the 'mother country' during the 1950-1960s for better working opportunities, it was the Colonial Secretary for the Labour government, Arthur Creech that said, 'these people have British passports and they must be allowed to land; [However] there's nothing to worry about as they won't last one winter in England' (*The Guardian*, 2008b). Black children have been positioned as a 'problem' demographic since the late 1950s. Anthony Crosland's Circular 7/65, The Education of Immigrants, institutionalised (and therefore legitimated) this position by recommending that schools have no more than 30% of immigrant children and began 'bussing' or dispersing Black children to various schools. The concern was that teachers would be burdened by immigrants' language and cultural differences and the priority was the education of the indigenous White population:

> It will be helpful if the parents of non-immigrant children can see that practical measures have been taken to deal with the problems in their schools, and that progress of their own children is not being restricted by the undue preoccupation of the teaching staff with the linguistic and other difficulties of immigrant children (DES, 7/65 p.5).

The late-1950s to mid-1960s is a period commonly referred to as the assimilationist phase in which Black children were expected to be absorbed into wider White society with no special provisions afforded at national policy level to aid that absorption. Black children, in essence, were culturally pathologised, referred to in terms of a deficit as a result of their cultural and familial difference (Phoenix, 1994), and placed, sometimes directly, into

educationally subnormal schools because their language barriers and inability to adapt to the 'British way of life' was taking too much time away from their peers (Oakley, 1968; Pollack, 1972; Shain, 2013). Any educational inequalities were largely blamed upon Black families who could not adapt to the demands of a British education. It was not until the mid-late 1960s that awareness of racial inequalities received political recognition.

Labour Home Secretary Roy Jenkins confirmed the education system was a useful way to absorb minorities, but the assimilationist policy approach was not effective in doing so. The mid-1960s to mid-1970s is commonly referred to as the government's integration phase. This period was propelled by growing discontent during the 1950s amongst Black communities, and the riots in Notting Hill in 1958. Jenkins (1966) suggested integration rather than 'the flattening process of assimilation' involved acknowledging and tolerating difference by incorporating cultural pluralism.

Funding under Section 11 was provided to schools in order to compensate schools for the challenges of having pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and the passing of the Race Relations Act (1976) made it unlawful to discriminate in areas such as education. This was further supported by the creation of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), an organisation with powers to investigate complaints of racial discrimination. Despite these developments, there was no central guidance on teaching for a multi-ethnic society and the official discourse was to couch the underachievement of Black children within the general pattern of disadvantage. As the Home Office explained

> The government's basic analysis is that a great deal of the disadvantage minorities suffer is shared with the less well-off members of the indigenous population and that

> their most fundamental needs – jobs, housing, education and the health services, are essentially the same as those of the general population (1978, cited in Tomlinson, 1983:23).

Consequently, LEAs and schools were left to meet the challenges of cultural pluralism on their own based upon particular locations having a higher proportion of minorities (Grosvenor, 1997). Inaction, rather than just failing to act, was a response and indicated that the Labour government was not willing or prepared to lead on advancing the pursuit of racial justice. Troyna argues,

> Neither inaction nor inexplicitness – the characteristic stance of the DES and LEAs until the late 1970s/early 1980s – could be dismissed as featureless non-events. On the contrary, they represented explicit ideological and policy positions; formal responses, in other words, to racially perceived situations (1992:66).

Despite a policy approach of integration, which Grosvenor (1997) argued was a softer repackaging of assimilation, Bernard Coard's seminal work in education revealed that educationally sub-normal schools became a 'dumping ground' for large number of Black children wrongly placed in these schools (1971). Once there, the vast majority never returned to mainstream schools and suffered academically as a result. The authorities did very little to stop the scandal. Bussing was made illegal in 1975, but themes of underachievement among Black (particularly Caribbean) communities raised important concerns and tensions about low self-esteem, the monocultural curriculum underpinned by racist assumptions, and teacher racism. This is where *competing* interests in the development and introduction of multiculturalism and a multicultural education emerged.

Multiculturalism – a definition

At national policy level, multiculturalism was defined as a fusion of factual multiculturalism and state multiculturalism. In the former, Warmington (2014) explains multiculturalism refers to demonstrable shifts in population demographics and the linguistic and cultural differences that invariably result. In the latter, state multiculturalism refers to social policy recognition of diversity, thereby ensuring institutional and legal compliance with recognising such plurality. Therefore, multiculturalism was defined as "the overlap between politics of recognition and the politics of redistribution" (Warmington, 2014:73). However, a multicultural education, including BH, emerged and developed out of competing interests from different groups constantly vulnerable to a lack of co-ordination and centralisation at national policy level. This has led to BH's very existence in schools being threatened by successive governments' policy changes.

The state's rationale for introducing multicultural education (including Black History) into English schools

A taken-for-granted and widely accepted view of the Black child suffering low self-esteem as a result of poor parenting and lower teacher expectations became entrenched at national policy level after the publication of the Plowden Report (Central Advisory Council for Education, 1967). Though the report did not specifically identify failing Black students as the central issue concerning educational inequalities, the report highlighted factors affecting academic achievement. The ramifications of this report "established a trend in the direction of social, as opposed to educational goals, in schools for working-class 'slum' children and thus, ushered in a series of "compensatory" programmes to redress educational inequalities" (Stone, 1981:25). Plowden argued that attitudes had a profound

effect on students' sense of self and was compounded by a lack of parental involvement in their children's lives. The 1970s could arguably be seen as the state adopting a pathological view towards what it perceived to be culturally deficit families.

Black communities fell under the state's remit of 'deficit' as I demonstrated through the phases of assimilation and integration and, therefore, child-centred approaches to education were perceived by educationalists and at policy level to provide equality of opportunity to all children irrespective of class, race or gender. In centring cultural deficiencies as the cause for racial inequalities in education, the period 1970s-1980s is referred to as the policy approach of 'cultural pluralism' or 'multiculturalism' because the focus for schools with concentrated numbers of Black children was to break down stereotypes, change White teacher and student attitudes towards them, and promote tolerance of difference through the curriculum. This position was strengthened by the Bullock Report (1975) and the DES Green Paper, *Education in Schools* (1977), which encouraged the integration of cultural diversity in school curricula. These documents support the concept of interest convergence from a critical race perspective because of the growing disquiet amongst Black communities and left-wing teaching unions about racism in education.

However, from a critical race perspective, this seemingly interest convergent commitment to racial justice also suffered from interest divergence because policymakers lacked a clear focus of what multiculturalism and a multicultural education would develop into beyond its integration. Rather, the assumption amongst policymakers was that multiculturalism and a multicultural education would end the cycle of deprivation in line with the Labour government's wider focus on tackling disadvantage *for all* (Stone, 1981). Thus, Stone

characterises multicultural education - presented in the form of calypso music and lessons on Black 'heroes' relevant for 'hard to reach' Black children - as a "misguided liberal strategy to compensate Black children for not being White" (ibid, p.101). From a critical race perspective, the official school curriculum is a "culturally specific artefact designed to maintain a White supremacist master script" (Ladson-Billings, 1998 in Taylor et al., 2009:29). Where more diverse narratives such as BH are included within the dominant one, they exist as a result of being brought under control or mastered by the dominant one (Swartz, 1992). Consequently, the incorporation of BH was not to challenge the racial status quo but to assimilate into it.

Academic literature substantiating the British state's pathological view of Black children was extremely limited as most studies emanated from the United States. However, David Milner's study of Black children in education revealed that they displayed a strong tendency to reject their 'Black' identities in ways that their White peers did not and internalised racism imposed upon them by wider White society (1975). For Milner, this had a profound impact upon their self-esteem and, thus, academic achievement. Brian Bullivant's study of multicultural education during the 1970s extended Milner's findings by suggesting that it is only through a multicultural education that Black children could improve his or her educational achievement as it provided a sense of self, strengthened the liberal value of equality of opportunity in education, and assisted in changing prejudicial attitudes from the White majority due to a lack of knowledge about Black cultures (1981). The perceived benefits of multiculturalism in redressing Black children's low self-esteem started to gain credibility at policy level during the 1970s. Some schools in England introduced Black Studies (also Black History) with institutional pedagogies focusing on countering the Black child's negative self-image (Stone, 1981). This took the form of

providing cultural activities or studying 'Black' literature that provided positive images of Black cultures, a contrast to wider White society's racist depictions.

However, this approach to educating Black children was fiercely contested and criticised by Black parents and community organisations and with the persistence of Black children's negative experience of schooling, the development of BH in English schools from their perspective was based upon an entirely different rationale (Warmington, 2014).

Black communities' rationale for introducing multicultural education (including Black History) into English schools

In 1974, the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration identified that Black parents and the wider Black community were increasingly disillusioned with and seeking alternative provision for the education of Black children. The Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration found West Indian children were underachieving and recommended that urgent remedial action should be taken (1973; 1977). Black parents rejected the assumption that their cultures were to blame for underachievement and pointed to a poor education system in terms of curricula content and teacher racism. The anger of Black parents was given further credibility by Coard's seminal work (1971) revealing that educationally sub-normal schools were becoming a convenient 'dumping ground' for Black children, and statistics published by the Inner London Education Authority's Research and Statistics Group revealed that West-Indian children had very low reading scores compared to their White counterparts (Tomlinson, 2008). In addition, the Black People's Progressive Association revealed that in Redbridge (an outer London borough), not one West Indian pupil had achieved an A-level in 1977, concluding that a hostile

White society and poor self-esteem due to anti-Black attitudes contributed to poor academic performance (Black People's Progressive Association and Redbridge Community Relations Council, 1978).

Consequently, as Stone argues, there was a mismatch between schools and Black parents in the education of Black children. The proliferation of Black supplementary schooling emerged as uncoordinated and localised acts of resistance to White racism, rooted in tradition (Brandt, 1984; Chevannes and Reeves, 1987). Thus, for African-Caribbean Blacks, Brandt suggests schooling took place in clubs, welfare associations and churches and for Asian Blacks, resistance was based upon rural cultural traditions (ibid). Mirza and Reay (1997) suggest that the emergence of supplementary schools countered pathological accounts of Black intelligence, personality and culture. Providing a familiar and safe space for Black children, supplementary schools developed a counter-narrative about Blackness. This involved integrating elements of BH where the focus was on learning Black literature and African and Caribbean histories with the goals of 1) gaining knowledge not found in monocultural English schools and 2) Black empowerment. In a similar fashion to state-sanctioned multicultural education, Black supplementary schools were neither widespread nor uniform. Rather, there existed areas in England, mostly large cities such as London and Manchester, with larger numbers of Black communities, where BH was introduced and developed.

Black community organisations also had a role in developing BH, but as Warmington (2014) explains, they were small and often London-based. The West Indian Standing Conference (WISC), an umbrella organisation formed to promote the interests of Black communities in Britain, lobbied local authorities for funding and taught "West Indian

history, culture, customs and traditions" (Warmington, 2014:53). Students read texts from African-American and Caribbean writers and some mainstream schools even adopted Black studies courses, though, in so doing, received a hostile backlash from White parents (Stone, 1981).

Concomitantly, during the 1970s-1980s pressure groups also had an interest in incorporating BH in schools. Multiracial organisations such as the National Association for Multiracial Education (NAME), Birmingham's All Faiths for One Race (AFFOR), and All London Teachers Against Racism and Fascism (ALTARF) lent their support for multicultural education, resources and training for teachers. Protests by Black-led organisations such as the Black Parents Movement and Black Students Movement stoked political fears that Black discontent was growing and gaining increasing support at institutional (school) level.

One such example was the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA). In 1977, it asserted that a multicultural education must be incorporated in schools "prompted by fears about educational disengagement, unemployment and social disruption among Afro-Caribbean young people in particular" (Warmington, 2014:76). The Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) provided courses for teachers, resources and information booklets. By 1981, "about twenty-five LEAs had appointed an Advisor for multicultural education and a few had produced policy documents" (Tomlinson, 1983:23). However, the vast number of teachers preferred to maintain their colour-blind, deracialised approach to instruction as it was assumed to provide equality of opportunity in education for all, rather than ostensibly privileging minorities. This resistance could be attributed to their own monocultural experience of education, making it difficult to change what they were teaching, particularly

in areas with few or no minority children; however, from a critical race perspective, Ladson-Billings suggests that "a race neutral perspective purports to see deficiency as an individual phenomenon" and with Black students problematized, "when these strategies or skills fail to achieve desired results, the students, not the techniques, are found to be lacking" (1998 in Taylor et al., 2009:30).

The riots in 1981 across major cities in England were a response to police brutality, racism and a lack of opportunities for Black communities. The Scarman Report (DES, 1982) recognised that racial disadvantage was a significant issue affecting the lives of Black people. It is clear that BH emerged and developed out of contested and competing circumstances. As Warmington explains, "multicultural education policy was neither the gift of enlightened politicians nor cynical social engineering nor simply a response to the successes of grassroots black education struggles" (2014:79). Rather, Warmington draws upon the concept of educational settlement to explain "policy making not as a coherent ideological space but a site of struggle" (ibid, p.79). In practice, there was no clear framework for the introduction and development of BH, only competing interests, a lack of uniformity, and statutory embeddedness. BH was developed also within the context of increasing hostility towards minorities under the Thatcher government (1979-1990).

Tomlinson characterises the late 1970s and particularly the 1980s as a period dominated by "an avalanche of literature advocating commitment to and implementation of a multicultural curriculum" (2008:63), but progress towards full implementation of multiculturalism across all schools was curtailed because it lacked a statutory place in national policy; therefore, Grosvenor argues support for multiculturalism was largely rhetoric rather than substance. The dominant focus for the Labour and later Conservative

government in education was to satisfy the White majority and "preserve and present the values and beliefs consistent with the 'British way of life'" (1997:64). Grosvenor contends that it was the decentralisation of education that allowed for pockets of progress in certain locations even with growing hostility towards multiculturalism, particularly, as I show later, during the Thatcher years (see page 47). It would be several years later that a report was published highlighting racism as a central feature of education policy, proliferated in part through the curriculum commonly known as the Rampton Report (DES, 1981).

The Rampton Report (1981)

The 1980s was a period of contradictory policies relevant to the teaching of BH in English schools. Hostility from the right-wing Thatcher government preserved White supremacy as a central feature of education policy and continued to problematise Black children. Recent evidence from the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration (1977) and the damning findings from Redbridge on West Indian attainment provided irrefutable evidence of racist outcomes as a result of education policies. Under Secretary of State for Education, Mark Carlisle, a committee was tasked with investigating the underachievement of West Indian pupils. The report warned against subsuming racial discrimination within the broader category of disadvantage or 'handicap' (DES, 1981:73). Rampton was explicit about the impact of a monocultural curriculum on the Black child.

> A West Indian child in a predominantly white society needs to see that people like himself are accepted in society generally and that it is recognised that ethnic minority groups have made and are making important contributions in all walks of life. If teachers do not make a determined effort to acknowledge the West Indian child's

individual needs in this respect, they are in effect treating him as though he were white and denying an important and visible fact of his everyday life (DES, 1981:13).

Riots involving Black communities across major cities in the 1980s were further evidence that they faced racialised as well as economic disadvantages. The Scarman Report (1981) also acknowledged the inappropriateness of the curriculum for stirring up racial hostilities and the government responded in 1984 with the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE). The Council was set up to ensure that teacher training included preparation for living in a multicultural society and under the new Secretary of State for Education Keith Joseph, funding was provided to meet teachers' challenges. However, as Tomlinson explains, "between 1985 and 1989 some £3 million went to fund Education Support Grant projects – largely in areas with few or no ethnic minorities" (2008:84). Mark Carlisle was adamant that he would not make any structural changes to the education system and broadened the scope of the investigation to include improving education for all students. This in effect ignored racialised inequalities and legitimised the structural privileging of White interests.

The Swann Report (1985)

The final report on the achievement of ethnic minority students was entitled Education for All and is commonly referred to as the Swann Report (DES, 1985). It gave much less consideration to racism guiding the experiences of Black children, rather as Grosvenor argues, "located the problem of underachievement in the class-cultural background" of Black children (1997:72). Put simply, the Swann report found evidence that not all ethnic minorities were underachieving as "Asians" were faring as well as whites; therefore, the

attainment differences between Blacks and Asians could be found within their cultural backgrounds. The report did stress that 'Education for All' involved a culturally pluralist education and was particularly relevant for the teaching of history, stating

> an out of date and inaccurate textbook is indefensible on educational grounds and a history syllabus which presents world history exclusively in terms of British interests, experiences and values could in no way be regarded as 'sound' history. Thus, we regard 'Education for All' as essentially synonymous with a good and relevant education for life in the modern world (1985:318).

British interests, experiences and values in the history curriculum were a reflection of the dominant White culture and, therefore, the structural privileging of Whiteness rather than cultural pluralism. The taken-for-granted assumption that Britishness was synonymous with White British history was inferred rather than challenged and an absence of diversity reaffirmed this 'fact.' The Swann report warned against colourblindness. This refusal to acknowledge and address racial inequalities ensured Whiteness defined the normative standard. The report suggested colourblindness was "just as negative as a straightforward recognition of people with a different skin colour since both types of attitude seek to deny the validity of an important aspect of a person's identity" (1985:27). The report strengthened Rampton's assertion about the inaccuracy of subsuming racial discrimination within the broader category of disadvantage. However, Tomlinson (2008) argues multiculturalism provoked reorientation of teachers' attitudes about curricular decisions and not a re-examination of school structures in perpetuating raced and classed inequalities, thus from a critical race perspective, maintaining White supremacy through racism as policy. In effect, the intentions might not have been racist but the outcomes

certainly were (Gillborn, 2005). The role of multiculturalism came under growing criticism from the Left (anti-racist scholars) and Right (national policy approaches in education) and it to these debates that I now turn.

Criticisms of the role of multiculturalism from the Left: Multicultural and Anti-racist debates

The role of a multicultural education came under sharp criticism during the 1980s from the Left. Key antiracist scholars such as Barry Troyna, Hazel Carby, Maureen Stone, Chris Mullard, Ambalavaner Sivanandan, and Godfrey Brandt were deeply critical of what they perceived to be state multiculturalism as racism lite. This is because schools' rationale for adopting a multicultural approach was too heavily based upon changing individual attitudes rather than considering wider, structural racism operating at an institutional level. Although Warmington (2014) suggests the multicultural-antiracist debates of the 1980s were 'exaggerated,' it is to their arguments that I now turn as the antiracist position provided an important breakaway from the multicultural position.

For Brandt, the phases commonly referred to as assimilation, integration, and multiculturalism are problematic because not only do they ignore Black resistance but also, he argues, these phases are mere *reconfigurations* of the assimilationist "racist status quo" (1984:14). Ultimately, state-sanctioned multiculturalism, evidenced through the Swann report (1985), inaccurately posited culture as "an explanation of social/racial relations" with a neutral state acting as arbiter (ibid). The effects of this were to subsume race with culture, presuming all cultures have equal access to status and power. It is only through cultural exchange (a multicultural education) that different cultures may arrive at a

harmonious understanding, with the aim of diminishing racism over time (making it antiracist). Brandt firmly rejects this premise arguing that Britain is a racist country; instead, racism is endemic and forms a

> structural part of British institutions – laws, processes, procedures *and* a part of the cultural assumptions, explanations and 'preference' in terms of allocation of resources and support (1984:38)

Therefore, attitudes alone cannot redress structural inequalities. When Black children leave the confines of their racist school they enter a wider racist society which is already organised, structurally, along hierarchical racial lines. Brandt explains racism transcends class; therefore, a multicultural education is ineffective in acknowledging and addressing issues of power and White supremacy. This position supports a critical race analysis of racial inequalities as evidence of 'racism as normal' because of the taken-for-granted and deeply embedded nature of racism at various levels of society.

Stone (1981) supports Brandt's analysis of the shortfalls of a state-sanctioned multicultural education, arguing that it was an approach designed to compensate the Black child for not being White. For Stone, a multicultural education continues along the same trajectory of pathologising Black children as it identifies and problematizes Black academic underachievement as the result of a lack of adequate socialisation. Thus, 'resocialisation' through a multicultural education such as "Black Ethnic Studies or Caribbean Cultural Activities" provides a kind of "cultural enrichment [to] enhance self concept" (ibid, p.26). Stone is keen to highlight that this pathology of Black children and subsequent benefits of a multicultural education emerged in a theoretical vacuum with a lack of evidence about its

efficacy. The question then becomes: who is a multicultural education really for? Stone's analysis of the shortfalls reveals that White children are the inevitable beneficiaries of a multicultural education. Hazel Carby (1979) extends this argument even further.

Carby (1979) highlights that the state is not a neutral actor in providing a 'remedy' for Black children. Multicultural education involves cultural essentialism thereby reducing Blackness to an homogenous, unproblematic identity that could be commodified. As there was no critical appraisal of structural inequalities and structural racism, a multicultural education, in effect, perpetuated the same deficit notions about Black children and the failure to achieve being their fault. For Carby, the consequence of failing to ensure at national policy level that a multicultural education had clearly defined aims and objectives from all actors concerned with its development, outside of the notion that it was simply a good idea, meant that it was always incomplete. Thus, she argues, the audience of such an incomplete version was White power holders:

> It is not the opinions of racial and ethnic minorities that is voiced through multiculturalism. Nor are official documents or educational theories about the multicultural curricula addressed to them directly. Rather, racial and ethnic minorities are the object of discussion, pre-defined as constituting 'the problem.' The audience is the White middle-class group of educationalists that have to contain/deal with 'the problem' (1979: 5).

The emergence of BH at an institutional level was, thus, precarious and detached from an antiracist imperative from the start. Therefore, I concur with Warmington who argues that multiculturalism and Black Studies was constrained by a double bind. On the one hand,

capturing the vibrancy of Black cultures often resulted in cultural essentialism, and on the other hand, the content resulted in no changes to structural inequalities (2014). This tension led Brandt to characterise the role of multiculturalism as a "racial form of education constructed by the oppressors to maintain the status quo of dominant and dominated, of oppressor and oppressed" (1984:118). Mullard strengthens Brandt's contention about the role of multiculturalism, arguing that it inhibited a dismantling of the structural privileging of Whiteness. Therefore, policies attempting to change attitudes of White peers was not antiracist but was about "the reproduction of culturally defined equality within a situation of the production of a structurally defined inequality" (1984:15). Despite these issues, Warmington explains that by the 1980s there was a dynamic network of Black publishers, study centres, BHM events and initiatives in England.

Antiracist arguments against multiculturalism have not been without criticism, namely in relation to the absence of a clearly defined, theoretical antiracist framework for what such an education would 'look' like. Brandt (1984) attempted to provide some of the features, arguing by definition, the role of an antiracist education is to be oppositional, opposing all structures, processes and procedures that result in the unjustified repression of particular groups. Therefore, an antiracist education should aim to seek equality (the deconstruction of structures that perpetuate inequalities), justice (enshrined in law, there must be accountability in policy-making), and liberation/emancipation (teachers must liberate children and aid or facilitate resistance) (ibid, pp.125-125). However, the lack of conceptual tools has allowed antiracism to be defined in wider discourse as simply being against racism with no clear idea about its practical application.

Both Sivanandan (1984) and Troyna and Williams (1986) argue that state-sanctioned multiculturalism provided an opportunity to perpetuate a hidden agenda. By institutionalising BH, the state could control and contain Black resistance. If the state was perceived actively to change the school curricula to reflect diversity, "multiculturalism constitutes the state's attempt to maintain social stability and defuse racial conflict rather than a challenge to institutional racism" (Troyna and Williams 1986:47). From a critical race perspective, this could be read as evidence of interest convergence where the latter of the two evils (a multiculturalism) is chosen over a loss of government legitimacy because of growing discontent from Black communities, teachers and pressure groups.

Criticisms of the role of multiculturalism from the Right: national policy approaches to education including the history curriculum

Despite the progress made in some areas for incorporating BH in schools, from a critical race perspective, Keith Joseph's reforms under the Education Act (1988) essentially institutionalised 'racism as policy' (Gillborn, 2014). The focus was on raising educational standards for all, which meant that race, gender and class issues were side-lined through the Conservative government's adherence to a 'colourblind' approach to issues of educational achievement. Paradoxically, this adherence to colourblindness privileged the needs of the White majority, and through a "discourse of derision" Grosvenor explains that educational vocabulary such as 'excellence', 'quality' and 'tradition' was juxtaposed with 'equality', 'antiracism' and 'indoctrination' (1997). The death of Ahmed Iqbal Ullah in Burnage in 1986 at a school with anti-racist policies allowed the Thatcher government and the right-wing media to polarise and tarnish attempts structurally to embed antiracism in schools. Ignoring race concerns by de-racialising policies in favour of a colourblind

approach has the consequence of privileging White interests. From a critical race perspective, Gillborn argues coloublindness "remakes differences that further entrench and extend all too familiar patterns of exclusion and oppression" (2004:45) and maintains racism as policy.

The wider education system was ostensibly based upon the principle of meritocracy, whereby individual effort leads to greater academic rewards, and this was deemed the ultimate way to achieve equality of opportunity for the greatest number of pupils. Put simply, the broader picture was still assimilationist in that Black children should adapt to schools and not necessarily be accommodated so that they could adapt. One area in which multiculturalism came under fierce criticism from the Right was in the development of the history curriculum.

History and Black History in the National Curriculum

In the history curriculum, Sylvester explains, teaching history was generally unchanged from the 1900s up until the 1970s, following a 'great tradition,' whereby "it was mainly political history with some social and economic aspects, and it was mainly British history, with some European, from Julius Caesar to 1914 (1994: 9). Tasked with devising a National Curriculum, Kenneth Baker, Chair of the National Curriculum Council, set up working groups to consult and organise content and assessments. The history curriculum was an area of particular contention as the Thatcher government sought to ensure a return back to traditional (read: White and Christian) values and a celebration of the British way of life.

Multiculturalism was criticised for being divisive. Consequently, Tomlinson explains that there was considerable political influence in the construction of the history curriculum in order to focus more heavily upon British history (2008). According to Thatcher's memoirs, any adherence to multiculturalism and antiracism through the history curriculum was 'comprehensively flawed' (1993:596). It is possible to make sense of its construction as evidence of White supremacy and the DES publication, Curriculum Matters: History from 5 to 15 (1988) makes that clear. It states that the role of history provides the fundamental place "in which a society transmits its cultural heritage to new generations" (p.1). Therefore, children should "become well acquainted with British history" (p.8) and through a unit entitled The World After 1945, pupils should learn about Britain as a multi-ethnic society, the Commonwealth and the 'third world' (p.13). Essentially, history since its inception in the National Curriculum institutionalised and legitimated 'othering' – making people non-White – by constructing Britain as internally homogenous and White and reifying ethnic minorities' presence only from 1945 from previously colonised and developing countries. BH did appear at Key Stage 3, but it was often confined to world history and Black people of the Americas (DES, 1991).

Black History Month

The emergence of Black History Month (BHM) in England in 1987 provided wider society an opportunity to counter the taken-for-granted assumptions about Black people and seek to illuminate the contradictions inherent within liberal, British democracy. As I explained in the introduction, Akyaaba Addai-Sebo founded BHM in England. The African Jubilee Year Declaration signed in several London boroughs in 1987 sought to institutionalise BHM and formalise the month of October for the recognition of historically marginalised

communities across the African and South Asian Diasporas. However, it emerged during hostility towards multiculturalism by the Thatcher government and it remains unclear quite how many boroughs signed the declaration, thus mirroring the plight of BH in schools: vulnerable to the lack of a clear framework, localised, and dependent upon commitments of racial equality of local authorities.

Post-multiculturalism: educating Black children

Colourblindness continued into the Major years, (1990-1997) under Secretary of State for Education, John Patten. Black children were still underachieving, despite a standardised curriculum; however, racial inequalities were still not afforded a central place in policy making. From a critical race perspective, the continued drive to raise standards in education for all and a lack of centrally and structurally embedding antiracism, allowed schools to use their 'freedom' from LEA control to legitimately marginalise Black students amidst growing pressure for schools to perform. Evidence from the DfE (1992: 3) showed that disciplinary measures, such as exclusions, had racialised consequences for African-Caribbean students. Specifically, data revealed that African-Caribbean students were disproportionately excluded (8.1% of the overall total). The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) made similar observations stating, "Black Caribbean pupils make a sound start in primary schools but their performance shows a marked decline at secondary level" (1996: 7). It explained that funds meant to address racial inequalities, such as Section 11, were 'rarely' being used to meet the needs of these students and more should be done within the curriculum to follow an intercultural approach. The report found evidence that where Black History was incorporated, "the progress and behaviour of Black

pupils have improved" (1999:23); however, this did not result in central changes at national policy level.

Although Maylor (2014) suggests that the underachievement of Black children is complex and cannot be reduced to one specific cause, Tory policies on raising standards permitted schools to operate in racially discriminatory ways. Gillborn and Mirza (2000) showed that irrespective of class and gender, Black pupils faced educational inequalities, and Gillborn and Youdell (2000) showed that the tiering of examinations into 'lower' and 'higher' tiers allowed teachers to exercise judgement about Black students' perceived lack of academic potential. Black communities hoped that the New Labour government would result in an end to colourblindness and commitment to racial justice. However, from a critical race perspective, despite some changes, a continuation of Tory policies for raising standards meant that the broader beneficiaries of education policies continued to be White students.

It was the New Labour government from 1997 that offered some recognition of the need to address racial injustices, but this was undermined by interest divergence, notably, a continuation of Tory policies and wider antagonisms towards multiculturalism. A Social Exclusions Unit (SEU) was set up to investigate and address the growing number of school exclusions after their report revealed African-Caribbean pupils (skewed towards males) were more than six times more likely to be permanently excluded from school than their white peers (1998). Herman Ousley, chairperson for the Commission for Racial Equality, found in his research that this pattern was even worse according to geographical location. In fact, certain areas of London had black exclusions that were up to 15 times more than their White peers (Ousley, 1998).

However, the Secretary of State for Education, David Blunkett's response was not to address these racialised inequalities in exclusion processes but rather to entrench the marginalisation of Black pupils by doggedly sticking to a colour-blind approach to tackling the problem. Thornton (1999) showed that whilst the government celebrated a minor decrease in exclusions and showed commitment to reducing the number by a further third by 2002, similar commitment was not displayed for addressing Black exclusions. That is, the government sought to reduce exclusions more generally rather than setting specific targets for reducing the exclusion of Black pupils (Majors, Gillborn and Sewell, 1998), despite evidence that students who face unrelenting criticism and sanctions underachieve (Smith and Tomlinson, 1989).

The Macpherson Report (1999) introduced the concept of 'institutional racism' defined as the collective failure of institutions to

> provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping, which disadvantage minority ethnic people (Para. 6.34).

The Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) required all schools to have race equality policies and funding through the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Group (EMAG) and Education Action Zones were set up in 1998 to improve education in inner-city areas. The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in their consultation report, Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of Minority Ethnic Pupils (2003), found that overall, Black

Caribbean boys were four times more likely to be excluded than their White peers, and despite differences in attainment between Black Africans and Black Caribbeans, more generally Black students were a vulnerable group.

Similar patterns of entrenched underachievement were found by the London Development Agency (2004) who acknowledged that Black boys in particular had been betrayed by the education system for more than 50 years. The problem of racism in schools was still a persistent issue affecting them, and in terms of achievement, in 2004, only 30% achieved 5 or more A-C grades at GCSE. They were the least likely group to hold a higher education degree. This was the result of low teacher expectations, high exclusions and an inappropriate curriculum to meet the demands of multi-ethnic classrooms. Similarly, academic research into the effects of initiatives such as EMAG revealed that Black students were failed and there was little communication between schools and Black parents or community organisations regarding their inclusion in educational experiences and outcomes (Tikley et al., 2005).

The Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) revised the National Curriculum in 1999 including history, which reflected a commitment to 'inclusion.' This meant that schools would provide a broad and balanced curriculum that responded to the diverse needs of children from different backgrounds. However, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) stated in its monitoring report on history in schools that

> too little attention is given to the black and multi-ethnic aspects of British history. The teaching of black history is often confined to topics about slavery and post-war immigration or to Black History Month. The effect, if inadvertent, is to undervalue the

> overall contribution of black and minority ethnic people to Britain's past and to ignore their cultural, scientific and many other achievements (2005: 6).

Inclusion increasingly shifted to focus on differentiated learning in teaching methods, rather than how appropriately the content reflected the diverse societies being studied, and the QCA pointed to several factors for this, including "lack of knowledge among teachers of Black British history, a lack of accessible resources and a lack of confidence on the part of many teachers" (ibid, pg.21). The DfES report entitled Ethnicity and Education (2006) revealed that history was the least favourite subject amongst ethnic minority children, including Black children. Specifically, 13% of Black African, 13% Indian and 13% Pakistani children said that history was their least favourite subject and though the report offers no explanation, subsequent Ofsted reports have revealed it could be the result of the structural privileging of Whiteness and marginalising of Othered histories in the classroom.

Ofsted published reports 'History in the balance' (2007) and 'History for all' (2011) respectively, supporting the QCA's statement about the exclusionary nature of history in schools, expressing the curriculum was too Anglo-centric and there was a long way to go to innovating the curriculum to counter prejudice and racism. It found that weaknesses in history were 'concentrated' at KS3 and the teaching of multicultural Britain was low. The QCA in 2007 provided a commitment in its statutory revisions of history, for schools to explore Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) histories on the curriculum with a view for this to become statutory in September 2008. Thus, BH became compulsory for the first time under Gordon Brown's New Labour government. It represented a departure from previous assimilationist iterations and the QCA indicated that history should "help pupils develop

their own identities" (2007:111). Rather than attempting to unify all students under a common White British identity – with no evidence that this approach actually works – students were expected to learn about the diverse nature of the British Isles, pre-colonial societies, the British Empire and its "effects on both Britain and on the regions it colonised, as well as its legacy in the contemporary world" (ibid, p.116). Inadvertently, however, the racialization of history continued to perpetuate the view that non-White groups are separate and distinct from 'normal' (read: White) British history.

In London, BH in schools was strengthened by Labour Mayor, Ken Livingstone's introduction of Black History Season. Rather than BHM being confined to the month of October, between 2006-2007 Livingston introduced year-long opportunities to learn African and Caribbean histories through tours, discussions, literature and poetry, fashion and the unveiling of a Bob Marley plaque. However, this was not compulsory nor was it adopted across England in the same way other commemorative events are, such as Remembrance Day.

The Ajegbo Report (2007) recommended a fourth pillar to citizenship education in order to include diversity and living together; however, a growing tolerance for intolerance particularly towards Muslim communities post-2001, fractured opportunities to structurally embed antiracism in education. Multiculturalism was the consequence of communities living 'parallel lives' (Cantle, 2001) rather than the permanence of racism at national policy and institutional levels. Gillborn characterised the period 2003-2008 as 'aggressive majoritarianism' – or interest divergence – where any policies deemed to go against White approval were sharply curtailed. The history curriculum was one such area of contention. In many respects, the larger policy focus on community cohesion contradicted many

progressive attempts at redressing racial inequalities. A return back to assimilation (Back et al., 2002) and anti-Black sentiment was further institutionalised under the Coalition and majority Conservative governments.

Under the Coalition government (2010-2015), the key policy concern in education of David Cameron's government was White working class boys (House of Commons, 2014; Gillborn, 2010), even though Black children are still a 'problem' demographic within the English education system (DfE, 2013a; DfE, 2014; DfE, 2015). Gillborn explains that Cameron stopped subjecting policies to equality impact assessments (measuring of the impact of policies on minority groups), as it was considered 'bureaucratic nonsense' (2014:33). In education, revisions by Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove resulted in the potential end of BH at KS3. As a result of his revisions, BH no longer has a statutory place on the curriculum and instead, common sense understandings of Britishness are reflected in 'Our island story,' ostensibly shared by all. History was seen as a crucial site to promote a highly politicised view of Britishness. Joining with pro-Empire historian, Niall Ferguson, the history curriculum was amended in 2013 for students who started school in September 2014. The aims were for history on the National Curriculum to ensure all pupils

> -Know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world
> -Know and understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world: the nature of ancient civilisations; the expansion and dissolution of empires; characteristic features of past non-European societies; achievements and follies of mankind

-Gain and deploy a historically grounded understanding of *abstract* terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'

-Understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses

-Understand the methods of historical enquiry, including how evidence is used rigorously to make historical claims, and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed (DfE, 2013b).

Gove argued that this ideological shift to a traditional study of history would fracture the opportunity for radicalisation and would bring about greater social cohesion as all students would relate to each other by sharing a common 'British identity'. However, important work by Alexander, Chatterji & Weekes-Bernard (2012) has shown that this approach promotes an exclusivist version of British history, culture and identity in which White British narratives are centred and prioritised as the only version of British history students are required to know and learn. The shift also calls into question the liberal values of equality of opportunity and antiracism if more diverse British histories could be so easily marginalised, excluded or forgotten. What is the impact on BME communities who are unable to 'see' themselves as integral to the construction of Britain? What message does it also send to their White counterparts who will have their ostensibly homogenous histories privileged, at the expense of people of colour?

The KS3 history curriculum represents the most explicit demonstration of a curriculum that constitutes race, that is, its mono-cultural construction creates British subjects who are

White and, therefore, makes the successes, achievements and conquests in history all White. The state's version of promoting social cohesion, therefore, is to naturalise Whiteness as the marker by which a British identity is judged and assumes this is an identity that can be equally shared. Osler (2009) suggests the traditional approach to teaching history portrays the British narrative as singular and unproblematic rather than multivocal and complex. All raced, classed and regional distinctions are ignored as a result. Black History is placed outside this marker and, thus, conceptualised in one of two ways:

1. In opposition to Whiteness: either to be compared to 'White' advancement (for example, studying Enlightenment in Europe and Britain with links to "key thinkers and scientists") or in conflict with 'White' history (for example, decolonisation);
2. Celebratory and congratulatory: an addendum to the broader Whiteness-as-usual context and narrative (as with the role of Black and Asian soldiers in both World Wars), to celebrate the end of racism (for example, around slavery and abolition) and the success of multiculturalism (Civil Rights in America) (Doharty, 2015:52).

The vulnerability of BH at national policy level continues to persist today. Suffering a lack of embeddedness at an institutional level means that the Whiteness-as-usual history curriculum remains overwhelmingly White and exclusive and Black histories are assumed to have no influence pre-1945.

The majority Conservative government under David Cameron and more recently, Theresa May, has failed to commit to education policies that address Black (particularly Caribbean) underachievement. This supports Richardson's assertion that despite over three decades of

race research, Black children are disproportionately failed by the British education system (2005). Fundamental British Values (DfE, 2014b), which schools are statutorily obligated to promote, have resulted in a return back to assimilation through intolerance for multiculturalism and the structural embedding of White supremacy. Amidst growing fears of terrorism and "self-segregating Asians," social cohesion and anti-racism is perceived to only be achieved through ensuring society shares a common set of values and identity (Phillips, 2004) with schooling such area of focus. The statutory duty placed on schools to promote Fundamental British Values in accordance with statutory legislation for meeting students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) needs (Ofsted, 2004) and Prevent legislation (HM Government, 2011) has had the consequence of a narrowly focused and exclusionary Key Stage 3 history curriculum. Current Secretary of State for Education Justine Greening, has made no reversals or amendments so far to the history curriculum, suggesting that despite a wealth of evidence showing a "poverty of knowledge within the teaching profession and teacher education about [Black children] and their attainment" (Maylor, 2014: 1), there is the general commitment to racism as policy by erasing 'race' from policy (Wright, 2010:306). The recently published 'Casey Review' on integration in Britain reaffirms the Conservative government's position, by recommending

> the promotion of British laws, history and values within the core curriculum in all schools would help build integration, tolerance, citizenship and resilience in our children. More weight should be attached to a British Values focus and syllabus in developing teaching skills and assessing schools [sic] performance (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2016:168).

The structural privileging of Whiteness is supported by academic literature on BH in the national curriculum and this is where I turn next.

Section 2 – Literature Review of Black History in the National Curriculum

In England, academic literature on BH in the National Curriculum is limited; however, academic studies converge in illuminating the contradictions of an ostensibly inclusive and accurate, history curriculum. They point to a history curriculum deeply inscribed with the ideological work of the New Right, that is, the structural privileging of White interests to entrench views that Britishness is synonymous with Whiteness and, as Grosvenor argues, minimal changes have been implemented to the assimilationist orthodoxy, despite the rhetoric of multiculturalism (1997).

Visram (1994) argues that the inception of the history National Curriculum was an attempt to fuse (inaccurately) nationhood and cultural experience. This was problematic because nationhood is determined in law, setting out the rights of its citizens. Attempting to fuse nationhood with common cultural experience was reductionist as "traditionally what has been taught as British history has been 'English' history. The Irish, the Scots and the Welsh only merit a token mention, and that too from an English viewpoint" (1994:54). Selection thus involves deselection and for Visram, "the blacks (i.e. peoples of African, the Caribbean and the Indian subcontinent), they are completely invisible or hidden from British history" (ibid, p.54). Consequently, students learning British history in this way were subjected to an assimilationist discourse that racialised their perception of the world.

Visram strongly condemns attempts to marginalise or erase BH, suggesting that British history cannot be divorced from its involvement in other areas of the world; therefore, any study of history must involve the nature of British involvement, and its effects on Britain and the other countries affected. Relatedly, a singular, uncomplicated and homogenous narrative of Britain's past has the consequence of encouraging students to perceive all of Britain's achievements originating in Britain. As Visram explains

> Britain's civilisation, its culture and democratic institutions are not the products of the descendants of the Angles, the Saxons, the Celts, the Romans and the Normans alone. Knowledge and influences have travelled from other cultures and countries into Britain. The Arabs, the Turks, the Chinese, the Indians and Africans have all contributed to the artistic, scientific and technological ideas which have been absorbed as part of British culture (1994: pp.55-56).

Therefore, Visram cautions against rendering the history curriculum 'incomplete' without BH by providing a distorted narrative, but encourages the integration of othered voices as equally valid and important. In doing so, the result is "not to divide, but to deepen our understanding of Britain's diversity to provide another reading of the British nation" (ibid, p.57). According to Visram, BH can and must be integrated into the mainstream British history curriculum explaining, "Black history is part of British history. As such it is central to school history" (ibid, p.60).

Lyndon (2006) a London secondary school history teacher provides practical application to Visram's argument by showing how BH could be seamlessly integrated within the mainstream history curriculum at Key Stage 3. Lyndon concurs with Visram that BH is

integral to British history as the presence of Black people in Britain has been recorded for thousands of years. Therefore, it is historically accurate to teach elements of BH beyond the scope of slavery, post-war immigration or BHM. The benefits, according to Lyndon, are clear: integrating serves to challenge stereotypes, improve student-teacher relations and wider community relations. Relatedly, by having a history curriculum that is more inclusive and representative, Lyndon saw an increase in students applying to study history at GCSE level and improved GCSE results. Specifically, in 2003, GCSE results were 19% A*-C, but rose substantially to 45% A*-C in 2005. Lyndon provides history educators with three tangible ways BH could be integrated at Key Stage 3 with minimal disruption to current practice:

> Through a thematic approach, such as 1) looking at Elizabethan attitudes to poverty and Elizabeth I's attempts to repatriate the Blackamoores (the Africans living in England were given this name, amongst others); 2) through looking at key historical events, such as the two World Wars and the contributions that were made by Black and Asian people; 3) through an examination of key individuals such as Olaudah Equiano or William Cuffay (2006: 1).

Lyndon created the website www.blackhistory4schools.com to share resources for teachers wishing to embed BH, "not as a token addition to the curriculum but [for] continuity across the key stage" (ibid, p.5). Therefore, Lyndon shares Visram's view that BH is British history, thus, there is "no excuse for all teachers not to successfully integrate Black British history into the National Curriculum" (ibid, p.6). It is important to consider the ideological work underpinning the history curriculum, work that focuses narrowly on common culture thereby demonstrating the national policy commitment to assimilation.

One way ideological work has manifested is through history textbooks. Foster (2005) analysed history textbooks commonly used by history teachers in English classrooms since 2001. Foster's findings were significant as they revealed that World War II (WWII) enjoys a "prominent position" in all textbooks and is told from "a Western European or British perspective" (2005: 4). Paradoxically, for a World War that involved more than 60 nations, Foster explains that textbooks focused exclusive attention on the Allied and Axis powers, namely, Britain, USA and USSR fighting Germany, Japan and Italy. Therefore, the impact of the World War was reduced to casualties faced on the home front in Britain "ignoring the contributions and experiences of peoples from the Empire and Commonwealth" (2005: 5).

Foster also analysed pictorial content relevant to BH and found that no photographic representation of people from the Empire and Commonwealth existed "out of a total of 86 photographic representations" (2005: 6). This erasure, Foster explains, is "disturbingly limited" and serves to reinforce the Anglocentric narrative that "the stories of 'other' groups lie beyond the central story line of the nation" (ibid, p.15). The ideological work is clear in the selection according to Foster, as content is never value free, objective or neutral knowledge. The political right has been instrumental in absorbing the history curriculum within the wider narrative of tradition "to promote selective national memories [that celebrate the] achievements of the White majority" (ibid, p.14).

Ali's research (2005) specifically found that her 75 survey participants believed BH was omitted to "maintain the status quo of White supremacy" (2000:51). From 1998-1999, Ali sent 81% of the surveys to teachers, lecturers, academics and members of NGOs. The

remaining 19% were sent to social workers, clergymen, lawyers and senior civil servants and they were asked to reflect on the status of BH in the National Curriculum. Ali found that the history taught in schools prior to the revisions in 2000 was damaging to students, both Black and White. Survey participants shared the assumption that BH was perceived in policy-making to be irrelevant to dominant White British culture and that explains its exclusion from the curriculum. This exclusion was further entrenched by poor resources and publishers positioning BH in equally marginal or non-existent ways. Survey responses from participants recommended that greater integration into the mainstream British narrative was needed.

In a departure from the consensus that BH is British history, Wrenn (2003) suggests that there were tensions at Key Stage 3 with Black and British history. Where BH appeared, Wrenn explains, textbooks and resources portrayed Black people as victims, a view that has "emerged out of an old discourse within the historiography of the slave trade and its abolition" (2003: 3). This Anglocentric perspective positioned Blacks as passive victims and recipients of freedom that White abolitionists fought for. Although Wrenn supports the view that BH "long neglected and ignored, should be an object of study in schools history" (ibid, p.4), he recommends a 'better' way to teach history overall is to

> equip children with the cultural awareness to deconstruct any interpretation for themselves. Within the scope of school history teaching, there is every reason to present varying historical interpretations, not as though they were equally valid but as subject to the same analytical framework as rival historical points of view (ibid, p.4).

His assertion that within an Anglocentric curriculum students could be equipped with cultural awareness (which is not defined) and that historical interpretations should not be treated as equally valid is significant. Who determines what is considered a valid interpretation? Wrenn ignores the role of power and how it organises the view of the past and accepted interpretations of it. This involves the ideological work Visram (1994) and Foster (2005) explained. As for powerful White policymakers, the role of history is to promote a selective view of Britain's past that privileges the White majority, strengthening Grosvenor's assertion that education policies have been largely assimilationist (1997). For socially devalued groups such as Black people, critical race scholar Derrick Bell argues, 'some voices have been historically commodified, marginalised distorted and silenced' making Wrenn's recommendation unfeasible (1980, in Taylor et al. 2009:42).

Apple applies his analysis of the British National Curriculum to the U.S. to explain that

> the curriculum is never simply a neutral assemblage of knowledge somehow appearing in the texts and classrooms of a nation. It is always part of a selective tradition, someone's selection, some group's vision of legitimate knowledge. It is produced out of the cultural, political, and economic conflicts, tensions, and compromises that organize and disorganize people (1993:222).

Therefore, Apple counters Wrenn's argument that students can be equipped with 'cultural awareness' because the selections of particular knowledges (often from the Western tradition) are "markers of taste [which are] markers of people [therefore] the school becomes a class school" (ibid, p.223). In other words, the knowledge that is privileged as valid is a key indication of who has power in society and, as Apple explains, power and

culture are “indissolubly linked” (ibid, p.232). Lastly, Apple highlights the contradictions inherent within the national curriculum of promoting a common culture. He argues that attempts to do so make society “culturally illiterate” as a National Curriculum is not received in the same way along class, race and gender lines. The National Curriculum is “a reflection of the culture, history, and social interests out of which it arose. It will accordingly neither homogenize this culture, history, and social interests, nor homogenize the students” (ibid, p.232). Apple is keen to emphasise that rather than encouraging adherence to, and recognition of a common culture, New Right attempts to create a National Curriculum is involved in a form of cultural politics whereby the past is invented rather than retold, “ratifying and exacerbating class, race [and] gender differences because there is an absence of significant resources both human and material” ibid, p.234).

Crawford (1995) shares the view that the New Right’s attempts to create a National Curriculum are based upon cultural politics. Crawford argues the history curriculum of the 1980s was used to promote a moral panic about ‘socialist conspirators’ attempting to undermine the traditional social values, norms and institutions with anti-British sentiment. Particularly during the 1980s, Thatcher’s famous ‘swamping’ statement legitimised ‘common sense’ concerns that studying British history was key for the survival of a nation under threat from people with other cultures. Therefore, the history curriculum was rooted in the ideology of nationalism where “any interpretation of that past [is] based upon a view of Britain’s unique and positive contribution to world civilisation” (1995:447).

Crawford explains that cementing White supremacy was achieved by Thatcher’s appeals to ‘hegemonic common sense’, stressing the importance that “we” learn “our” nation’s history. This had the consequence, according to Crawford, of unifying people around only

one feasible response and to reject alternative viewpoints. For Crawford, the erasure of BH was a method used by the New Right to avoid interpretation of historical facts or truths and instead, encouraged teachers to "pass on an accepted and common sense version of history in an uncontaminated form" (1995:446). Contamination for Crawford involves recognition of diverse British histories along ethnic, religious and linguistic lines, as it would shatter the illusion that there ever existed, or could ever exist, a common British identity. Rather, the New Right focused on constructing a history curriculum consistent with maintaining a White supremacist master script, the image of which is "an independent island race cut off from mainland Europe, proud and fierce, critical of 'foreigners' and their habits" (ibid, p.447).

Grosvenor (1999) shares Crawford's views that raced identities are part of the fabric of the 'cultural capital' of British history, delineated in the English mind "those who are 'of' the nation and those who are, and always will be, 'outside' of the nation" (p.37). The Black presence in Britain for Grosvenor provides a visible threat to the nation as they are racialised as non-White and non-British, and viewed through the prism of racism, associating their presence with violence and social problems. History textbooks often afforded Black people brief mention post-1945, attributing their presence to immigration and racial tensions. Consequently,

> Black experiences lay 'outside of history', that is, outside received notions of Britain's past. This is a reading of the past which particularises, homogenises and isolates black experiences. Life experiences are presented in a 'race' focused historical vacuum. Black lives have no historical (or contemporary) meaning outside racialised 'black and white'

> relations. Black voices outside of this racialised vision of the past go unheard, unrecorded and unremarked in historical narratives of the nation (Grosvenor, 1999:38).

For Grosvenor, the omission of BH from the mainstream British narrative constitutes representations of Otherness, or the process of defining who is and who is not. It is also a key indication that Black people have always been represented as a problem demographic. In order to challenge this, he recommends that there should be an analysis of how "racialised identities have been imagined and developed in the English mind over time" (ibid, p.38), something I turn to in Chapter 3.

The literature on BH in English schools has revealed that the history curriculum, rather than being an accurate reflection of Britain's past, could be read as a racial text designed to maintain a White supremacist master script (Ladson-Billings, 1998). From a critical race perspective, the processes involved in securing White domination are found in the selection of material based on Anglocentrism and nationalism, which portray an invented past rather than a historically accurate one. The privileging of White British history indicates who has power in British society and the consequence is a 'disturbingly limited' and incomplete view of Britain's past (Grosvenor, 1999).

The White supremacist history curriculum could explain why the DfES report, Ethnicity and education (2006) revealed that for some BME students – Black African (13%), Pakistani (13%) and Indian (13%) - history was their least favourite subject. Although no official explanation was provided, the literature review on BH has potentially highlighted some reasons why that might be; however, academic studies in this area provide some

evidence-based explanations for this and also illuminate the impact of privileging White interests on Black students. It is to this consideration that I now turn.

Academic studies on Black students' experiences studying history in English schools

One area in which Black students express negative experiences of schooling – and thus provides the focus of this thesis – is in the study of history. Siblon's research in Northamptonshire (2005) found that 74% of schools across primary and secondary sectors do not, or rarely teach Black British history. Schools that 'rarely' do so used token Black figures, such as Ghandi or Martin Luther King, even though they are not British (p.18). The rationale for this was because 80% of teachers across both sectors described themselves as having limited or no knowledge of Black British history (p.20). Grever, Haydn and Ribbens's (2008) comparative study between England and the Netherlands found that 'ethnic minority' students had a different experience of history taught in schools compared to their 'indigenous' (White) counterparts. Fewer than 50 per cent agreed that 'a common history creates mutual bonds' and this fell to 36.4 per cent for ethnic minority students (p.10). Rather, students wanted to see an 'objective' view of a nation's past. This supports Harris and Reynolds's findings that minority students did not have a personal connection to the history taught in classrooms and, instead, wanted "to be taught a more diverse past both in terms of geographical spread, types of history and historical perspectives" (2014:484).

Harris found that schools often focus the teaching of history on "collective memory: what is good about Britain, its history and contributions to the world" (cited in Harris and

Reynolds, 2014:466) and this simplistic view of the past alienated Black children as the focus on 'their' history was based upon struggle and inequality (2014:468). This approach resulted in schools cherry-picking a few (but repetitive) key individuals as representative of the seemingly homogenous Black experience. Research by Whitburn and Yemoh (2012) revealed the consequence of focusing on BH heroes, relegated its place to BHM and is unhistorical rather than socially cohesive. Instead, deeper integration into the mainstream history curriculum was desired by Black students and within this, 'positive aspects of change' rather than victimhood was important to prevent alienation (p.22).

Black students' feelings of alienation and disconnection with history taught in classrooms were a similar theme highlighted in Hawkey and Prior's research (2011). In a study about perspectives of history amongst minority students, they found that Black students were dissatisfied with the disproportionate focus on slavery and this was at odds with the history they were taught elsewhere. At present, Traille (2006; 2007) has specifically focused on African-Caribbean students and their mothers' experience of *history*. Surveying 124 students of African Caribbean and non-African Caribbean descent (aged 13-17 years) and interviewing 12 children of African Caribbean and non-African Caribbean descent (aged 12-17 years), Traille found that the one-size-fits-all approach to history in the National Curriculum needed to be carefully rethought. This approach had the consequence of homogenising or othering BH, which was usually focused on Black people of the Americas or slavery. This approach alienated Black children by making BH synonymous with victimhood, and rather than a reactionary move to Afrocentrism, African Caribbean children and their mothers wanted deeper integration into the mainstream history curriculum. The study also highlighted the paradox of teaching diversity, where teachers felt they were demonstrating 'inclusivity' and 'diversity', they interpreted this to mean

having BH in the first place, rather than considering the implications of the substantive content or the impact it had on Black students. The content, however, lacked relevance to Black students and instead they wanted to see more positive recognition of their histories within the narrative of Britishness.

On the other hand, good practice with the integration of BH was observed during Demie's research into improving the academic attainment of Black Caribbean children (2005). In one London borough across 13 case study schools, Demie found that effective teaching and learning incorporated BH, not as an addendum to the Whiteness-as-normal history curriculum, but as a basis for reflecting pupils' heritage, culture and experience as Black British students. Teachers were keen to avoid the Americanisation of BH and committed structurally to a relevant and inclusive curriculum that addressed the complex identities of Black Caribbean pupils in their classrooms. Therefore, Black Caribbean students could speak with confidence about their complex identities and "they took for granted that they were British" (2005:495). Though the focus of the study was on Black Caribbean students, the findings gave no information about Black African students. The implication of this omission is that Black African students may be achieving better academically than their Caribbean peers so, BH is integrated only when there is a 'problem' group in need of remedial assistance. Despite the progress made in one London borough to address the needs of a particular group of Black students, it appears that elsewhere the picture is not as progressive.

Bracey's recent research (2016) has explored BH after the implementation of a Heritage Lottery-funded curriculum project in Northamptonshire. The research focused on the perspectives of primary and secondary school teachers towards BH. Although he argues

that the teaching of BH is more challenging since the national policy revisions, the study focuses too heavily upon individual teachers' attitudes and values as an important factor in the engagement of BH, reaffirming the view that Black students' negative experiences are the result of poorly informed or racist teachers. This thesis makes a departure from ignoring the contributions of all Black students (African and Caribbean) and pays attention to locating the institutional pedagogies of the research schools within wider structural and ideological racism, which legitimates classroom decision-making and engagement with BHM/BH.

Gap in the academic literature

The previous research has been significant in revealing how political decisions about the history curriculum have inaccurately reflected Britain's diverse past, failed to foster social cohesion, or personally connect with particular groups owing to conceptualising 'Other' history in parochial ways. However, there remains a gap in the literature exploring how pedagogical approaches for teaching BH based upon teachers' interpretations of it and Black students' negative experiences of these approaches, should be positioned within a broader appreciation of institutional and ideological influences. These wider influences continue to view and perpetuate understandings about Black students and thus, their history, as deficient. Put simply, alienation and disconnection felt by Black students with the history curriculum as a result of portraying BH as homogenous and only rehearsing the narratives of slavery and US Civil Rights should not be assumed as the fault of individual schools, either through lack of time or knowledge. Rather, these conceptualisations of BH mirror a much larger, structural and ideological racism that legitimises these parochial

decisions and negative manifestations in the classroom characterised by what I argue, are racial microaggressions.

In the US Judge Robert Carter (1988) argues that we must look at the ‘disease’ (the ideology of White supremacy), which legitimises the ‘symptoms’: parochial approaches towards BH and racial microaggressions. Only by illuminating that racist practices in the classroom are legitimated by structural and ideological racism can we expand anti-racist scholarship on racism in schools and work towards improving the experiences of Black children. This perspective is supported by Leonardo who argues that "students of color benefit from an education that analyses the implications of Whiteness" (2002:36) so they have an awareness of how to acknowledge and seek to combat its effects. Privileging Black students’ experiences of their marginalisation provides fresh insight into the ‘old’ problem of racism in schools because it recognises that they are valid holders of knowledge and their views should be respected and listened to if their experiences are to improve. Despite increased evidence that BH is a key missing component in the KS3 history curriculum, education policy continues to ignore this, effectively entrenching Black students’ marginalisation ever further. An antiracist education must incorporate the voices of the marginalised in order to understand the contours of racism and its impact on non-White recipients.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed relevant literature to outline historic patterns of structural and interpersonal racism Black students have faced since the 1950s to the present day, revealing that attempts to provide an education system that benefits all students has negative outcomes and impacts upon their experience of schooling. The liberal values regarded in political discourse as colourblind, such as equal opportunity, social cohesion and antiracism mask White beneficiaries and successive governments have chosen not to address the specific needs of Black groups, cementing racism as policy. Where racial disadvantage and inequalities in education have been addressed, this was not coordinated in a way that tackled the issues at a national level and BH has always lacked a clearly defined, antiracist framework. Multicultural education has suffered from a lack of commitment at policy level and, increasingly since 2001, multiculturalism has been viewed with suspicion and contempt for discouraging communities to integrate. Colourblindness is now the established political discourse in education, naturalising the marginalisation of particular Black groups. Both academic literature and studies reveal the structural and ideological privileging of White interests through the history curriculum by positioning BH as separate and non-British. This negatively impacts upon Black students' experiences of studying history. In the next chapter I outline the usefulness of a critical race analysis for illuminating the multifaceted nature of racism and the usefulness of centring the narratives of Black students in order to understand their experiences of studying BH and the impact upon them.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework - Critical Race Theory

Introduction

The last chapter argued that Black children, since their mass arrival to English classrooms in the 1950s, have faced historic patterns of ideological, structural and teacher racism based upon deficit notions of Black people. This has impacted on their achievement and experience of schooling, with the study of history being a particular subject of contention for Black students. The aim of this chapter is to outline the theoretical framework, Critical Race Theory (CRT) and explain its usefulness in analysing the multifaceted nature of racism in the English education system. CRT provides a context-driven lens through which to understand how deficit understandings about Black people emerged, have been incorporated and are entrenched at a structural level. The saturation of deficit notions of Blackness has legitimated the marginal position of Black students and thus, the study of BH. This chapter starts by briefly introducing the development of CRT in the US and outlining the key concepts underpinning the scholarship. It will then consider the English context with 'BritCrit', exploring its applicability to racism in education (including the history curriculum) due to the absence of an anti-racist theoretical framework. This chapter will then consider the debates about its transferability to the English context and end by making a case for using critical race methodologies for understanding how the saturation of racism through the KS3 history curriculum impacts upon Black students' experiences of studying BH.

Critical Race Theory – Its emergence in the USA

Critical Race Theory (CRT) can be traced back to Critical Legal Studies, a body of scholarship from the 1970s. Critical Legal Studies (CLS) emerged during the US Civil Rights era but can mostly be seen as a revival of the Legal Realism of the 1920s and 1930s. Scholars such as Mackinnon and Kennedy, influenced by Legal Realism, argued that the legal system was not an objective, purely evidence-based space for the judge to make an informed and rationale legal decision. Rather, the legal system was built upon "arbitrary categorisations and decisions that both reflected and advanced established power relationships in society by covering injustices with a mask of legitimacy" (Taylor, 2009: 2). Put simply, the terms 'Black' and 'White' represent more than a group of individuals or an identity; in fact, they are deeply constituted by the unequal racial fabric of Western European ideology which permeates all aspects of society, including the law.

CRT developed as a sub-division of and later split from, CLS in the 1980s because it was perceived to be too restrictive by centring class in the absence of race. CLS was mainly concerned with class-based analyses of the law and social power, underpinned by market forces. The scholarship revealed that terms such as liberty of contract, consent, and duress were not value-free or apolitical terms; instead they were "manifestations of a particular institutional political and class-based ideology" (Roithmayr, 1999: 3). By the first CRT workshop in Madison, Wisconsin in 1989, CRT departed from the (mainly White) scholarship of CLS because of its inability to analyse how the law is founded upon and reflective of a proliferation of racial power. That is not to suggest that race transcends all other categories such as class, sex/gender, and sexual orientation; however,

> race has played a unique role in the formation and historical development of the United States . . . Race is a fundamental organizing principle of social stratification. It has influenced the definition of rights and privileges, the distribution of resources, and the ideologies and practices of subordination and oppression (Omi and Winant, 2015:pp.106-107).

Race and racism are products of White supremacy, as this chapter will demonstrate later; therefore, despite regional differences in the development and understanding of race and racism outside of the USA, CRT's global project of dismantling White supremacy means its scholarship can (and should) exist outside of North America.

Critical Race Theory – Its emergence in England

Though in its infancy, CRT is a growing scholarship in England. The first UK-based Critical Race Theory (CRT) seminar took place in 2006 at the Manchester Metropolitan University. Critical race scholars in the UK were attracted to the acceptability of the permanence of racism saturating all institutions *as a starting point* to intersections with other forms of oppression. Traditional social science in England on race inequalities has tended to be inconsistent with the consequence of marginalizing or silencing minority voices, and leaving racialised dynamics unchallenged (Gillborn, 2011). Considerations of racial inequalities in education started in the 1970s with multiculturalists (manifested in the Swann report, 1985) who argued that racist attitudes could be overcome through a multicultural education. This focused too heavily upon lifestyles of the exotic 'other.' Coming under sharp criticism for ignoring structural perpetuations of inequalities, anti-

racists of the 1980s, as I explained in Chapter Two and develop further in this chapter, pointed to school structures being institutionally racist. However, both multicultural and anti-racist debates have lacked a coherent theoretical and methodological basis for challenging and addressing racism in education.

CRT offers a different way to frame multiple oppressions with the added benefit of embracing "the best of activist social science while foregrounding praxis, social justice, social transformation and most important, centring 'race' and racism" (ibid, pg.14). CRT has since been used to explore the liminal position of Black scholars in higher education and the racial microaggressions they face (Rollock, 2012); critical pedagogy with British Muslims (Housee, 2008); racial inequalities in education policy (Chakrabarty and Preston, 2007, 2008; Gillborn, 2005; 2013; Thomas, 2012); racism in sport (Hylton, 1995; 2005; 2008); and Marxism and CRT (Preston & Chadderton, 2012). There are no established doctrines or methodologies guiding CRT in England, but there is an adherence, generally, to the core tenets of CRT scholars in the USA.

Although there exists no established doctrines or methodologies guiding CRT scholars (Crenshaw et al., 1995), there exists a general set of conceptual tools or basic insights (Delgado and Stefancic, 2000a) that scholars agree upon. Firstly, racism is normal and manifests at multiple levels from the micro level - racial microaggressions - to the macro level - structural and ideological privileging of White interests. Secondly, political, economic, social, and cultural advancements for Blacks have historically occurred where Whites have also benefited through the processes of interest convergence and divergence. Thirdly, CRT challenges dominant ideologies and reveals that colourblindness is a myth. Therefore, liberal values such as equal opportunities, meritocracy and raising standards

actually mask and legitimate White privilege. Lastly, traditional social science research has tended to uphold deficit-informed thinking about Blacks (Tate, 1997) and so counter-narratives provide an opportunity to hear their experiences of areas of inequality in education and the impact upon them. Even where largely ethnographic research in education has revealed striking linearity in the literature concerning micro-level racism and the experience of Black students in schools, a critical missing component has been in providing a theoretical and methodological perspective that centres marginalised voices (Gillborn, 1990; Mac an Ghaill, 1988; Sewell, 1997; Wright, 1986). Therefore, it is important to centre the lived experience of those facing oppression with a focus on activism to end all forms of injustice. I will take each one in turn and explain how the US-based founders conceptualized CRT and how the concepts have been applied to education in England.

Conceptual tools guiding CRT

1. Racism as normal

Race consciousness and racialisation has been a key feature of Western societies, such as the USA and UK since European explorers colonised foreign land and peoples. Race pervades all areas and subsumes all people in the process determining, in large part, racial groups' economic, political, and social positioning (Bonilla-Silva, 1997). In this system of racialisation, people of colour are treated unequally compared to their White counterparts, and this is secured through institutional and structural arrangements (Barrera, 2008). To centre race in any analysis of inequalities is to accept that racism is not the one-dimensional, interpersonal ignorance of a few, but rather, so ingrained in Western society it is virtually unrecognisable (Delgado and Stefancic, 2000a). As Solórzano explains,

racism occupies at least four dimensions: "a micro and a macro component, institutional and individual forms, conscious and unconscious elements and a cumulative impact on both the individual and group" (1997: 6). A more accurate definition of racism acknowledges its various reconfigurations and manifestations, rather than the taken-for-granted rhetoric that it is solely interpersonal. Therefore, I draw upon Essed's definition of racism that saturates all societies in multiple ways as evidence of 'everyday racism' (1991). Specifically, Essed argues,

> everyday racism is the integration of racism into everyday situations through practices (cognitive and behavioural) that activate underlying power relations. This process must be seen as a continuum through which the integration of racism into everyday practices becomes part of the expected, of the unquestionable, and of what is seen as normal by the dominant group. When racist notions and actions infiltrate everyday life and become part of the reproduction of the system, the system reproduces everyday racism (1991:50).

In England, the publication of the Macpherson Report (1999) revealed that racism saturated all aspects of society, including education, shattering the illusion that racism was solely interpersonal and conscious. The report also highlighted that in education, colourblindness and equal opportunities were having negative racialised consequences for Black children, as the needs of diverse communities were not being met or valued. The report's findings were met with hostility in public discourse, particularly the finding that the definition of racism should be expanded to include an incident that the recipient *perceives* to be racist. Therefore, Gillborn explains that antiracism became an ill-defined concept in education policy and thus, reconfigured to refer to the ignorance of a few rather

than the result of structural and ideological arrangements (2006). Gillborn draws upon CRT to explore racialised educational inequalities manifested as a result of education policies in England. He explains that schools have a statutory obligation under the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) to monitor race equality; however, they are "lagging well behind other public authorities" in addressing racial inequalities (2006: 5). A CRT analysis reveals that equality of opportunity has not yet been achieved and, in fact, school processes such as assessments, the curriculum, teacher training and inspection regimes serve to naturalise Black students as failures (Gillborn, 2006). In this way, the education system, rather than a site of equal opportunities, is a racialised space, organising and distributing resources and benefits along racial lines. Therefore, the racialised *outcomes* of education policies in England lead Gillborn (2014) to characterise them as 'racism as policy' as they do not need to be intentionally racist, but they are, nevertheless, deeply embedded and taken-for-granted. In the KS3 history curriculum, the structural privileging of White British history and the erasure of BH provides examples of racism as policy.

Huber and Solórzano (2015) provide an excellent framework for CRT scholars in education to identify the micro-level, institutional, and ideological contours of racism. At a micro-level, Black people are commonly the recipients of conscious and unconscious attitudes, conveyed to them in the form of racial microaggressions. These conscious and unconscious attitudes are demonstrative of the *permanence* of everyday racism as they reflect wider structural and ideological anti-Blackness. Chapter 5 reveals that racial microaggressions directed towards Black students are an enduring feature of their experience studying BH. These microaggressions are reflective of wider institutional and ideological anti-Blackness that permits these parochial approaches to occur in the classroom. The next section borrows much from the psychological literature out of the US

where the concept originates, but this chapter then explains its applicability to the English education system.

1.1 Racial Microaggressions

The concept 'racial microaggressions' is defined and developed by African-American psychiatrist, Chester M. Pierce. Working with African-American communities, Pierce argues that racism is a system of control guiding the lives and experiences of African-Americans and, as such, they develop race-related stress conditions. In historically White spaces, such as schools and workplaces, Blacks face mundane extreme environmental stress (MEES) (Pierce 1974; 1975a; 1975b; 1995). *Mundane* refers to the everyday, taken-for-granted experiences of African-Americans that are *extreme* because their experiences have psychological and physiological consequences; *environmental* refers to the readiness of environments – including institutional, cultural and policy practices – to aim against the Black male presence in particular; and *stressful* because time that could be spent engaging in creative or professional endeavours is consumed by finding survival techniques to deal with various acts of racism (Smith, Hung and Franklin, 2011:64).

Traditional race research, exploring overt and gross acts of racism directed towards minority groups, exhibits inherent operational prejudices that sustain the marginalisation of these groups because the dominator is mostly ignored from the object of study. The gap in anti-racist work for the English education system has been the lack of connecting micro-level racism to wider structural and ideological racism. A lack of this congruent link between micro and macro means that in academic research, the victim is targeted to be "understood, helped, analysed, categorized, altered, and controlled" (Pierce 1995:278). Consequently, the experiences of the victimised are not sought as this deficit understanding

about their plight consciously or unconsciously "presumes that they are trivial, irrelevant, marginal, or even immature, miniature, and worthless" (ibid).

As a result of living under a racist system of control, Black people live in a constant state of hypervigilance to the threat of racism because the oppressors' capacity for oppression and discrimination is unrelenting. This state of hypervigilance, of being constantly on guard against racism is unrecognised by Whites and "the withering effects of cumulative, individual, and collective microaggressions" (ibid, p.277) towards Black people have further developed in modern racist societies because the 'old,' gross acts of racism have largely been replaced by the subtle, the covert and the everyday. The subtle acts are harder to name and identify and the consequences less likely to be overt or clearly visible so are less likely to be believed. Therefore, it is important to centre the voices of recipients of oppression if an anti-racist future is to be realised.

Pierce defines racial microaggressions as

> subtle, innocuous, preconscious, or unconscious degradations, and putdowns, often kinetic but capable of being verbal and/or kinetic. In and of itself a microaggression may seem harmless, but the cumulative burden of a lifetime of microaggressions can theoretically contribute to diminished mortality, augmented morbidity, and flattened confidence (1995:281).

Pierce seeks to illuminate that what has been systematically overlooked in academic research: the taken-for-granted attitudes, the subtle verbal and/or behavioural responses directed towards Black people. These attitudes are comprised of mundane reinforcing

messages that Black people are insignificant and irrelevant (Pierce, 1969) and they inhabit – and inhibit – a Black person's space, time, energy and motion (STEM) (Pierce, 1995). To defend against these ubiquitous and unrelenting microaggressions, a Black person must negotiate racial battles and this "requires time and energy that oppressors cannot appreciate" (ibid, p.282). The lives of Black people are filled with preoccupations with developing survival or 'adaptive techniques' to "dilute, postpone, or deflect stress about anxieties or disaster, terror, and torture that could be brought about by an oppressive individual or collective (ibid, p.277).

Influenced by Pierce's concept of racial microaggressions, US scholars researching racism have extended Pierce's definition and identified its presence within higher education institutions and the law (see Yosso et. al., 2009; Smith, Yosso, Solórzano, 2007). Davis (1989) argued that the law is comprised of taken-for-granted, unconscious assumptions about Black inferiority and this inferiority "is more than an implicit assertion; it is a background assumption that supports the seizure of a prerogative (p.1568). Unconscious attitudes about Black inferiority manifest themselves in microaggressions – automatic disregard – and are dependent upon similar unconscious attitudes about White superiority. Davis suggests Whites are capable of microaggressions because "cognitive habit, history, and culture [leaves them] unable to hear the range of relevant voices and grapple with what reasonably might be said in the voice of discrimination's victims" (1989:1576). How have these unconscious attitudes about Black inferiority/White superiority and their commensurate microaggressions gained legitimacy? For this, it is important to look at the construction of racism. Solórzano, Ceja and Yosso suggest three important points about the construction of racism: "(1) one group believes itself to be superior; (2) the group that

believes itself to be superior has the power to carry out the racist behavior, and; (3) racism affects multiple racial and ethnic groups" (2000:61).

Unconscious attitudes of White superiority, which are dependent upon Black inferiority, is an important area to explore further. How have Whites come to develop these entrenched attitudes? Feagin (2010) suggests Whites view the world through the lens of a 'White racial frame,' comprised of an aggregation of racist stereotypes, racial narratives, racial images and racial emotions resulting in "inclinations to discriminatory action" (pp.10-11). This White racial frame is historic and thus, deeply embedded in the mean-making structures of Western societies. William Smith (2004) extends Feagin's analysis of superior-inferior attitudes by using the concept of 'racial priming' to explain the

> socialization process wherein racialized messages and racial ideologies are passed onto White children. This priming (preparation) process occurs indirectly, directly, consciously, and unconsciously. The ongoing process of racial priming, conditions White children to engage in color-conscious racialized actions throughout their lifespan while believing themselves to be color-blind (cited in Smith, Yosso and Solórzano, 2007:560).

Colour-blindness is a form of racism, and in a critique of liberalism, the values which underpin Western societies such as tolerance, respect for diversity, meritocracy and equal opportunities, CRT scholars identify colour-blindness as a form of racialised discrimination. This is because Whites are the only group "that can take up the non-particular position of ordinariness, the position that claims to speak for and embody the commonality of humanity" (Dyer, 1997: pp.222-223). In other words, colourblindness is

Whiteness rather than the absence of race. There are multiple elements that converge to reinforce the priming process for White children through to adulthood, including

> peers, games, folklore, jokes, politicians, mainstream media, and music as well as the hidden curriculum found in textbooks, teacher expectations, and schooling inequalities . . . [Whites] internalize racist attitudes, stereotypes, assumptions, fears, resentments, discourses and fictitious racial scripts (Smith, Yosso and Solórzano, 2007:561).

In England, Rollock (2012) acknowledges there is little substantial research in the UK on racial microaggressions. In education, this leaves racial microaggressions particularly under-theorised. Therefore, more work in this area needs to be conducted to demonstrate that racism is more complex than typically understood in public and political discourse, when in fact racism extends beyond conscious prejudicial attitudes of a few White individuals. Rollock has drawn upon counter-narratives within CRT to illuminate how subtle and seemingly innocuous racism pervades higher education institutions. A lack of acknowledgement and awareness about the more subtle forms of racism have a devastating impact on Black people, as Rollock argues,

> the prevalence and incidence of these racial microaggressions remains a key marker of the continuing power and privilege of Whiteness in educational practice and wider society as they continue to wound, constrain and denigrate the validity of the presence of persons of colour. Yet these very acts are 'missed' as being racist not just because of the subtlety but because of an inherent misconception that 'nice' people cannot be racist (2012:529).

Delgado Bernal, one of CRT's most prominent scholars, argues that students of colour have been historically undervalued in schools in terms of their histories, cultures and languages (2002). Rather, they have faced Anglo-centrism as the normative standard and experienced frequent teacher misunderstanding about their cultures. Feagin suggests this is made possible because of the existence of the White racial frame, which legitimates current racialised structures and depends upon collective memory and collective forgetting (2010). In the former, powerholders (principally Whites) "have the greatest control over society-wide institutional memories, including those recorded by the media and in most history books, organizational histories, laws, textbooks, films, and public monuments" (ibid, p.17). In the latter, the White racial frame ignores or suppresses depending upon the "overt choices of the powerful;" consequently, they "seek to suppress or weaken collective memories of societal oppression, and to construct positive and fictional memories" (ibid, p.17). This is supported by Bunce and Field in England, who suggest that the memories of Empire have been largely forgotten by what they characterise as 'establishment amnesia' (2014). This process of selective memory and memory loss serves a political purpose:

> Forgetting the history of Black resistance movements has helped the majority White population to forget unpalatable truths concerning the ubiquitous discrimination in housing, unemployment and education and the savage violence at the hands of the police and freelance racists which these Black movements confronted (2014: viii).

For White teachers and students, the pervasiveness of Anglo-centrism within and outside the walls of education make it difficult to 'see' racism because society's collective memory supports the view that Western society developed *organically*. Mills argues

> as a general rule, *White misunderstanding, misrepresentation, evasion, and self-deception on matters related to race* are among the most pervasive mental phenomena of the past few hundred years, a cognitive and moral economy psychically required for conquest, colonization, and enslavement. And these phenomena are in no way *accidental*, but *prescribed*, by the terms of the racial contract, which requires a certain schedule of structured blindness and opacities in order to establish and maintain the White polity (1997:19 italics original emphasis).

Thus, in education, Whiteness guides the normative standard of "ideal students," encouraging the formation of hierarchical and raced identities. In England, Cecile Wright suggests, "schools are not only involved in the construction of race, gender and class, but they also reproduce these existing inequalities" (2010:317). Therefore, any child located outside the typology of the ideal student will fare badly under the current education system. Teachers are merely reflecting institutional racism rather than facing a historic crisis of a few 'bad apples' and, in essence, the English education system is organised to fail Black children; therefore, all "social policy initiatives employed to respond to Black children in British schools have entailed an erasure of 'race' from policy" (Wright, 2010:306).

Consequently, Whiteness as the normative standard ensures that the education system is "defined to include only the cultural practices of Whites [which] laid the foundation for the idea that Whiteness – that which Whites alone possess – is valuable" (Harris, 1993:1721). In England, Gove's version of 'our island story' has revealed that policy decision-making about its content entrenches common-sense understandings that Britishness is synonymous only with White British history, and therefore, reflective of the only valuable knowledge

worth learning. Drawing upon Huber and Solórzano's framework for analysing racism, institutional practices and processes are also permeated by racism, securing White domination and associated privileges (2015).

2. Interest convergence/divergence

In the US, Bell's theory of interest convergence (1980) is important for understanding how the achievements of Blacks in achieving racial equality was only accommodated as long as Whites were also the beneficiaries. Dudziak (1988) used the 'most celebrated Civil Rights case,' *Brown vs. Board of Education*, to show that desegregation should be placed within the historical context of McCarthyism. Therefore, it was not simply the state of Kansas wanting to achieve equality of opportunity for all: it was forced to. As Bell explains, *Brown vs. Board of Education,* "served to advance the nation's foreign policy interests more than they provided actual aid to Blacks" (1990: 2). The advancement of Brown needs contextualising, according to Dudziak, to demonstrate that progress did not happen in spite of everything else, but because of other, more pressing concerns for the US government. Dudziak explains

> the focus of American foreign policy at this point was to promote democracy and to "contain" communism. However, the international focus on U.S. racial reform meant that the image of American democracy was tarnished (2009:85).

Put simply, the US had a Bill of Rights and a Constitution protecting American citizens from tyranny; however, there were substantial and widespread human rights abuses towards African-Americans. Soviet propaganda and observations from Latin American and

African countries, revealed the hypocrisy of American democracy. To counter Soviet propaganda, Dudziak explains that the image of democracy needed cleaning up at home; hence, the celebrated case of *Brown vs. Board of Education* as a significant move forward for America and the American people. However, Bell characterises the Brown case as a "magnificent mirage" because of the 'unfulfilled hopes of racial reform' (2004: 4). This is because desegregation under Plessy vs. Ferguson (1896) was not realised under the Brown case; rather, Brown reconfigured instead of dismantling racial inequity and left economic, residential and educational segregation untouched (Dixon and Rousseau, 2006).

In England, Gillborn draws upon and applies the concepts of interest convergence and divergence to education policy. Interest convergence is not born out of a logical and reasoned process of negotiation between powerful White policy-makers and marginalised Black communities. Instead, progress was achieved only through struggle from minority communities, as I explained in Chapter Two. As Gillborn argues that progress in education policy to address racial inequalities "becomes the lesser of two evils because an even greater loss of privilege might be risked by failure to take any action at all" (2013:479). Gillborn observes that despite occasional policy rhetoric about the importance of addressing race inequality in education, the pursuit of neoliberalism continues to undermine this as "success is assumed to reflect merit" (2014:36). This perpetuates the notion that the education system is designed to raise standards for all students rather than tackling how the system structurally disadvantages particular groups. For instance, in the contemporary English context, the introduction of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) has disproportionately affected Black students' attainment. This is because lower teacher expectations for Black students impacts upon their capacity to be entered for higher tier examinations. Consequently, they have been "placed in the lowest teaching groups, where

teachers cover less of the curriculum, thus giving students a reduced chance of achieving the highest grades" (Gillborn, 2014:34). The EBacc is the new measure of academic success that penalizes all students, but in particular, "the highest penalties are suffered by Black Caribbean students, where 84.3% who were successful under the old measure are excluded from EBacc success" (ibid, p.34).

Interest divergence is another concept that Gillborn has drawn upon and applied to English education policy and, specifically, to political discourse about the 'real' victims of education policies: the white working-class (2010; 2013; 2014). He suggests this is done to mobilise Whites along all class lines to ensure that in times of economic crisis, the White working class will continue to 'buy into' the value of their Whiteness. In so doing, this ensures White supremacy is maintained because of the perceived privileges attained by virtue of being White. The long history of the discourse of a threatened White working-class first came to prominence in the 1950s with the arrival of immigrant children into English classrooms. The state's attempts to manage diversity reflected that immigrant children were problematic for the White majority. Although Whites have continued to be privileged in policy decision-making, since the mid-2000s there has been an explicit centring of the needs of White working-class boys. Official statistics have been used as an indicator of White working-class underachievement and Gillborn is keen to highlight the "ideological work" being done to mobilise White identities and curtail race equality. One such way is the government's use of Free School Meals (FSM) as a measure of poverty. The evidence shows that students in receipt of FSM, "achieve relatively poor results *regardless* of ethnic background" (2010: 9).

Despite this, Gillborn explains class is ignored and instead "the race dimension is deliberately accentuated" (ibid, p.10). The greatest inequality persists between White British students on FSM and those White British students who are not on FSM. Outside of the FSM analysis, non-White students such as Black British Caribbean children are persistently underachieving (DfE, 2015), but solely focusing on Whites as the real race victims (Rollock, 2007) inhibits opportunities to address racial inequalities for ethnic minorities. As Gillborn explains, "antiracist and multicultural education initiatives are positioned as a problem, their funding threatened, and a new focus on White students is promoted" (2010:13). This is an approach echoed by changes to the KS3 history curriculum. In policy terms, ignoring the continuing underachievement of Black groups is reflective of a wider anti-Blackness and complicity in securing White domination.

From a critical race perspective, the revisions to the KS3 history curriculum are further evidence of interest divergence. Taking a chronological approach to the study of British history allows teachers to choose their preferred topics of study and can, in effect, entirely erase BH from the mainstream British narrative. Consequently, these revisions support maintaining White supremacy at a structural level and legitimate unquestioned attitudes and collective memories that suggest Britishness is synonymous with Whiteness. Drawing upon Huber and Solórzano's framework it is clear that racism has an ideological root based upon White supremacy and its primary concern is maintaining the system of domination (2015).

3. A critique of liberalism – challenging dominant ideologies

Omi and Winant (2015) explain that the established discourse in the racial democracy comprising the USA is that of colourblindness. In a liberal democratic society, such as the US, to 'see' race is to be racist and this false logic allows for the legitimation of Whiteness because it takes 'race' matters off the political agenda. Collective remembering and forgetting have impacted on the way contemporary American liberal society views Civil Rights gains, that is, "as a long, slow, but always upward pull" (Crenshaw, 1988:1334). However, this implies several false claims about racial equality.

Firstly, Civil Rights successes have always been incremental and have occurred in a linear fashion, irrespective of pace. Secondly, that the current legal system is capable of (eventually) eradicating all types of racial discrimination, which ignores the racial power base underpinning the legal system. Thirdly, the current legal system and structure effect radical change rather than limited change. Instead, CRT contends that liberalism offers no such mechanism for change and where small changes do occur, the pace is painstakingly slow.

In education, the adherence to colourblindness in American society has led to the acceptance of a set of taken-for-granted, liberal values: meritocracy, equality in opportunity, and raising standards, all of which mask their White beneficiaries. As Leonardo explains,

> White racial supremacy revolves less around the issue of unearned advantages, or the *state* of being dominant, and more around direct processes that secure domination and the privileges associated with it (2009:75).

League tables, assessments in which 'intelligence' is measured, streaming and tiering children according to 'academic ability,' gifted and talented programs and the curriculum are Anglo-centric and transmit 'White liberal values' as universal. Underachieving children, such as Black students, are then seen to be natural underachievers rather than observing the school structures to be complicit in ensuring their marginalisation through the direct practices I have described. Failure is then attributed to the individual (and by extension, his or her community) as racism is still understood to be interpersonal rather than deeply embedded and structural.

In England, Hylton describes colourblindness as "a device that maintains dominant hegemonies and social hierarchies by regularly ignoring discriminatory criteria for inclusion" (2008: 9). The dominant, colourblind discourse in the English education system is that it provides all students with the chance to succeed academically. This is strengthened by 'model minorities,' typically Indian and Chinese students, who achieve persistently well at GCSE including above their White counterparts (Gillborn, 2008; 2010). Therefore, the charge of racism can be avoided, and Black Caribbean students (particularly boys) are considered natural failures in an 'equal' system. This leaves race equity constantly having to "fight for legitimacy. This is a key part of the way in which education policy is implicated in White supremacy" (Gillborn, 2005:493). In this way, the painstakingly slow progress of liberalism is also observed in the English context.

Black marginality is further entrenched by continuing pressure for schools to raise standards. The growth in academy schools means greater control of schools to set admissions based upon ability (Gillborn, 2014). The process of schooling has racialising consequences, particularly for Black (particularly Caribbean) children who are entered into lower tier examinations and frequently the recipients of racialised disciplinary measures, such as permanent exclusions (Gillborn, 1990). Under David Cameron's Conservative government, he stopped holding policies up to scrutiny through equality impact assessments, as he considered these processes 'bureaucratic nonsense' (Gillborn, 2014:33). Therefore, a CRT analysis reveals the myth of colourblindness through applying the concepts of interest convergence/divergence to English education policies. Based upon a lack of priority for addressing persistent racial inequalities, an explicit policy focus on White working-class students and ignoring the wealth of evidence that colourblindness has racist outcomes, has implicated schools in securing White supremacy. This has led Gillborn to characterise government education policy as 'racism as policy' (2014).

4. Centring the narratives of those affected by racism in educational research

Delgado (1988) argues that Whites are unable to 'see' their complicity in accruing and perpetuating their privileges in the racial democracy of the USA whereas the subjugated groups within communities of colour have their lives dominated by an awareness of racism. Therefore, the power of voices, of naming one's own realities provides an illuminating insight into the structure of society and realities of racism, "One purpose of narrative is to redirect the dominant gaze, to make it see from a new point of view what has been there all along" (Taylor, 2009: 8). Applying his centring of voice to the legal system, Delgado (1989) suggests the preference for universalism over particularism silences the

‘smaller’ stories of people directly affected by the legal process. That is, the legal system minimises ‘stories’ that are context-driven in search of a universal truth (Tate, 1997). Consequently, CRT scholars employ a range of methodologies that centre the voices of silenced groups to disrupt the illusion of the oppressor; namely, that structures and practices while appearing inclusive, ‘neutral’ and value-free may actually disguise the privileges afforded to Whites and the heavy cost to those facing numerous disadvantages. Delgado asserts,

> stories and counterstories can serve an equally important destructive function. They can show that what we believe is ridiculous, self-serving, or cruel. They can show us the way out of the trap of unjustified exclusion. They can help us understand when it is time to reallocate power. They are the other half – the destructive half – of the creative dialectic. Stories and counterstories, to be effective, must be or must appear to be noncoercive. They invite the reader to suspend judgement, listen for their point or message, then decide what measure of truth they contain. They are insinuative, not frontal; they offer a respite from the linear, coercive discourse that characterizes much of legal writing (1989: 2415).

Solòrzano and Yosso define counter-storytelling as a method of telling stories from those on the margins of society: the subjugated and unheard groups. The benefits are that they help to “strengthen traditions of social, political, and cultural survival and resistance” (2009:139). Research using Critical Race methodologies in education ‘focus on how students of colour experience and respond to the education system and will employ a range of counter-narratives (usually biographical experience) or counter story-telling (ibid). The value of counter-narratives and counter-storytelling in education is not reduced to

expending energies teaching the oppressor about racism. There are community building, psychic preservation benefits, too. They allow groups to realise they are not alone in their feelings of frustration, disenfranchisement and anger; they do not have a 'chip on their shoulder' and neither are they 'playing the race card'. There is an element of liberation in seeing the world through different eyes namely, the psychological and physiological toll of living under a racial democracy and having those feelings accepted as valid and important for pursuing anti-racist change. Parker and Lynn explain that

> CRT narratives and storytelling provide readers with a challenging account of preconceived notions of race, and the stories are sometimes integral to developing cases that consist of legal narratives of racial discrimination. The thick descriptions and interviews, characteristic of case study research, not only serve illuminative purposes but also can be used to document institutional as well as overt racism. The interviewing process can be pulled together to create narratives that can be used to build a case against racially biased officials or discriminatory practices (2009:151).

In England, Housee draws upon and applies counter-narratives to studying Islamophobia with her students in higher education (2012). She argues that counter-narratives are valuable to connect those oft-marginalised voices with bigger structural and ideological racisms. In so doing, the bigger project of pursuing racial justice can be strengthened. This methodological approach of centring the lived experiences of those facing marginality can be used to explore Black students' experiences of the history curriculum. In Chapter 2, I explained how "our island story" told through the history curriculum constitutes the reproduction of structures of White supremacy. Rather than an accurate reflection of Britain's past, the *invented* history curriculum can be read as a racial text, reinforced by

particular subject decisions and approaches that marginalise or erase BH. As Preston (2007) argues, structures of White supremacy are continually reinforced and in so doing, they become embodied, taken-for-granted and a type of everyday racism. It is important critically to interrogate these taken-for-granted assumptions and structures. Rollock (2012) uses counter-narratives to speak back to the dominant discourse on racism. By naming her experiences of racism along with other intersectional challenges, Rollock argues that it is possible to highlight how pervasive racism is beyond the interpersonal level, operating structurally and ideologically.

By focusing on the 'White/Black' binary, earlier CRT scholars masked the complexities of identities within these categories, producing what appeared to be fixed notions of cultural and racial difference. Although there is the recognition that race is a social construct, shaped by a long history of White racial formation and political pressures (Calmore, 1992 in Taylor et. al., 2009: 151), more work needs to be done, particularly in education to complicate the notion of identity in the US and elsewhere (Chadderton, 2013). However, Tate (1997) and Parker and Lynn (2009) suggest this was necessary to focus on the common voice of subjugated Black voices and there has been a vast increase in moving away from this binary to include class and gender (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Crenshaw, 1988; Crenshaw et al., 1995) Chicano and Latino voices with 'LatCrit' to focus on culture, language and immigrant status (Solórzano and Villapando, 1998) and Critical Race Feminism.

So far, this chapter has demonstrated that there are clear benefits to using the conceptual tools offered by CRT to understand the significance of race and racism in education and the structural privileging of White interests through the KS3 history curriculum that

legitimate parochial approaches to BH as well as anti-Black attitudes towards Black children in classrooms. It is important to consider some of the debates surrounding the specificity of race and racism in the English context and the extent to which CRT can be sensitive to historical and geographical differences.

Key debates concerning the applicability of CRT to the English education system

Antiracist literature arose from the 1980s as a response to the state's version of liberal multiculturalism that focused on assimilating Black students into the mainstream at the expense of ignoring structural and power inequalities. Key scholars in England challenged the taken-for-granted adherence to liberal multiculturalism, including Brandt (1986), Mullard (1982), and Troyna (1992). Brandt referred to schools' incorporation of diverse histories as the Trojan horse of institutional racism (1986) because the focus was on combatting negative images with positive ones and incremental curriculum changes, rather than structurally ensuring racial inequalities were challenged and addressed. This argument was taken further by Troyna who argued, "unwitting or otherwise, ideological sleights of hand resulted in obfuscation rather than clarification of the nature of racism in education and the specific processes which are generative of racial inequality" (1992:81). Troyna explains that the Department of Education and Science's inaction to lead on antiracist initiatives left the pursuit of antiracism in schools vulnerable and incomplete.

The usefulness of antiracism in education came under sharp criticism from the political right and the media after the death of Ahmed Iqbal Ullah, a Bangladeshi boy stabbed to

deal by a White peer at his school. The school had antiracism policies and so the political right and the media used this as a basis to discredit "loony left" councils who were ostensibly supporting an extremist ideology (Gillborn, 1995; Troyna, 1993). However, in the UK, antiracist scholars face a lack of a conceptual framework for studying race and racism. Gillborn suggests that whilst this may be a source of strength, on the other hand, antiracist scholars have "failed to properly interrogate our conceptual history and theoretical frameworks" (2006: 3). What is missing, according to Gillborn, is a description of "what is characteristically *antiracist* about an antiracist analysis; and offer a suitable starting point for further explorations in educational theory, policy and practice" (ibid). This is supported by Mirza (2007) who suggests that without a conceptual map, successive governments' 'phases' of assimilation, integration and cultural pluralism towards minorities, appear atheoretical and conceal patterns of overt and subtle discrimination.

According to Gillborn, antiracism at the political level in the 1980s was devoid of critical content and mere rhetoric until the publication of the Macpherson report in 1999. The introduction of institutional racism in the political and public lexicon produced a 'strange' result for English society, as institutions were keen to demonstrate their antiracism credentials. Unfortunately, Gillborn says that antiracism was reconfigured to mean being simply *against racism* and thus, reduced the scope of racism to individual attitudes adrift from structural racisms identified by Macpherson (2006). Despite changes to the law, such as the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000), if the dominant system does not significantly evolve in terms of the curriculum and systems of testing ability, Gillborn argues intentions mean very little. Therefore, this leads Gillborn to suggest that rather than antiracism failing, "in most cases, it simply has not been tried yet" (2006: 6). The shortcomings of the anti-racist movement in the UK and the enduring inequalities in

education led some scholars in England to turn to the possibilities of a critical race perspective.

It is important not to lose sight of wider processes involved at ideological and structural levels that legitimise inequality in schools and classrooms, or as Gilroy (1987) explains, we risk reducing its study to a coat of paint theory of racism. Gillborn concurs suggesting

> if we only focus on the scale of inequity and school-level approaches to addressing it, we lose sight of the most powerful forces operating at the societal level to sustain and extend these inequalities. Essentially, we risk tinkering with the system to make its outputs slightly less awful, but leaving untouched the fundamental shape, scale and purpose of the system itself (2006: 7).

Antiracism must, therefore, retain a critical edge and develop a conceptual map for future scholars working in these areas "to build on the successes, failures and frustrations of previous work," as Gillborn explains, that currently they must "relearn the antecedents of any antiracist analyses that they wish to develop. This is both wasteful and risky" and often, original sources are difficult to source and access (ibid, p. 7). Therefore, Critical Race Theory offers a framework to start this antiracist work in the UK. Though the name implies it is a theory with rigid and fixed sets of ideas, it is more accurately characterised as a *perspective*. Gillborn suggests that he sees no reason why a critical race perspective cannot be used in the UK as it is a growing body of scholarship that is flexible, contested (even within scholars writing in the same areas) and dynamic (2006). He distinguishes between the conceptual tools guiding the scholarship, as I outlined above, and the methodological tools often used, but these are by no means prescriptive.

Warmington (2012) shares Gillborn's assertion that there is potential for the conceptual tools or basic insights of CRT to be applied to the education system in England. He suggests that Black British (mostly English) intellectuals have a more marginal status in the UK than their US colleagues, which may explain the absence of an antiracist conceptual map. He attributes this to the marginalisation of their work in public debates and historical accounts, but also a 'brain drain' of talent over to the US where Black intellectuals are more established following Affirmative Action. Warmington adds that despite their marginal place here in the UK, Black intellectual thought *does* exist, and in education he highlights the race-conscious scholarship of Heidi Mirza, Bernard Coard, Maureen Stone, Hazel Carby, and Tony Sewell. Education has been a key site for Black thought because, for Warmington, being Black *and* British originated at the point Black children populated British schools and scholars studied "the haphazard development of education policies to address their needs and experiences" (2012: 7). He warns that Black intellectual thought is central to Britain's formation and thus, any attempts to develop a conceptual map for illuminating and challenging racialised processes in education must make use of Black British thought and activism.

Warmington welcomes CRT to the UK, not as a carbon copy of the US version but because "CRT in the U.K. remains open enough to work with decentred, unstable notions of blackness" (2012:16). Traditionally, CRT in the US centred the experiences of African-Americans, but in the UK there is a "uniquely British use of the term Black" informed by political blackness of the 1980s (ibid, p.15). Therefore, CRT is more nuanced in the UK because of its inclusion of Black - African, Caribbean *and Asian* - scholars. For example, Housee, a Black British scholar, uses and applies the conceptual tools of CRT to Black and

South Asian (Muslim) students in higher education (2008; 2012). Housee argues that CRT is useful in education because it

> examines [the] macro picture of policies, strategies, programmes, and related practice across the entire educational endeavour, but also focuses on the micro picture of interpersonal behaviour, classroom interaction, participation, and related matters (2012:104).

These nuances in the applicability of CRT show that the scholarship can be sensitive to different geographical regions outside North America and also make use of its general insights. White supremacy dominates the political system of the modern world with global implications (Mills, 1997); therefore, it is appropriate to develop an antiracist conceptual map that can dismantle White supremacy outside of the borders of North America. Warmington explains that CRT is particularly apt for countering the ideological claims of neutrality, meritocracy, colourblindness and equal opportunities in education, and in England, it has been applied to education *policies*, while in the US it was initially applied to legislation (2012).

Lastly, Gillborn suggests important antiracist changes can be achieved, but there is still much more to be done in terms of understanding and addressing racist processes and outcomes. Thus, he says "there is no excuse for the continued absence of CRT from the vast majority of work on race and education outside of the U.S." (2006:14).

Criticisms of CRT in the UK

Criticisms of CRT come mostly from Marxists such as Cole (2009a, 2009b), Cole and Maisuria (2007), and from critical realist approaches such as Kaufmann's (2006). Cole's version of Marxism, which he believes provides the *only* possibility of a viable and equitable future, directly takes issue with several 'tenets' of CRT. Briefly, the criticism centres on whether class or race is the primary marker of oppression and whether CRT can accommodate cultural differences that exist between minority groups such as Asian and Black minorities. This connects to a broader criticism of CRT and that is its tendency to essentialise racial groups. Cole also questions the applicability of the term 'White supremacy' to describe a system of domination which secures the privileges of Whites in the UK. Warmington provides an excellent response to this and the danger is spending too long in cyclical debates about which version of oppression is the most 'truthful' of the lived realities of subjugated groups. He suggests,

> Whiteness does not guarantee all White people 'positions of class power and privilege,' nor does it relegate all Black people to positions of poverty and absolute lack of privilege. What it does, in networked interactions, is ensure that Black people are located always in insecurity, instability and sufferance. That is, nothing earned by Black people is immune from removal, no position is immune from removal, no position is immune from being dissolved where boundaries of Whiteness are invoked (2011:282).

Bonnett (2006) argues that CRT in the UK represents the Americanisation of anti-racism, as it is culturally imperialist. He questions whether CRT could be applied to different social and cultural contexts, while Bourdieu and Wacquant (1991:41) warned against

conceptual paradigms being universalised. Gillborn (2011) counters this by suggesting that CRT in the UK requires constant critical reflection of aims, assumptions and practices – not blind adherence – and this is further supported by Pitcher who argues

> [CRT] has the potential be attentive to the historical and cultural specificity of racisms (in the plural) and does not claim to possess a theory of race that is universal and unpatterned by the contingencies of time and space. This acknowledgement of the specificity of race is of course axiomatic in developing a theory of race that might be applicable to more than one context (2011:204).

In essence, the term 'CRT' for Pitcher, may be limited to other social and cultural contexts that have a different experience (and use of terms) of racial discrimination and 'race.' To counter this, Hylton coined the term 'BritCrit' to acknowledge the specificities of race and racism in the UK, and scholars influenced by CRT are careful to be context-aware. Phillips is also sensitive to the charge that 'colourblindness' may not be an accurate term that can be used here in the UK. However, she uses Goldberg (2000) to show that following the 2001 disturbances, fear of "self-segregating Muslims," White flight and racialised territories show that whilst "ethnic segregation may be lower than in the USA, similar processes are at work" (2004:29). Phillips explains

> To date, much of the discourse surrounding the development of 'parallel' lives within multiethnic Britain has privileged discussions about ethnicity and cultural difference at the expense of racialised inequalities in power and status. This helps to obscure the material effects of racialised difference and tensions, and diverts attention from wider

> issues such as the politicization of 'race' . . . and networks of institutional discrimination (ibid, p.38).

Therefore, CRT has clear applicability to the UK context, and whilst there are considerable differences in terms of racial formation between the US and UK, "the adherence to economic neoliberalism in both countries has resulted in the dominance of a political discourse that emphasizes the significance of ethnic and racial 'differences' rather than addressing systemic patterns of racist exclusion" (Rhodes, 2009). Consequently, it is down to the failures within different groups, held back by their culture, resulting in greater separatedness and (their own) marginalisation. A CRT analysis provides an important analytical function to racial inequalities in education and, particularly, students' experiences of particular subjects. This makes a CRT analysis of the KS3 history curriculum particularly relevant and important as there is a political assumption that it reflects a collective, colourblind identity.

Conclusion

The emergence of the West was predicated upon the unbridled exploitation, displacement and marginalisation of people of colour and, consequently, racism saturates all aspects of society. The process of racialisation, or 'making people up' supported by collective memory and forgetting, has been crucial in legitimising the allocation of power and resources based upon White superiority and Black inferiority. The saturation of racism throughout English society means that institutions – and actors within it – come to embody and reproduce, consciously or unconsciously, patterns of social power. Therefore, routine practices that become unchallenged and taken-for-granted are referred to by Essed as

‘everyday racism’ (1991). CRT is an appropriate theoretical and methodological lens for analysing Black students’ experiences of the KS3 history curriculum because it is context-driven and not ahistorical. Elements of anti-Blackness have guided the experiences of Black (particularly Caribbean) children in English schools and, therefore, the marginal position of BH is just one of the ways White supremacy is maintained. Similarly, the saturation of racism operates at multiple levels and a critical race perspective values that connections must be made between the micro-level racism in the classroom to the wider structural and ideological racisms that permit these micro interactions to occur. There is a congruent link and anti-racist discourse in the UK has failed to address why there are persistent inequalities for Black children. The conceptual and methodological tools offered by CRT allows for anti-racist work to have a conceptual framework.

Lastly, CRT posits that it is only by centring the lived experience of Black students that it is possible to understand the multiple oppressions they face through BHM/BH and how institutions saturated by racism impact upon them. Black History, by its very name, is racialised outside of ‘normal’ history; therefore, the unit ostensibly centres the historical narratives of African diasporic communities. It is consistent with the centring of ‘Black’ History that methodological tools are used to centre Black experiences of BHM/BH. The next chapter will explore the development of traditional race research that has silenced Black students and consider the usefulness of critical race methodologies in recognising Black students as valid holders of knowledge.

CHAPTER 4: Methodology and methods chapter

Introduction

The last chapter outlined the theoretical framework, Critical Race Theory (CRT), and its usefulness in analysing racism in the English education system. Specifically, methodological tools from a critical race perspective allow for a connection to be made from the micro-level pedagogical approaches and classroom interactions during BHM/BH to wider institutional and ideological racisms that legitimate such approaches and interactions to occur. The aim of this thesis is to understand KS3 students' experiences of BHM/BH with particular focus on African and Caribbean students. The aim of this chapter is to outline and provide a justification for the philosophical stance of critical race methodologies underpinning this thesis and the methods used to answer the research questions. Within the research schools, the research questions were:

1. What are the current institutional pedagogies for teaching BHM and BH?
2. What do KS3 students and their history teachers understand the *purpose* of BHM and BH to be?
3. How do students of African and Caribbean descent in secondary schools experience BHM and BH?
4. To what extent do Black students have individual or collective agency to determine the approach to BHM and BH?

This chapter has 3 sections. Firstly, I outline and provide justification for critical race methodologies and methods. I used Critical Race Ethnography (CRE) and counter-

narratives to answer my research questions and achieve the overall aim of my research. Section 2 outlines my positionality and assumptions based upon being a racialised, classed and gendered researcher and the implications for my research. The third section explains sample decisions, problems encountered during the research process, ethics, and ends by providing information on the research sites, "Limehart Secondary School" and "Parsley High School."

Section 1 – Outlining and justifying critical race methodologies

As stated in the previous chapter, scholars influenced by CRT are not constrained by a particular set of doctrines or methodologies. Rather, there is a general acceptance of four basic insights to the scholarship: racism as normal; processes of interest convergence/divergence securing White beneficiaries; challenging dominant liberal values such as 'equal opportunities' and 'meritocracy' because of their negative racialised consequences for Black students; and centring the lived experiences of those facing oppression is useful in achieving the overall goal of social justice through activism.

Colourblindness is the established, unchallenged political discourse in England. It seems paradoxical that race saturates all institutions and peoples but goes 'unseen' and, yet, the statutory focus on Fundamental British Values is deeply inscribed with Whiteness. It is a form of assimilationist policy-making that shapes the political, social and economic experiences of Whites and Blacks alike. By taking 'race' off the political agenda, government data that explores pupil attainment by characteristics (DfE, 2015) naturalise Black (mostly Caribbean) underachievement as unfortunate *but random*. This is because there is a general acceptance, politically, that the education system provides equality of

opportunity, and in a market system of different schools and various opportunities within schools (such as Gifted and Talented programmes, homework and after-school clubs), it is up to the individual pupil to advance his or her own educational journey. Consequently, school structures and processes – an Anglo-centric curriculum, setting and streaming, racialised disciplinary procedures such as exclusions, and parental and school 'choice' – entrench the marginalisation of Black students. The 'model minority' successes in education (Gillborn, 2008) help to support the assumption that liberal values in education - meritocracy, equality of opportunity and colourblindness - provide an inclusive system for all and, thus, the persistent underachievement of Black students is naturalised. In the KS3 history curriculum, there are assumptions that topics of study are colourblind and representative of all British people, as I will explain later.

A CRT perspective seeks to challenge taken-for-granted structures and processes resulting in unequal racial outcomes for people of colour – including negative experiences of education – outside of the "perpetrator perspective" (Freeman, 1995: xiv). This perspective inaccurately views racism as stemming from irrational and ignorant people. However, to challenge this, there is the important first step of questioning how race has historically been researched, to what end, and what shifts need to occur in order to illuminate historically marginalised Black voices.

Critical race scholars are guided by the philosophical stance that scholarship should never position itself to be neutral and objective (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller and Thomas, 1995). Rather, all research is political, particularly in societies saturated by race; therefore, scholars researching in this area cannot sit outside of racialised power dynamics, as they subsume everyone. Therefore, as Ramji in the UK warns, methodology has an impact on

race research, and unless researchers are careful to locate the historical and cultural heritage of their epistemological frameworks, they risk perpetuating the exclusion of non-White others "through the aegis and frameworks of Western rationalism and historicism (2009:21). The first critical question for CRT scholars researching racial inequalities is an epistemological one. CRT has a successful record of revealing the racial formation (and racist saturation) of American and British societies. It is a logical inference that if racism saturates all aspects of society, then it also saturates knowledge production: how we know and understand our world.

Epistemology, the *how we* know, is never neutral, but dominated by world-views and the conditions within which people live and learn (Ladson-Billings, 2000). This worldview stems from the Western Enlightenment, a colonial discourse. I explained in the previous chapter that Whites interpret their lives and society through a White racial frame (Feagin, 2010). Consequently, this frame dominates ways of knowing and understanding the world that is more than simply biased; instead, it is based upon White hegemony. This system of domination, made possible by unearned, invisible assets and privileges (McIntosh, 1997), is invisible to Whites but has very real consequences for their non-White counterparts. As stated in the introduction, Blackness in this thesis refers to persons of African and Caribbean descent who self-identify as 'Black' and, share the cultural practices and traditions of the African diaspora. Despite the ethnic make-up of schools, particularly Limehart Secondary School which was majority South-Asian and Parsley High School where Dhana (a self-identifying Black woman of South Asian descent) developed BH topics to include South Asian histories, Black Africans and those of African descent represent the lowest form of Blackness (Espinoza and Harris, 2000). Thus, the thesis centres and analyses data primarily upon the study of African diasporic history topics and

students. However, I recognise that other non-White groups such as South Asians, were also 'read' as Black in school and in the history curriculum.

Ramji argues that Western Enlightenment epistemology has informed much of social science research, including on racial inequalities, and has a historic legacy of "excluding non-White others" (2009:19). Out of this tradition stems several research paradigms: positivism, constructivism, liberal feminism to postmodernism, all of which according to Stanfield, draw from a "narrow foundation of knowledge that is based on the social, historical, and cultural experiences of Anglos" (1994, cited in Bernal, 2002:107).

Ramji explains that a key feature of colonial discourse is to rely on binaries in knowledge production (2009). These binaries are racially framed with concepts such as civilised and uncivilised being coded to reflect Whiteness and Blackness. The impact of this is to demarcate the fixed boundaries between polar opposites, but also

> binarism operates in the same way as splitting and projection: the centre expels its anxieties, contradictions and irrationalities onto the subordinate term, filling it with the antithesis of its own identity (Ramji, 2009:22).

This is further compounded by terms such as 'Black and Minority Ethnic' (BME) or 'Black History' as they encourage the 'othering' of non-White groups as separate and distinct from Whiteness-as-normal English society (Potter, 2015). For CRT scholars, we must be reminded of Audre Lorde's famous quote that the master's tools can never dismantle the master's house (1984). Put simply, there is the requirement to redress historical racial inequalities in education and education research through methodologies

that *differ* from Eurocentrism in order to "uncover and discover the lived experiences of disenfranchised, colonized, and Indigenous people. That is, there are - and need to be - multiple ways of inquiry/knowing" (Dunbar Jr., 2008:90).

Scholars in the US who have developed critical race and race-gendered epistemologies, which are historically, socially and culturally sensitive, include Delgado Bernal (1998); Dillard (2000); Gordon (1990); Ladson-Billings (1995, 2000), and Scheurich and Young (1997). The key message from their respective works is that people of colour are holders of knowledge based on their experiences of *living* in a raced and gendered society. Critical race methodologies benefit from transdisciplinary scholarship (Parker, Deyhle and Villenas, 1999) and can draw from other areas such as ethnic and women's studies to understand racial inequalities and work towards greater equality.

Traditionally, the overreliance on viewing Black underachievement and negative experience of schooling from a pathological perspective has been reaffirmed by Eurocentric methodologies that privilege objectivity, validity and apolitical research. In England, the most prominent critics of the growing body of ethnographic research indicating racial inequalities as a result of direct and indirect racism comes from Foster (1992; 1993), and Foster, Gomm and Hammersley (1996). To summarise, they provide several areas of contention about the 'bogus scientific claims' and 'systematic deception' inherent within ethnographic research and the subsequent findings about negative teacher attitudes towards Black children (1996:183).

Firstly, the ethnographic studies are small scale with sometimes an unspecified number of teachers, so the findings cannot be generalised to all teachers or to the other teachers who

also come into contact with Black students. Secondly, greater prominence is given to the negative views of a few 'bad apples' and assumed to be representative of all teachers either in the research site or teachers generally. Instead, it is more accurate to suggest that the data reveals some teachers have these attitudes and, therefore, researchers cannot be clear how widespread these attitudes are. Thirdly, attitudes are not indicative of behavioural responses and approaches, thus, whilst some teachers may hold general negative views about a group, this does not automatically equate to negative communications or treatment towards that group. Lastly, there is no evidence to suggest that teachers displayed negative communications or treatment towards Black children because of their race; rather, "the teacher's attitudes may be a result of the actual observed behaviour or performance of the individual student and unrelated to their 'race' or ethnicity" (Foster, 1992a:271). Any *perceived* racial stereotyping by teachers on the part of Black children may, in fact, be a response to their actual behaviour and any academic underachievement is a consequence of bad behaviour in the classroom. Foster suggests researchers such as Wright (1986) and Mac an Ghaill (1988) refuse to acknowledge this as a possible explanation for different educational outcomes and experiences amongst Black children (1990b).

Foster, influenced by Hargreaves et al., (1975) suggests that teachers' views of children are not fixed and often they revise them based upon evidence of the students' work or behaviour. In his own research, Foster found no evidence of racism in his two-year participant observation in a multi-ethnic, inner-city comprehensive school (1990a). He found no evidence of Black children being treated any less favourably on grounds of their 'race' or ethnicity and, to the contrary, African-Caribbean girls were more academically successful than their White peers. What could explain entrenched patterns of

underachievement among Black students more generally, he argues, is that they are more likely to attend poor-performing schools that are equally poorly resourced.

Whilst these arguments are not without merit, Gillborn (1995), Gillborn and Gipps (1998) and Troyna (1993) offer excellent and extensive counter-arguments to the criticisms levelled at qualitative research revealing structural and interpersonal racism in English schools. Gillborn explains that Foster (1990a) does acknowledge, albeit briefly, that Black children are underrepresented in higher band groups and this could be the result of low teacher expectations, particularly towards African-Caribbean boys; however, beyond this brief acknowledgement, this revelation does not concern him (1995). Instead, deniers of racial discrimination have relied heavily upon notions of proving this fact beyond reasonable doubt and using methods applied in natural science to show rigour and objectivity.

Troyna (1993) accused Hammersley and Foster of being 'methodological purists' in which the weight given to the burden of proof is only accepted where it is measurable; this silences critical questions about other, more contentious schools' practices and procedures. The evidence of racial discrimination and racialised consequences is not a criticism of all teachers, but recognition of their role in an institutionally racist setting. That is, "schools play a key role in the production and reproduction of power and social inequality" (Graham and Robinson 2004:655). In essence, teachers reflect and are reflected by wider racisms so the 'bad apples' charge is a redundant one. After all, even Black teachers and Black staff can be implicated in the marginalisation of Black children as they operate in institutions that reflect the privilege of those persons racialised as White and middle-class.

Gillborn (1995) also contests the notion that research can be apolitical or value-free, an important attribute of research that is scientifically rigorous. Hammersley (1992) suggests the goal of social science research is to pursue the 'truth' and this must be evidenced and measurable in a way that is accepted by the majority in a research community; however, Gillborn suggests he is ignoring the role of power in a crude attempt to apply notions of plausibility and credibility. In doing so, Hammersley ignores the fact that no type of research can be "divorced from the assumptions of the individual critic, whose views may reflect particular political, methodological, class-based, gendered and racialised assumptions" (1995:pp.52-53). If we were to only accept the burden of proof based upon what is measurable and 'credible' or 'plausible,' researchers risk ignoring who gets to decide what is credible or plausible and relegates institutional racism, or the role teachers play in entrenching Black marginalisation, to a mere 'theoretical possibility' (ibid.) Perhaps the most convincing charge against methodological purism is the idea that scientific discourse is located outside of structures of power. Gillborn argues,

> By denying scientific discourse is itself implicated in the processes of cultural production and reproduction, the 'methodological purists' offer a prescription of sociology that is at best ethnocentric, at worst racist. That is to say, by privileging the values, expectations and assumptions of the dominant ethnic group these authors (whatever their conscious intent) may defend processes that systematically serve to disadvantage minority groups (1995:63).

In the study of racial inequalities in outcomes in schools and negative experiences of schooling, quantitative and qualitative researchers must ensure academic rigour and high ethical standards, but also ask critical questions about the taken-for-granted assumptions,

practices and processes that seek to naturalise Black children as failures in the English education system. Eurocentric methodologies marginalise the lived experiences of those facing oppression in favour of finding objective 'truths;' however, Delgado Bernal (2002:112) warns, "[this] is based on White superiority, capitalism and scientific theories of intelligence" which naturalise Black underachievement as an unfortunate but random consequence of an 'aracial system' (Duncan, 2002).

Politically, in England, the current discourse on race is that the education system does not 'see' race and only colourblind policy-making can ensure equality for all. The current discourse on class is that 'poor' White working-class boys are the 'new' chronic underachievers and this requires urgent attention, but this is couched in the language of poverty and economic deprivation (see excellent analysis from Gillborn, 2010). CRT scholarship challenges this dominant discourse in education (through race and gendered counter-narratives) by examining how education policy and structures in schools and classrooms marginalise students of colour (Solórzano and Yosso, 2000). For example, why is race centred for a particular group of students studying history and not others? Are the KS3 history revisions representative of a *collective* 'our' island story? What topics are taught for BHM/BH and in what ways are they delivered? How do students of African and Caribbean descent experience this?

Consequently, qualitative research in education has *pedagogical* as well as methodological implications to critical race and race-gendered scholarship. Matsuda suggests, "those who experienced discrimination speak with a special voice to which we should listen" (1995:63) and is, therefore, valuable in changing teaching processes and practices to be more inclusive of Black students. This position accepts the value that can be obtained from

hearing oppressed voices and, as such, I am influenced by the ability of race-gendered epistemologies to reveal that what has always been there: a broader world-view from different communities and experiences.

Along with criticisms of CRT as a body of scholarship come similar criticisms directed towards critical race-gendered epistemologies. The first centres on essentialism and the extent to which such epistemologies are a form of 'identity politics' that treat all people of colour as a homogenous oppressed mass sharing the same voice (Delgado Bernal, 2002). This position argues that a voice (read: singular voice) is "simplistic and does not allow for the myriad experiences that shape who we are and what we know" (Delgado Bernal, 2002:118). However, scholars influenced by CRT do not purport to illustrate a singular oppressed voice, but rather illuminate how race intersects with other forms of oppression such as class and gender. The growing scholarship of LatCrit and Critical Race Feminism in America are examples of the extension of critical race-gendered epistemologies to incorporate multiples sites of oppression, such as immigration status, bilingualism, and gender that intersect with race.

The second major criticism is centred on the overreliance on counter-storytelling and counter-narratives as valid knowledge in 'truth' claims. This is particularly relevant for my research as I have decided to use a race-centred ethnography at both schools *in addition* to counter-narratives, to expand the scope of my analyses. Farber and Sherry (2009) provide the most extensive critique of CRT scholarship based upon counter-storytelling and counter-narratives. How can scholarship claim to be objectively presenting truths when counter-storytelling is so personalised and deeply subjective? How is validity determined?

How do CRT scholars determine that there is commonality in the voices of people of colour? How typical, rather than simply descriptively accurate are their accounts?

Farber and Sherry are sceptical that CRT scholars have not met the burden of proof that there is a distinct voice shared by all people of colour and, in fact, if the evidence used by CRT scholars is that these voices are shared among the oppressed, then privileged minority scholars cannot claim to share this voice. They argue, "without a clearer conception of the "voice of color" it is difficult to assess the arguments of behalf of its existence" (2009:317). A lack of clear conception means too that stories from the bottom – from oppressed groups – cannot be privileged as a special kind of knowledge. As their contention relates to storytelling in legal scholarship, they suggest,

> the crucial test of scholarly writing must be whether it provides an increased understanding of some issue relating to the law. Community-building may be valuable, but it is an enterprise quite distinct from increasing understanding of the law (ibid, p.321).

The other side of this argument, of course, is that CRT scholars who homogenise minority voices also do the same for White groups. Farber and Sherry (2009) contend that members of dominant groups are assumed to share a dominant mind-set that underpins all institutions, speaking with the same voice and interpreting certain aspects of the world (seemingly only race and gender issues) in the same way. They warn against an overreliance on storytelling in scholarship as it raises serious questions about validity particularly, "a fictional portrayal risks creating a spurious aura of empirical authority" (ibid, p.326). Furthermore, they suggest the capacity to judge truthfulness from storytelling

is difficult if there is a reliance upon a "first person agony narrative; therefore, stories should not be used as evidence" (ibid, pp.327-328). Thirdly, they question the extent to which such stories can be presented as typical of real world experiences and, "if the story is being used as the basis for recommending policy changes, [whether it] should be typical of the experiences of those affected by the policy" (ibid, p.329).

Lastly, Farber and Sherry question how quality can be assessed when scholars centre and *over*-rely on storytelling. They argue that in relation to traditional standards such as merit and meritocracy in the judgment and progression of minority scholars, "we find little support for the general claim that traditional standards are inherently unfair to work by women and minorities" (ibid, p.331). There is also the issue of assessing validity, quality, typicality (generalizability) and truthfulness, which Farber and Sherry suggest is difficult when using counter-narratives or counter-storytelling (for an excellent response to these concerns, see Delgado, 2009). Consequently, they argue that the application of conventional standards with an emphasis on truthfulness and typicality should be the measure of their academic work.

Delgado (1990; 2009) provides an excellent and comprehensive counter-critique of Farber and Sherry's contention about CRT scholarship. Firstly, the assertion that CRT scholars place an overreliance on narratives and storytelling is a false one: "at most, one-quarter of the works could be described as written in the storytelling or narrative mode" and CRT scholars are careful to include supplementary data including statistics and doctrinal analysis (2009:341). Secondly, CRT scholars that utilise and value the voices from people of colour, by centring their experiences, are not assuming there is a *singular* voice that can homogenise all minority groups, but place value on "the usefulness of the stories

themselves . . . to learn something about or from the behavior itself" (ibid, p.342). Put simply, placing the lens of critique upon the 'different minority voice' thesis is an unhelpful way actively to listen to the concerns and experiences of oppressed groups. It is not that they have a different mind-set, but a commonality of living in a racially unequal society and there can be lessons learned about the impact of these inequalities. Delgado suggests that relying upon traditional modes of scholarship that claim objectivity, rationalism, scientific methods to search for the 'truth' and validity is that critics ignore that this too is a positioned perspective. The value in counter-storytelling is "not on helping a White understand a Black, but on helping a White understand a *White*" (ibid, p.343).

The problem is that the privileging of Eurocentrism so saturates our society and research approach that it is *invisible*, so it is important to see that this too is a positioned, and deeply political perspective. As such, methodological approaches that seemingly rely upon and uphold the principles of validity, quality, neutrality, scientific truth claims and objectivity are, in fact, using majoritarian narratives that *can also distort* our understanding and ways of knowing about the world. Even majoritarian narratives can omit knowledge, so Farber and Sherry's contention about atypicality and quality should also be directed towards Eurocentric epistemology. In the end, "if racism is deeply inscribed in the very paradigm we rely on to describe and order our world, any story that challenges that paradigm too frontally will strike the reader as incoherent" (ibid, p.344).

Delgado explains, "majoritarians tell stories too. But the ones they tell – about merit, causation, blame, responsibility, and social justice – do not seem to them like stories at all, but the truth" (2009:340). The key message is that all positions – and versions of truth – are subjective and socially constructed. Therefore, there should be an acknowledgement

and respect towards *other* ways of knowing and understanding racial oppression by socially devalued groups who experience the brunt of it. The goal, according to Delgado Bernal, is not to replace one set of truth claims over another, but to centre the lived experiences of socially devalued groups with the aim of changing society to a more equal one. It is only by "tapping into these strengths and strategies [that it is possible to] moving away from a Eurocentric epistemological orientation to a critical race-gendered perspective (2002:120).

The orientations of critical race-gendered epistemologies that I have chosen for exploring the overall aim of my thesis are critical race ethnographies and counter-narratives. The implications of a Critical Race Methodology are a decolonisation of narratives around taken-for-granted, unchallenged and colourblind concepts about the study of KS3 history, such as equal opportunities, social cohesion and antiracism. These liberal ideologies are presented in the English education system as value-free, but they are deeply racialised and negatively impact on the school experiences of Black students.

In this thesis, critical race ethnography and counter-narratives reveal the exclusionary nature of the KS3 history curriculum that privileges White students at the expense of more diverse histories from communities of colour. Currently, BHM/BH is being incorporated in the research schools as tools for antiracism and equal opportunities. However, in racialising a topic of study, such as slavery or US Civil Rights, it homogenises Black students around a victim identity and also homogenises White students around what Delgado describes as 'false empathy' by asking dominant groups to imagine what life is like being oppressed (1996). This cultivates opportunities for using the classroom space for reflecting wider anti-Black institutional and ideological racism.

Critical Race Ethnography

A definition of ethnography according to Hammersley and Atkinson is

> A particular method or set of methods which in its most characteristic form . . . involves the ethnographer participating overtly or covertly in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions – in fact, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research (1995: 1)

There is a growing body of mostly qualitative research (largely ethnographic) into racial inequalities in the British education at secondary school (Fuller, 1984; Wright, 1986; Mac and Ghaill, 1988; Gillborn, 1990, 1995; Mirza, 1992; Sewell, 1997; Blair, 2001; Rollock, 2007; Gosai, 2009; Maylor et al., 2009); and primary school level (Wright, 1992; Connolly, 1994, 1998a; Nehaul, 1996). The overwhelming evidence is that Black students are located outside the typology of the ideal pupil, one who is White, middle-class and Western (Archer and Francis, 2007; Phoenix, 2012) in effect, institutionalising racial inequalities (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000). These studies converge in revealing behavioural criteria rather than academic ability and potential, dominate the academic trajectories of Black students in English schools, often relating to a lack of awareness about the cultures of Black communities. For example, different linguistic styles such as the use of Caribbean creole and misunderstandings about particularly Black Caribbean boys' 'inappropriate' hair and walking styles creates a climate of hostility between Black students and White teaching staff.

Being sensitive to the nuances of race, class and often gender in their analyses, these works illuminate that such characteristics intersect in the educational experiences of Black children, intertwining and altering the effects of each other (Wright, Weekes and McGlaughlin, 2000). The assumptions that guide these studies are that racism is not just a personal ignorance of a few, but rather, deeply embedded in the processes of the school environment. Consequently, I concur with Wright who argues, "schools are not only involved in the construction of race, gender and class, but they also reproduce these existing inequalities" (2010:317). As Gillborn explains, there were three common features that the ethnographic studies shared:

> [They] make extensive use of observational and interview data to explore the daily character of life in multi-ethnic comprehensive schools; focus on interactions between White teachers and minority students, especially as they relate to academic selection and matters of schools discipline; [and] chart students' progress in terms of survival and accommodation strategies within school contexts that are (whatever the institutions' rhetoric) experienced as hostile by many ethnic minority students (1998:35).

Despite these important works illuminating 'hidden' and visible manifestations of racism, the usefulness of ethnographic work as neutral, objective and generalisable has been called into question. Parallels should be drawn from the 'methodological purists' I outlined earlier in this chapter. Blair (1998) suggests that these requirements for qualitative researchers, who use ethnographies, are untenable. Rather, there is a myth of neutrality. This is because research is

> a political activity in which the researcher is heavily implicated, but also because it creates a hegemonic research community. Through this hegemony, not only are the rules of the game decided by an established elite, but alternative voices are likely to be excluded if they do not fit within predetermined criteria for what is deemed to be valid research (1998:14).

The myth of neutrality treats research as simply feeding back to one's (academic) research community rather than, as CRT demands, utilising the findings for practical social change. CRT questions taken-for-granted (Eurocentric) assumptions, such as neutrality and objectivity, and Blair adopts a very similar position by questioning whether in fact this myth is a guise for White defensiveness. Put simply, do the findings confront head on, the realities of life in racist Britain that would expose the privileges that Whites enjoy at the expense of people of colour?

Connolly (1998b) levels a similar criticism towards Hammersley's assertion (1992) that qualitative research lacks capacity to be generalised. Connolly suggests attempts to hold ethnographic research to this regard is tantamount to "encouraging ethnographic researchers to 'dance to the wrong tune'" which, in effect, sets the research findings up to fail (1998b: 125). This is because such research is often small-scale and intensive, that it cannot, by its nature, assume the unique social, political, economic and cultural contexts of one school can be extrapolated to another school. Connolly makes the convincing argument that even if the researcher later returned to the same school there would be different students, possibly different staff, and as such ethnographic researchers are viewing the school environment in a particular time-specific, socially-specific moment. Even generalisations about all students within the school would be inaccurate.

Generalising is not what ethnographic research seeks to achieve and if 'methodological purists' continue to level this charge against ethnographic research, it will always be misunderstood.

Rather, Connolly argues that ethnographers should resist the urge to treat the microcosm of schools as a laboratory experiment that can be controlled, but strive instead for empirical and theoretical *relevance.* He argues ethnographers should

> identify and explain causal social processes; to understand why individuals and groups experience what they do and behave in a particular way…the final task is then to understand how the specific forms of racism manifest at one particular level of the social formation come to influence and be taken up at other levels (ibid, p.133).

The consequence of empirical and theoretical relevance is that the findings of institutional processes and procedures that marginalise Black students at one school may exist at another, once empirically tested. Past ethnographic research can be used as a springboard to build on and develop emerging research to help 'sensitise the researcher' to what may be occurring in their research school (ibid). This further supports Gillborn's assertion that CRT is relevant for the English context to develop a conceptual, antiracist framework for current and future research (2006). There are also social justice benefits to ethnographic research. Such findings help researchers, policy-makers, local authorities and teachers think critically about their assumptions and approaches to education and the impact these have on particular groups of children. Lastly, according to Connolly, ethnographic research holds theoretical relevance because the development of theory is not to 'prove' or 'disprove' another's work but should be viewed as "being grounded in empirical

investigation and representing a developing resource that can draw attention to and help understand the range and diversity of social processes, practices and relations" (ibid, p.136). Each subsequent ethnographic study, therefore, ultilises those from the past and seeks to develop and refine what has gone before.

Traille's research with African-Caribbean students and their mothers found during her questionnaires and interviews that African-Caribbean students expressed negative attitudes towards the overreliance upon topics centring the "victimisation of Black people," such as slavery and US Civil Rights (2006:182). Where BH was taught, it lacked sensitivity and non-African-Caribbean students treated the topic "with derision and behaviour that implied Black people were inferior" (ibid). Their mothers wanted to see BH absorbed into the mainstream history curriculum as its exclusion fractured cohesiveness between peers. With this in mind, I wanted to extend the previous ethnographic work by drawing on a critical race-gendered analysis to my doctoral findings. Consequently, this involved observing the ways in which the KS3 history curriculum was not inclusive of a collective 'our island story' but deeply inscribed with privileging persons racialised as White. The key themes that emerged are discussed and then analysed by drawing upon the concepts of critical race theory.

According to Hylton, "CRT implies a critical epistemological root" (2014:25). Indeed, epistemologically CRT scholars draw influence from a broad range of disciplines including sociology, law, history, ethnic and cultural studies, African American, Latino/a and Native American critical social thought (Parker and Lynn, 2009; Solórzano and Yosso, 2009). Though there is no identifiable CRT methodology, Hylton argues that critical ethnographic *methods* such as the participant observations I conducted at both schools

> would not be out of place in a CRT methodology, where they enable a reworking of mainstream views on matters to do with race they move from thick description to critical interpretation (2014:32).

Thus, at a practical level, I observed BHM/BH's lessons and events by sitting with students at their tables, helping to set up the classroom for their lesson, discussing with students what they were learning during lessons, discussing lesson plans and schemes of work with teachers, and assisting the teacher during lessons if required. Delmont and Atkinson argue ethnography in education involves "research on and in educational institutions based on participant observation" (1995:15). This thesis provides an explicit approach to uncovering embedded racism at multiple levels with the ultimate aim of dismantling educational inequalities; therefore, it shares more with the epistemological aim of *critical* ethnography in education: both hermeneutic and emancipatory (May, 1997). Specifically, this involves centring the lived experiences of the researched to make them visible and theorising "social structural constraints and human agency, as well as the interrelationship between structure and agency in order to consider paths towards empowerment of the researched" (Gordon, Holland and Lahelma, 2007:193).

Power is also exercised epistemologically and thus, both power and subjectivity are important aspects of critical research, particularly those claiming to pursue a social justice agenda. Hylton suggests "power differentials can be alleviated when CRT centres the subject and ensures that research is *for* rather than *on,* the subjects in question, and the researcher is located within the study" (2014: 35). I had an impact on the research environment. I shared a 'partial identification' with Black African and Caribbean students,

that is, areas of my biography and identity that converged with the researched. For example, I shared their experience of being educated in an English school, experience of being racialised as Black and, negative experiences of schools' engagement with BHM and BH. In this way, it could be argued that I was an 'insider', but it is important not to lose sight of the power relations that operated to highlight our similarities as well as our differences.

I was acutely aware of the shifting power relations between myself, KS3 students more broadly, history teachers and Black students. As Bhopal argues, "individuals are not passive . . . the researcher can be both powerful and powerless in the research . . . [however] the researcher, by virtue of having the data, has the power as to what to present" (2000:72). At Limehart Secondary School I was viewed by history teachers as the BH 'expert', and with students, my presence gave them the confidence to ask teachers what they were planning for BH. I felt I had the trust of students particularly as I was not their teacher. With Black children, they felt comfortable enough to ask me how *I* felt watching slave performances – inverting the format of the focus group to understand my perspective shows a level of rapport had developed. At Parsley High School I felt I had less power, as I had fewer opportunities to develop a stronger rapport with students due to the structure of lessons. They could withhold information as I was not there for BHM - by the time I started, BHM had nearly finished - and during interviews I sometimes had to reiterate confidentiality to hear their experiences. Ultimately, at both schools I started with the assumption that racism is normal and therefore, it was necessary to 'take sides' with Black students in order to illuminate "practices that exacerbate inequality"(Dockery, 2000:95) and to actively identify how micro racism is legitimised by meso and macro level anti-Blackness.

Participant observations

Walsh explains that

> The observer and the people being studied are aware that theirs is a field relationship, which minimizes the problem of pretence. It involves an emphasis on participation and social interaction over observing in order to produce a relationship of rapport and trust" (cited in Seale, 2004: pp.229-230).

However, there were times in Parsley High School, for example, that I was only invited to one lesson with Year 8s and one lesson with Year 9s so the ability to build rapport and trust was minimised. Consequently, I adopted a role of observer as participant where "the balance is in favour of observation over participation (cited in ibid, p.230).

The strategy I used to record my observations was through a field-note journal. Madden suggests that "field notes can and should be a faithful representation of real events (2010:118); however, it is fallacy to suggest that an ethnographer does not enter the field with a particular lens guiding what is 'seen' and what is written down. Therefore, I was keen to triangulate my ethnographic data with interview data to consolidate or counter my interpretations. I took participatory field notes that occurred in the classroom or during the BHM workshop/event, and if I could not write down in class, it was always shortly after leaving the school building and sitting outside in my car. I recorded the dialogue and interactions of all students as I felt this would help me to understand how BHM/BH is conceptualised, challenged, confronted and discussed. My observational notes, then, formed the basis for interview questions with Black students and their history teacher(s)

where I focused on their decision-making, pedagogical approaches and rationale for engaging with BH in particular ways. To strengthen my observational notes, I wanted to hear directly from African and Caribbean students, those whose histories BHM/BH was supposed to represent.

The development of themes within the data analysis was achieved by clustering recurrent content in observational field note data. I started by clustering the 'major' themes according to common patterns that I found, such as teachers' attitudes towards Black History or, students' attitudes towards Black History. In so doing, I was able to 'systematise observations' into major themes (Boyatzis 1998). Having major themes based upon the observations also served another purpose: I could extract observable *differences* between and among these groups, thus interrogating them further and developing sub-themes within the conceptual framework provided by Critical Race Theory. Boyatzis argues that a theme "is a pattern found in the information that at a minimum describes and organizes the possible observations" that I did with the 'major themes' and "at a maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon" as I did with the emergence of 'sub-themes' (1998: 4).

Counter-Narratives

The dominant taken-for-granted, political narrative underpinning British society is that multiculturalism divides communities and encourages people to segregate (DfCLG, 2016). The recent decision to uncouple the UK from the European Union in the June 2016 referendum appears to be based upon fears of 'uncontrolled' migration threatening the British way of life. This has impacted on legislation, most notably in education, where

there is now a statutory requirement for all schools to teach Fundamental British Values (DfE, 2014b). Michael Gove's changes to the history curriculum was ostensibly designed to provide all students a history of 'our' island, where social cohesion can be achieved by sharing a singular British identity that transcends class, ethnic, regional or linguistic nuances. It was unchanged by Nicky Morgan MP and now Justine Greening MP under the current majority Conservative government.

I outlined earlier in the methodology chapter that there is value in critically interrogating Eurocentrism's capacity to represent a 'truthful' and 'natural' understanding of society. Eurocentrism privileges neutrality, objectivity and the discovery of 'truth' using scientific research methods, but as I demonstrated, this results in racialised White beneficiaries. The domination of White supremacy is maintained when the established narrative, such as that of the KS3 history curriculum is not examined for its myth of colourblindness; its 'hidden' privileges and advantages accrued and maintained by White groups; and burdens and frustrations accrued and felt by Black groups.

Solórzano and Yosso explain that the counter-story can be an effective tool for "exposing, analyzing, and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege. Counter-stories can shatter complacency" (2009:138). To widen the angle with which we understand the world, Delgado suggests there are also community-building benefits to hearing the stories of outgroups (1989). Communities sharing a common culture and shared understanding realise that they are not alone in their marginality and can build upon these stories to strive for social justice. In this way, "counterstories can serve as an equally important destructive function . . . They can show us the way out of the trap of unjustified exclusion" (Delgado 2000:61).

In England, schools are expected to be colour-blind, equal opportunity spaces in which all students can succeed to their full potential; however, research reveals this is frequently not the case for Black students, and one area of contention is the Anglo-centric curriculum. Less is understood about specific processes within the history curriculum in areas such as instruction during BH, curricula decision-making for BH, and resources used for BH that contribute to Black students' negative experiences of schooling. As Matsuda (1995) explains, it is important to listen to the special voices communicated by those facing discrimination; after all, the majoritarian view still assumes, through the publication of statistics on achievement according to pupil characteristics, that Black underachievement is an unfortunate but random outcome of schooling. This naturalises their marginal place and the taken-for-granted assumption is that Black students are less hardworking or less intelligent than their counterparts. However, Matsuda encourages critical race scholars to seek out a new epistemological source from groups who have historically suffered the realities of injustice (ibid).

Solórzano and Yosso provide an extensive explanation with examples of various types of counter-narratives and/or stories. However, a simple distinction between a counter-narrative and a counter-story is that the former is often personal and "recounts an individual's experiences with various forms of racism and sexism;" while the latter utilises the traditions of storytelling in African-American, Chicana/o, and Native American communities (2009: 139). Based on this distinction, the "composite *characters* . . . are grounded in real-life experiences and actual empirical data and are contextualized in social structures that are also grounded in real life, not fiction" (ibid, p.142, italics my emphasis).

Delgado Bernal recognises the value of counter-storytelling/narratives in education by suggesting that it serves “as a pedagogical tool that allows one to better understand and appreciate the unique experiences and responses of students of color through a deliberate, conscious, and open type of listening” (2002:116). The goal of this is three-fold: to tell the oppressor about their practices that cause marginalisation for some groups and benefits for Whites; provide a source of psychological support to socially devalued groups who learn they are not alone in their feelings and do not have ‘a chip on their shoulders,’ and, through active and conscious listening, teachers can begin changing their practices. To develop counter-narratives, I used focus groups with KS3 students to understand their experiences of BHM/BH.

Focus groups and interviews

A focus group, according to Tonkiss is "a small group discussion focused on a particular topic and facilitated by a researcher" (2004:194). The benefits of using focus groups are that they provide the researcher with opportunities to understand how students conceptualise BH, the role of BHM/BH in their school, their experiences of the topics of study and pedagogical approaches, and discuss broader issues relating to antiracism, social cohesion and ‘our island story.’ CRT scholars accept that racism is socially constructed and not biologically determined and, as such, various groups will experience and define the concept of race differently. This is important for this thesis as the research schools integrated BHM/BH as a tool for equal opportunity and anti-racism. Bringing groups together to understand their experience of BHM/BH will explore the extent to which this has been achieved and the way knowledge and mean-making about BHM/BH is conceptualised and reproduced.

I based my questions largely on what I observed during lessons in terms of topics and interactions, but other questions stemmed from the taken-for-granted aims of the revised KS3 history curriculum. Tonkiss supports the use of focus groups in conjunction with ethnographic data, suggesting they allow "the researchers to elicit information or explore attitudes that are not easily accessible through observation alone" (ibid, p.197). This is important as there are concerns with "native researchers" accused of being biased in their observations, something I explore in section 2. Rather, focus groups "enable the researcher to examine issues that are not always or easily observable 'in the field,' and moreover to define these issues in terms of members' own understandings and concerns" (ibid.). Both the participant observations and focus groups with students allowed me to answer my research questions. With KS3 history teachers, I used semi-structured interviews. The questions stemmed largely from their decision-making for BHM/BH topics and resources and their conceptualisations about the purpose and role of BH within the larger KS3 history curriculum. I also asked broader questions about the aims of the KS3 history curriculum, ‘our island story’ narrative, and ways they felt it could be improved in order to include more diverse narratives.

Consistent with the CRT concept of centring lived experiences and, utilising critical race methodologies that privilege such knowledge, narrative analysis “allows for the systematic study of personal experience and meaning” (Reissman, 2001:706). Whilst there is no single analytic approach that definitively characterises a narrative analysis (ibid, p.697), in this thesis, the analyses allowed for the examination of data at both schools by illuminating the interconnections between individual experience studying history at KS3, and wider systemic inequalities. The attractiveness of narrative research ensures that like CRT, a

"historically specific context is the first step of analysis" (Squire et al., 2014:62). This is achieved by identifying the established grand or, master narrative. In this thesis, the master narrative can be found in the direct policy changes to the history curriculum, which indicate the government's position on how Britishness and British people are constructed and defined. Once this is located, narrative analysis "enables the researcher to focus on the way the storyteller configures her/his individual narrative in an interaction with the available macro-narratives and other cultural resources" (ibid, p.63).

CRT values experientially grounded knowledge gained from 'raced' individuals living in societies saturated with racism, and narratives depend upon "notions of 'possession' and 'authenticity' which assume that the voice of the narrator is their own and that it gives unrivalled access to their lived experience" (ibid, pp.75-76). As Phoenix suggests, in experience-centred narrative analysis, equal importance should be given to the individuals' experiences and social and cultural processes (2008:66). This was the approach taken in this thesis: to firstly identify the approach to KS3 history and policy statements on 'our island story' and analyse using CRT as a framework, the contested narratives provided by Black students to illuminate micro, meso and macro level racisms.

In the research process, Denzin (1978) suggests that researchers should aim for *credibility* rather than presenting 'truth' claims, and a process of methodological triangulation can achieve this. Put simply, utilising interviews or a range of diverse data sources serve to validate ethnographic data and enrich the phenomena being studied. Maylor has convincingly argued that there is a 'poverty of knowledge' surrounding the teaching of Black children (2014), and with most schools in England adopting national policy level changes to curricula, it is crucial that the education system more broadly, but also teaching

practices, assumptions and behaviours are placed under a critical lens. The saturation of racism is present at all levels of the education system and even 'well-intentioned' teachers can reproduce patterns of social power – Black and White. Therefore, the long extracts provided in this thesis from observations, interviews and focus groups identify that the permanence of racism in these schools cannot be reduced to a 'few bad apples' and thus, whilst Black History is important, no meaningful change to the experience of Black students can be achieved until it is done in contexts where racism is understood. There are also methodological consequences in keeping with critical race ethnography – providing thick description and critical interpretation – as long excerpts allows for the reader to assess the researcher's interpretations and "use data offered in support of one idea to confirm or disconfirm other ideas" (Katz, 1988:142). It also serves to counter claims of native researchers being inherently biased to the object of study as I turn to next.

Section 2 – Researcher positionality and the implications for research

> Race is a constant in my life. It may be the only constant...Fact is, the requirement for me to remove my experience as a "raced" object from my work as an academic scholar was undesirable. For as long as I can remember, my race has been my "center" (Dunbar Jr., 2008:89)

If you were to ask me my ethnic identity, I would respond "Caribbean and Asian." I share the cultural identity of my mother as I was raised by her and in Jamaica, the history of indenture from South Asia and China (in my case) means that I share a lineage with that process. Not only did I choose methodologies consistent with the centring of Black students during topics of study racialised as Black, but I also chose methodologies with a

Critical Race focus because I am aware of the impact my *perceived* "Black," middle classness would have on teacher and pupil perceptions of me. A prime example is during classroom observations, where teachers at Limehart Secondary School (who were White) would often look over to me once they made a statement to students about Black History – almost to validate their claims – and the student teacher even approached me as "a Black history expert" to provide ideas for lessons. I declined the label and the assertion.

My Blackness had an impact on the research environment. The field notes presented in this thesis are absent of some of my struggles and 'feelings' at both research sites. This was, in some ways, intentional. Although I accept that as Black woman I am an 'insider' in terms of sharing some of the experiences of studying Black History and sharing experientially-grounded knowledge of growing up in a racist society, I was mindful of the wider audience that would engage with this research (see Alexander, 2004 for convincing critical awareness of researcher positionality).

I concur with Bell (1992) in his '*Rules of Racial Standing'* that Blacks who identify instances of racism, overt or covert, are accused of "special pleading" and thus, not entitled to serious consideration (p.111). In addition, if my 'feelings' and struggles were laid bare, this would invariably lay claim to the charge that "Blacks cannot be objective on racial issues and will favour their own no matter what" (p.113), having the consequence of their recommendations "diluted . . . and taken with a grain of salt" (p.114). The examples in this thesis are serious; I faced ethical struggles as the researcher and I did not remain silent on these issues (for example, making the Head of Department at Limehart Secondary School aware of my concerns about Kevin's racist behaviour). Though my struggles were expressed in schools rather than explicitly as part of the analysis, for academic and policy-

level “colour-blind” audiences, the privileging of the experiences faced by Black students must come *first* and ‘taking sides’ with Black students to strengthen policy and pedagogical recommendations makes clear that, “there is no impartiality with respect to social injustices” (Essed, 2004:124).

Part of being a self-reflective researcher involves acknowledging that the researcher does not sit outside of the object of study, but what is discovered is based on the researcher’s encounter with the world and this impacts on the research environment and knowledge gathered (Vera and Feagin, 2004). This is supported by Nayak, who argues

> Ethnographic acts of representation are always historically situated, dialogic and incomplete scripts. They resonate with the unique voice and timbre of the ethnographer and are patterned by our individual stylizations. Ethnographic accounts remain also inter-subjective narratives formed at the confluence of ‘self ’ and ‘other’ and telescoped through our own personal interpretative lens. Indeed, many ethnographic studies have a good deal more to say about our own cultural values and assumptions than they do about the exotic Others we colourfully stitch into our richly embroidered texts (2006:413).

Woodson’s *The Miseducation of the Negro* ([1903] 2010) explains that the presentation and ‘truths’ can be more authentically imparted when the researcher shares the experiences of researched groups. I identify as Black and I experienced a BH curriculum in English schools I attended, so therefore, I share experiences and nuances similar to the observed. “There is a common experience/understanding between those who ask and those who are being asked. The subjects and the audience are not disconnected. They have similar lived

experiences" (Dunbar Jr., 2008:90). Where traditional methodologies without a race focus and without a researcher who shares the lived experiences of the observed may silence Black students, scholars of colour should work to change the current orthodoxy by uplifting and actively listening to those 'hidden' voices.

However, it is important to ensure quality is maintained during the research process. This involves privileging the voices of Black students without essentialism, something CRT scholars are sensitive to avoid. In my attempt to demonstrate empirical and theoretical relevance as well as research credibility, I concur with Kincheloe and Steinberg (2008) that there is a tension between privileging knowledge from marginalised groups and falling into the trap of essentialising such knowledge. Both scholars explore indigenous knowledge in education, but their insights are applicable to the 'hidden' Black experiences of education in England. Essentialism is understood to be a concept which assumes an uncomplicated, homogenising of groups such as 'Black people' or 'White people', and these groups have unchanging essences. These essences are assumed to be ahistorical, political and monolithic. Kincheloe and Steinberg warn against failing to "discern the differences between people included in a specific category . . . [as it discourages] shifting and adapting, and indigenous knowledges are viewed simply as sacred relics fixed in a decontextualized netherland" (2008:pp.142-143).

Essentialism also runs the risk of binarism: choosing one side as privileged and dismissing the other as primitive. This 'choice' is not value-free and objective but, rather, located within the racialised system of Western power and, inevitably, Black voices are the ones commonly dismissed. Of course, knowledge produced by Black communities is not uniformly the same; Black people do not experience racism and patterns of inequality and

discrimination in the same way. Nuances such as gender, sexuality, class, and geography influence Black experiences in Britain. However, recognising the importance of anti-essentialism, I concur with Kincheloe and Steinberg that "we still believe that the study of indigenous knowledge is valuable and that there may be some common threads running through many indigenous knowledge systems (2008:144). Common threads running through 'hidden' voices are important for my research into Black History in English schools. By its very foundation, BH was set up in England by Akyaaba Addai-Sebo to prevent Black peoples from losing sight of their African heritage in racist Britain. Therefore, essentialising 'Black' communities was encouraged for the purpose of survival and as an anti-racist imperative. It is within that spirit of unity that I privilege Black voices whilst still accepting the plurality of perspectives within their counter-narratives.

This also serves to justify why other approaches, such as grounded theory were avoided, precisely because letting the data 'speak' for itself assumes an ahistorical and decontextualized development to racial inequalities in education, including the othering of BHM/BH. The lengthy process involved in using the data to inform further theoretical sampling is what Charmaz defines as

> seeking pertinent data to develop your emerging theory. The main purpose of theoretical sampling is to elaborate and refine the categories constituting your theory. You conduct theoretical sampling by sampling to develop the properties of your category(ies) until no new properties emerge (2006:96).

Too much time would be spent at the theoretical sampling stage and less on providing a context-driven analysis for patterns of micro, meso and macro-level racisms towards Black

students. This thesis *does* draw upon conceptual and methodological tools that privilege race during BHM/BH, which is entirely consistent with the centring of race known as 'Black' history. This approach will allow all Black students to name their experiences, thus making CRT the most appropriate framework.

Section 3 – Sample decisions, ethics and problems encountered

The city was chosen because it has been rated in the top 10% most deprived cities in England according to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DfCLG, 2015). This illustrates that the majority of school cohorts come from socio-economically deprived backgrounds. I chose a multicultural, multi-ethnic city in the North of England and based my decisions on schools according to their most recent Ofsted reports. I looked for explicit statements of ethnic diversity beyond the national average and some even stated 'majority African' or 'majority Pakistani.' I then looked for evidence within reports that 'social, moral and cultural needs' of students were met and I looked on schools' respective websites for evidence that they incorporated BH at KS3. I then contacted schools directly via email.

In February 2014, I contacted 11 secondary schools in the Midlands with a view to starting in schools during their next academic year, September 2014. My decisions about the suitability of schools was based on their latest Ofsted reports detailing BME student cohorts being above or well- above average, and clear indications that schools were successfully promoting Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (Ofsted, 2004) development either through the History curriculum or elsewhere. Despite follow-up emails and telephone calls, I was either ignored or turned down, though this could have been

attributed to wider public concerns about Islamic extremism being promoted in schools and so my research involving changes to the history curriculum to focus on Britishness, was perhaps viewed with suspicion.

During this time I also contacted 7 secondary schools in the North of England and, again, decisions about suitability were made from Ofsted reports. I received interest from three comprehensive schools in the North of England and so arranged to meet with the Heads of Humanities in April 2014. Initially, I was focussing on the 'problem' demographic, Black British Caribbean boys and by the time I started my research in September 2014, I had *one* school left. This was due to one school not having enough Black British Caribbean boys to make my research viable and, despite their last Ofsted report explaining that the highest proportion of students came from Black Caribbean backgrounds, when I met with the Head of Humanities, it was explained to me that there was only one Black British Caribbean female in KS3 and two Black British Caribbean females in Key Stage 4.

At the second school, I met with the Head of Humanities who expressed needing 'help' with 'disengaged' Black Caribbean boys at his school. I was given the all-clear in April 2014 to start my research in September 2014 once we agreed the expectations of attending lessons and events on BHM, interviewing Black British Caribbean boys and their history teachers and returning in the Spring Term of 2015 for BH as they would be studying slavery then. However, at the end of August 2014 I received an email from the Head of Humanities explaining that he was leaving in December 2014 and therefore, the school was only prepared to commit to a single term study. The rationale was that it would be unfair to "pass responsibility for a research project to the incoming Head of Faculty." I went into school for one day in early September to get a timetable for BHM lessons and

events and was informed that they have did not have any concrete plans, but individual teachers were putting "something on during form time from 08:30am-09:00am" and I was invited to attend those sessions. Sadly, in mid-September 2014 a student committed suicide and I received the below email from the Head of Humanities,

> "As a result of this catastrophic event we have had to re-think the issues facing young people today, and clearly some of these issues are being given a higher priority than others. This means the development programme that is delivered through form time is being re-planned. There is no indicator that we will cover Black History Month at this time or at any point this year as we look to incorporate concerns such as depression, bullying and self-image."

The third school, which was my only remaining school and the one I have termed in this thesis Limehart Secondary School, was keen to include my research in their future planning for lessons on BHM/BH. The Head of Humanities was committed to sharing good practice amongst his staff and shared with me concerns about Black British Caribbean boys not being engaged with school and largely, most Black students were not interested in BHM/BH. He explained that 'other students got really involved in BHM/BH, but the Black students really did not want to' and he was perplexed as to why that could be. We agreed a timetable of four days per week starting in September 2014 in preparation for BHM in October 2014.

During September 2014, I was still sending out emails to recruit other schools. I secured a meeting with another mixed-cohort secondary school in September 2014. I met with the Head of Humanities and explained in more detail exactly what I was exploring as part of

my research project. The Head of Humanities was happy to accommodate me and, a BH unit on slavery was taking part in their Spring Semester; however, she needed to have the project agreed by her Head Teacher. Unfortunately in mid-September 2014, I received the below email from the Head of Humanities:

> "I've met with our head and when we've looked at the timescales I'm afraid we won't be able to take part – due to staff absence I'm being pulled from some parts of my usual timetable to cover another GCSE class which means some of my year 9s will be picked up by a non-specialist. Whilst not ideal we have to prioritise exam classes. I don't feel comfortable asking a non-specialist to be involved when they aren't as comfortable in the content anyway. We also have a residential trip currently being organised for History, which will take a lot of my time and enjoy post-Christmas too. Please feel free to utilise the schemes of work if they help and I'm so very sorry we couldn't be of more help to you."

During my research at Limehart School, I also worked on weekends at a popular pharmacy chain, Boots. On a particular weekend at the end of October 2014, I was explaining my research to a colleague and my problems with securing a secondary school and she explained that her mother was a Social Worker at the academy school that I had contacted numerous times previously and was ignored. My colleague offered to speak with her mother about my research and get back to me with an email address for a contact within the history department. I was provided contact details of the second-in-department for Humanities at the school I have named in this thesis Parsley High School. We met on the 22nd October 2014 and that was the last session for BHM which I was invited to observe. The email explained that we would meet after the lesson to further discuss my research

topic and opportunities to get involved with the "able and talented students." I broadened my scope to all Black students as there was no evidence Caribbean students experienced BHM/BH any more or less negatively than their African counterparts, and the homogenisation of all Blacks under BHM/BH made it appropriate, and necessary, to include all Black students.

Research Site – Limehart Secondary School

A total of 25 KS3 students and their three history teachers participated in my focus groups and interviews. I conducted five focus groups with KS3 students and three interviews with history teachers. There were two Year 8 classes studying slavery during BHM/BH and one Year 9 class exploring BHM through a Baccalaureate on citizenship and life skills. Limehart School is a mixed-sex foundation secondary school with mostly Indian and Pakistani students, in the North of England. The city has several different catchment areas with their own Local Authorities in charge of state-maintained schools. There are more boys than girls on roll and students who speak English as an additional language comprise over half of the school cohort. Recruiting students from the local working-class neighbourhoods is reflected in the government's statistics for measuring deprivation and, thus, the proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium stands at over half of students at any point over the past six years. The percentage of students achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) including English and Maths may raise some concerns for future Ofsted inspections as it is half of what is achieved across the Local Authority and since 2012, has been consistently below the national average across all schools in England. Their last Ofsted report, which was published a few years before my arrival, revealed that

Limehart Secondary School was judged to be a ‘good’ standard across leadership, teaching, student learning and behaviour.

In April 2014, I met with the Head of Humanities (a Pakistani male) to explain my research interests (at the time, it was focused on Black British Caribbean males only) and it was agreed that I would start in September 2014 observing KS3 history lessons four times a week and any other lessons or events designed for social cohesion, ‘Britishness’ and anti-racism. I was given freedom and flexibility to explore the school environment, speak to any teacher I needed, observe any lesson and I attribute this to the Head of Humanities expressing in February ‘a concern’ with Black boys’ engagement with school and genuine concern for BME students’ attainment in school. The Head of Humanities was committed to anti-racist research and was keen to hear my findings about areas within the curriculum that might be a barrier to learning for Black students. He was keen to show me the work on the walls from previous years by students who made posters with Bob Marley lyrics and anti-racist slogans and suggested that it was Black students who were the least interested in engaging with BH. He wanted to understand if there were any barriers to engagement his department missed; therefore, the whole Humanities department was amenable to any questions or observations I had. The Humanities department comprised of 8 members of staff: three minority ethnic teachers including the Head of Humanities, a teacher and a trainee teacher, all of South Asian descent and six White staff which included three females and three males, (including one female trainee teacher). The history teachers, Kevin, Joanna and Anne were White and from working-class backgrounds. The remit was also broadened in October 2014 to include all Black students of African and Caribbean descent.

The school itself is small and easy to navigate. There were motivational quotes on the walls of the corridors and in the Humanities 'block,' words written in Urdu and Arabic demonstrating their commitment to recognising the diverse nature of the teacher and student cohort. The walls were adorned with students' work. There was a warm and welcoming environment and during my first staff meeting with all members of the Humanities department, I got the impression all staff members were interested in committing themselves to being amenable to my observations and interviews. The aim of my research was explained to staff, as was the schedule for my observations; I informed them of the process of gaining consent from staff and students and was then welcomed to Limehart School attending four days per week.

Research Site – Parsley High School

A total of 22 KS3 students and their primary history teacher, Dhana, participated in my focus groups and interviews. I conducted four focus groups with KS3 students and one interview with their history teacher. Focus groups were comprised of Years 7-9 speaking to me after BHM and one Year 9 class studying, once per week, the role of colonial soldiers in World War I in October-November 2014. I then returned in April–June 2015 for the BH unit with Year 8s and one Year 9 class studying, twice per week, the role of colonial soldiers in World War II. The majority of interviews took place with Years 8 and 9 in July 2015. Due to the access issues I faced with the other schools, I secured Parsley High School at the very end of BHM in October 2014. Consequently, my ability to get a sense of the wider department and school was restricted much more and I only had access to one class at Year 8 and one class at Year 9 incorporating BH. I was not integrated in the department in the same way as Limehart Secondary School, did not meet other teachers

and attended no staff meetings. Instead, I went to school when aforementioned classes were on the timetable and left thereafter. I was informed after the first meeting with Dhana that she had tailored the modules because of the ethnic diversity of the cohort.

This is a slightly below-average sized secondary school with almost twice as many boys as girls. The school welcomes many students from overseas and is over 85% minority ethnic backgrounds with the largest group being of African heritage. Over half of the students speak English as an additional language and over half of students are eligible for free school meals. The history department has one Black teacher of Indian origin (self-defined) and she is the second-in-charge. The rest in the department are White teachers; however in wider school, I noticed a sizeable number of minority men and women, though I am not certain whether they were teachers or support staff. The school is regarded highly by Ofsted for meeting its obligations under 'spiritual, moral, and cultural development' (Ofsted, 2004).

Parsley High School is an academy which means it does not have to follow the National Curriculum; however, Dhana, explained that she was in fact following the revised KS3 history curriculum, but was tailoring it to suit and reflect the students she taught – overwhelmingly minority ethnic students – as they would be 'turned off by all that White history'. At both schools, ethical approval was obtained through Keele University and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (Gov.uk, 1998), all names, including schools, have been anonymised and replaced with pseudonyms. Consent forms were issued before any data collection and informed consent was sought from teachers, students and their parents.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the critical race methodologies, CRE and counter-narratives, and methods (participant observation, focus groups and semi-structured interviews) used in this thesis. Considerations about the researcher's positionality have been outlined and information on research sites provided. There are numerous benefits to using critical race methodologies, namely, that they provide context to historical patterns of racial discrimination towards Black students in English schools. Secondly, those who face patterns of direct and indirect marginality should be centred for illuminating such practices and working towards greater antiracist practice. Lastly, no research can be interpreted neutrally, as intersections of class, race and gender for the researcher impacts upon the object of study. Therefore, there is the acceptance that all analysis is a form of interpretation, but the voices of those facing oppression help to affirm what the researcher has observed. The next chapter will involve the data findings and analysis at Limehart Secondary School.

Chapter 5: Data findings and analysis at Limehart Secondary School

Introduction

The previous chapters provided a theoretical and analytical framework for my research into Black students' experiences of BHM/BH. This chapter presents a discussion and analysis of the findings. I draw on CRT concepts, namely racism as normal, interest convergence, a critique of liberal values of equal opportunities and antiracism through BH, and counter-narratives by Black students, to analyse the ethnographic and interview data obtained at Limehart Secondary School. Split into two parts, this chapter contains the following, in part 1, I thematically outline ethnographic data covering BHM and BH from September-November 2015, with Key Stage 3 students. The critical race concept 'racism as normal' supported the analysis of these data. This is because at Limehart Secondary School, the findings suggest Black students faced various acts of direct and indirect racism, which was reproduced and normalised through direct (social relations) and indirect (structural processes) instantiations; or 'everyday racism' Essed (1991).

The second part of this chapter thematically outlines interview data with KS3 history teachers, Kevin, Joanna and Anne and later, KS3 students with a particular focus on Black students, obtained during November 2014. The findings from the interview data with KS3 history teachers suggest a *critique of liberalism* as they shed light on the myth of equal opportunities and antiracism, namely that these values are fundamentally flawed. However, I contend that their critique of liberalism is not a recognition that, as Bell argues, 'some voices have been historically commodified, marginalised distorted and silenced' (2009:42)

but that adherence to these liberal values is a threat to White people. Lastly, interview data with Black students revealed that *experientially-grounded counter-narratives* are effective ways to expose various acts of direct and indirect racism and challenge dominant ideologies in education as they have to bear its consequences. The findings from ethnographic and interview data support my theoretical assumption that the current institutional pedagogies for teaching BHM and BH at Limehart Secondary School were based around culturally pathologising Black communities, drawing parallels with the state multiculturalism of the 1970s. Consequently, students of African and Caribbean descent experience BHM and BH negatively.

Part 1: Ethnographic data

Major themes	Sub-themes
1. Teachers' attitudes towards Black History and peoples of African and Caribbean descent	1 a Racial microaggression 1 b Humor 1 c Stereotyping
2. Teachers' approaches and Black students' approaches for (dis)engaging with Black History	2 a Teachers' interest convergent relationship with BH revealing the continuing presence of institutional racism 2 b Black students and double consciousness
3. Pedagogical tools for teaching Black History	3 a Silencing students critical questions 3 b Black essentialism

Three major 3 themes emerged from the ethnographic data: teachers' attitudes towards Black History and peoples of African and Caribbean descent; teachers' approaches and Black students' approaches for (dis)engaging with Black History; and pedagogical tools for teaching Black History. As the findings of this chapter unfold thematically, there are several sub-themes within the major themes, as there was no singular and all-

encompassing ‘attitude’, approach or pedagogy for engaging with BH. Within the major theme, *teachers’ attitudes towards Black History and peoples of African and Caribbean descent*, three sub-themes characterise what I observed as verbal responses towards BH, which then informed approaches later on. The three sub-themes are: racial microaggressions, humour, and stereotyping. Overall these responses towards BH dominated the experiences of students of African and Caribbean descent and converged to entrench denigrating and humiliating deficit understandings about the essence of what it means to be ‘Black’.

Within the major theme, *teachers’ approaches and Black students’ approaches for (dis)engaging with Black History,* there are two distinct sub-themes that emerged from teachers and Black students as behavioural actions or responses that I observed based upon their established attitudes towards Black history. Teachers’ approaches to (dis)engaging with Black History were conveyed through using empathy as an antiracist tool for fostering social cohesion. However, an empathetic approach to fostering social cohesion was predicated upon interest convergence, whereby elements of BH were engaged with, *so long as* they could find ways to incorporate the privileging of White interests. That is, where White British involvement in abolition could be more comfortably celebrated rather than White British *complicity* with enslavement and imperialism, then BH was engaged with. Black students’ approaches to (dis)engaging with BH were characterised by distancing themselves through avoidant techniques/responses such as playing on iPads or talking during activities; or distancing through rejecting their connection to Africa and instead, joining in with the White teachers’ racist assumptions about the primitive ‘East’, or primitive Africans. As the findings suggest later, this may not have been out of maliciousness, but as a strategy for survival or a basis for resistance.

Within the major theme, *pedagogical tools for teaching Black History,* the two sub-themes that emerged were: teachers silencing of students' critical questions about slavery that would have put White supremacy under a critical lens as teachers did not want to engage with 'race' talk. This was achieved through the unquestioned and uncritical use of worksheets and iPads to inhibit dialogue about BH so that students accepted what they read from the BBC or Wikipedia as 'true' for the history of enslavement. The second sub-theme, Black essentialism, reduced pedagogy to focusing on what is unique, different and exotic. The focus was too heavily upon lifestyles, cultural differences and living conditions of African slaves, mirroring the multicultural teaching of exotic lifestyles during the 1970s. I turn now to outline the major ethnographic themes – and their relational sub-themes – that illustrate my points.

<u>Theme 1:</u> Teachers' attitudes towards Black History and peoples of African and Caribbean descent

Before exploring the major theme 'teachers' attitudes towards Black History and peoples of African and Caribbean descent,' and analysing examples from ethnographic data using the subthemes: racial microaggressions, humour and stereotyping, it is important to make clear what I mean by the term attitudes. Briefly, I would like to expand on a definition of attitudes, how they differ from opinions or beliefs, why it is important to study attitudes linking back to my research and then, how I have assessed attitudes in my analysis. Overall, the findings suggest that teachers' verbal constructions of BH are reflective of their attitudes towards Blackness and thus, have an ideological root based upon White supremacy.

Attitudes are unobservable; they are 'inferred' constructs that those studying attitudes, through direct observation, are able to interpret based upon the verbal responses a person provides about a topic. Defined as "a readiness for response…attitude is not behavior, not something that a person does; rather it is a preparation for behavior, a predisposition to respond in a particular way" (Oskamp and Schultz, 2005: 8). Attitudes are not the same as opinions or beliefs and it is important to make that distinction. Opinions are "equivalent to beliefs…that is, they are usually narrower in content or scope than attitudes, and they are primarily cognitive" (ibid, p.14). Therefore, opinions are a type of belief. The attitudes I identified and analysed were based upon "a predisposition to respond in a favourable or unfavourable manner" with respect to BHM/BH (Oskamp and Schultz 2005: 9).

1 a - Racial microaggressions

Racial microaggressions dominated the approach to BHM/BH and the experience of Black students at Limehart Secondary School. In psychology, the work of Wing Sue has provided a continuation and development of Pierce's original concept of racial microaggressions (2003; 2005; 2010). Wing Sue et al. (2007) suggests that racial microaggressions vary in their severity and impact and as such, developed a taxonomy of racial microaggressions that takes account of these nuances. All racial microaggressions are forms of racism but they are not homogenous acts; therefore more research needs to be conducted in order to

> Bring about greater awareness and understanding of how microaggressions operate, their numerous manifestations in society, the type of impact they have on people of color, the dynamic interactions between perpetrator and target, and educational strategies needed to eliminate them (ibid, p.273).

Sue suggests it is important to take account of these nuances because the power of these nuances lies in their invisibility to perpetrators and oftentimes the recipients (2010). Perhaps what is more harmful – than the overt, gross acts of racism – are the ordinary, everyday interactions between Whites who believe themselves to be supportive of equality of opportunity irrespective of class, race, and gender, but engage in racial biases and prejudicial behaviours that Blacks face, but are unable to expressly name.

In the taxonomy of racial microaggressions, Sue et al. (2007) explain there are three forms of racial microaggressions: micro-invalidation (unconscious), micro-insults (unconscious), and micro-assaults (conscious). Unless otherwise stated, the examples I provide below come from the KS3 students' main history teacher, Kevin, during Year 8 classes and ends with a discussion section at the end of the examples.

Key of abbreviations used

SS – Student (Where I was unable to see who asked a question)

BCB – Black Caribbean boy

BCG – Black Caribbean girl

BAB – Black African boy

BAG – Black African girl

Micro-invalidation

> Microinvalidations are characterized by communications that exclude, negate, or nullify the psychological thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality of a person of color (Sue et al. 2007:274).

I experienced several instances in the classroom between teacher and students that conveyed a dismissal or exclusion of the feelings of students of colour in the class about enslaved Africans. Often it presented itself through the teacher avoiding students' questions, simply ignoring them or nullifying the experience and impact of slavery on Britain.

Example 1

Kevin: "Europe brought materials to Africa so the tribes can make clothes…they also wanted weapons though not very good ones."

Aaron (BCB): "Because they only had spears and sticks."

Kevin: "Yes."

Keisha (dual heritage girl, Jamaican & Spanish): "When they had slaves sir-"

Kevin interrupts: "This question is not on task."

Keisha: "But it's a quick question sir"

Kevin: It's not the one we're on though; we'll come back…

Kevin: Why not use European workers on plantations?

SS (shouting out): Because they're lazy!

Aaron (BCB): because that's racism!

Kevin: "FORGET RACISM! FORGET RACISM! Why is that important?"

Bushra (Asian girl): "Did they think they had more strength?"

Kevin: “We’re nearly there at the answer.”

Imran (Asian boy): “They couldn’t work in the sun that long because of their skin.”

Kevin: “That’s right.”

Aaron (BCB): :Black skins can handle heat.”

Kevin: “Europeans sent our prisoners who were White from Manchester and London prisons to the West Indies to work, but many died in the heat.”

Example 2

Writing task individually – How would you feel in a ship on the Middle Passage?

Mohit (Asian boy): “I would want to kill some people.”

Kevin: “Wow such extreme anger!”

Mohit (Asian boy): “Then go to my mum and cry like a baby.”

Khaled (another Asian boy) chosen speaks of being uncomfortable, in pain and lonely.

Aaliyah (Asian girl): “Terrified, not knowing where going.”

She speaks of problems not knowing the English language.

Kevin: “I don’t know if anyone speaks an African language but it is nothing like English.”

David (BAB): “I do.”

Kevin: “Go on then.”

David speaks in his tongue

Kevin: “What did you say?”

David: “Hello, how are you?”

Kevin: “See, did anyone understand that?”

CLASS (in unison): “NO!”

Example 3

Kevin: "Yes, good. We got a lot of our food stuffs from West Indies and abroad because we can't grow enough of our own stuff."

Hussain: "Sir, if people from Empire didn't help in the war, would Britain have lost?"

Kevin: "Well that's the question, isn't it?! Would we have lost…"[He doesn't invite conversation]

SS: "They were forgotten."

Kevin: "Why not with military honours."

SS: "Because they were forgotten."

Kevin: "Right, okay let's watch the rest of this then" [YouTube video]

It plays

Kevin: "So eventually these people were treated the same."

Aaron (BCB): "When they were dead."

Kevin: "Yes, eventually they are getting the recognition. Going back to if England would have lost: who asked that?" [Hussain raises hand and asks again]

Kevin: "I wouldn't say we would have lost, but we would have struggled to win."

Discussion

The findings of micro-invalidation lend support to the concepts 'White racial framing' (Feagin, 2010), and 'White racial priming' (Smith, 2004) that I discussed in detail in the theoretical chapter. As micro-invalidation is an unconscious reflection of racism, defined by Essed (1991:39) as 'attitudes, actions, and processes that contribute to the development and perpetuation of a system (structural-cultural) in which Whites dominate Blacks', I argue that Kevin is unconsciously embodying patterns of social power and reflecting in his

communications, the history of viewing society in racially stratified terms. As a racialised (White), gendered (male), middle-class (in terms of his profession) person, the English education system is designed to ensure, protect and promote his privilege despite promoting equality of opportunity for all students. The White racial frame is an embedded perspective subsuming all within it, that informs, "collective memories and histories, and helps people make sense out of everyday situations (Feagin, 2010:10). The frame is developed through a process of racial priming in which everyone socialised within the 'frame' is exposed to racist stereotypes, images, narratives, and discriminatory practices and is saturated throughout society. I suggest that this is an important consideration because this White racial frame operates by creating binaries of White superiority and Black inferiority, in the same way Kevin has done in all three examples.

In the first example, Kevin conveys the subtle ideology of White superiority and Black inferiority by suggesting that superior Europeans brought goods *to Africa* and Africans, but they were not intelligent enough to realise the weapons they received were not very good. The 'old' racism characteristic of the pseudo-scientific, Enlightenment period is also implied in this example. Here, the racialised image of the intellectually inferior, but physically superior Black body that can work hard, withstanding tough conditions in which the fragile White body could not, is expressed here to justify their enslaved position. In the second example, *language* is used to create a White/Black (civilised/uncivilised) binary. With a majority South Asian cohort, it is no surprise they would not understand David's language, but the exclusionary intention although unconscious, is much more severe than that. Colonisation involved the suppression of indigenous languages, in favour of the coloniser's language, in this case, English. English is assumed to be the culturally superior language in which we must all speak if we are to be understood; to speak in one's own

tongue is to step back into primitivity. Feagin applies his analysis of mocking non-English languages to Asian-Americans, but it is applicable to Black communities, too. He argues that language mocking informs the contemporary framing of the immigrant who is unable fully to assimilate to the dominant English language and Anglocentric cultural traditions (2010). The expression by Kevin that the language is 'nothing like English' is a subtle insistence for non-Whites, to accept and conform to the racial frame and hierarchy, and not threaten the non-reciprocal process of assimilation, by unquestioningly adopting White norms and traditions.

In the final example, Kevin is at great pains to acknowledge the contribution of colonial soldiers in the war effort (WWII). How is Kevin able to confidently express to Aaron 'forget racism' in the first example, show surprise to Mohit's angry response about the Middle Passage in the second example, and suggest colonial soldiers had no impact on Britain's capacity to win the war in the third example? I would argue that Kevin is able to do this because the White racial frame not only operates by creating binaries, but also maintains its *unchallenged* power in society through a process of collective memories and forgetting (Feagin, 2010). The unchallenged nature of racial stratification – its racialised consequences in terms of the distribution and allocation of resources and life chances – is shaped by our understanding and interpretation of our racialised past (ibid). Kevin can speak with confidence if there is a lack of resources and collective memories available for teaching BH, suggesting otherwise.

By collectively 'forgetting' the contribution of colonial soldiers, the White racial ideologies guiding African enslavement, and surprise at Mohit's response indicates that in the process of memories of the past, there has also been a key process of *forgetting*. This is

supported by Bunce and Field in England, who suggest that the memories of Empire have been largely forgotten by what they characterise, 'establishment amnesia' (2014). This process of selective memory and memory-loss serves a political purpose of forgetting Black resistance and to ensure Whites are able to look upon their histories without the complicated distraction of historic injustices. Michael Gove MP stated that the history curriculum preceding the Coalition government – which had a statutory place for Black History – was 'trashing history' and denied students the right to 'hear our island story' (Gove, 2010). Thus, the established discourse about the wider KS3 history curriculum is that is provides all students a 'colourblind' view of the past; however specific privileges are accrued by Whites through the ideological selection of material which synonymises them with Britishness, strengthened by establishment amnesia.

Micro-insults

> A microinsult is characterized by communications that convey rudeness and insensitivity and demean a person's racial heritage or identity. Microinsults represent subtle snubs, frequently unknown to the perpetrator, but clearly convey a hidden insulting message to the recipient of color (Sue et al. 2007:274).

Students regularly called for context in relation to how slavery developed, the nature of African, chattel slavery and showed racial awareness in terms of understanding how White enslavers viewed Africans; however, teachers would regularly communicate with students in ways that demeaned the Black experience so much so that students questioned whether it actually was as bad as it looked.

Example 1

Keisha (dual heritage): "If slaves didn't build [NAME OF CITY] would that mean we would be here?"

Kevin: "I suspect we would."

Keisha: "We would?"

Kevin: "Yes we would."

Kevin puts on "Bye Bye Baby" YouTube video and remarks that Scotland will be voting today, *sings* "BYE BYE SCOTLAND!"

Keisha: "Why do we have to learn about this again and we've already done it?"

Kevin: "It's what we have to do but I have a projecty-type thing you can do."

Keisha: "Who by the government?"

Kevin *ignores* and prepares students to leave the class.

Example 2

Kevin: "What does empathy mean? Putting yourself in other people's shoes. How do we know what it was really like?"

Jessie (dual heritage girl): "Pictures and stories."

Kevin: "What's the problem with pictures?"

Jessie: "Sorry paintings!"

Do we know this *actually* happened?

Kevin: "What do you think? What do you think?"

Jessie: "Do we still have slave ships?"

Kevin: "Yes."

What do we have in museums?

Kaleem (Asian boy): "Shackles, chains."

Kevin: "Any girls keep a diary? Come on, own up! So what are they doing?"

SS: "Writing down evidence."

Kevin: "Yes, writing down evidence. We have two testimonies of what they say what happened. At the end of the second lesson I'm going to put you all in chains, put you on a slave ship and go to the staffroom."

Class giggles, SS: "Sir, you're acting!"

Kevin: "No! You're all going in chains, and I'm off to the staff room for 40minutes."

Katie (White girl) reads Ottobah's testimony; she reads and then the teacher stops her

Kevin: "What are you?"

Katie: "A robot?"

Kevin: "Yes you sound a bit like one. YOU'RE A SLAAAAAAVE, put some *emotion* into it."

She reads again and after a few lines she's stopped again, asked to put some 'oompf' into it. She laughs, says she's scared and he's (she means Kevin) scary.

<u>Example 3</u>

Lesson task: A drama performance of Plantation Life

They're asked to get into 6 (3 groups of 6) and assign themselves a role:

1) Plantation owner

2) Slaves (domestic and in the fields)

3) Overseerer

Kevin: “Think how you’re going to portray life on a plantation. We’re going to be dead sneaky at the end; we’re gonna film it.”

Class: “Noooo sir!”

Kaleem (Asian boy): “Can I film it?”

Kevin: “No. Someone who knows how to film it, you can’t cos you’re in it!”

Anne (trainee teacher) stops the class and says for students to research the following about slaves:

Punishment:

-What were they punished for?

–How were they punished?

Social Life:

- Were they allowed to practice their African culture?

- Did they have a social life? What was their work/life like? (Living conditions; families live together; do for leisure)

Shona (BCG) walks in from another class elsewhere (music), she joins a group and Kevin approaches and says she’s been assigned a “slave” role, “congratulations” he says, “you weren’t here to fight your corner so all these got the good jobs” (he points to other group members).

Discussion

I draw upon Critical Race scholar, Patricia Williams's concept of ‘spirit murder’ to analyse how the three examples converge to reflect wider anti-Black racism in English society (1987). In the first example, Kevin indicates to Keisha (dual heritage girl) that he is in

some ways, being forced to teach the same, repetitive topic for Black History. His conclusion is that the city in which they live did not benefit from colonialism and enslavement. In the second example, Kevin jokes that he will put the students in chains and board them on a slave ship, and he then asks Katie (White girl) to dramatise her speech in order to be more authentically slave-like. In the final example, he congratulates Shona (Black Caribbean girl) for being assigned the 'slave' role, as she was not there to negotiate for better. I would suggest these interactions directed towards these students indicate a spirit murder for Black students in the class.

A spirit murder is defined as a manifestation of racism – disregard shown to those whose quality of life depends on our regard – wherein "its product is a system of formalized distortions of thought. It produces social structures centered around fear and hate" (1987:151). In all three examples, Kevin unconsciously devalues the image of Black people: their contributions, their experiences of chattle enslavement, and the legacy of slavery on future generations of Black students and in doing so, Williams suggests "the general White population seems to have been socialized to blind itself to the horrors inflicted by White people" (1987:152). However, his demeaning comments are more than just *one* teacher's misguided comments; it indicates the permanence – and ubiquity – of wider, anti-Black racism and the unchallenged freedom in which he can express these views. Therefore, it is important to return to Essed's (1991) concept of 'everyday racism' as it includes recognition of the micro *and* the structural-ideological reproduction of racism. The findings of micro-insult shed light upon the paradox of individual racism; namely that it is a fallacy as Essed explains, this view

> Places the individual outside of the institutional, thereby severing rules, regulations, and procedures from the people who make and enact them, as if it concerned qualitatively different racism rather than different positions and relations through which racism operates (1991:36).

Individual racism can only occur as an expression or activation of group power, according to Essed (1991) and therefore, agents (in this case, Kevin as the teacher) are actively complicit in upholding the structures of a racist education system, reproducing it through racist practices. An example of upholding the structures of a racist system is the structural privileging of Whiteness, or a White-centred narrative through BH that fails to recognise it as integral to the study of British history – and not as an addendum. In an expression of reproducing racist practices, Kevin does not counter the established narrative and integrate other elements of Black histories, but instead continues with repeating the same 'victim-centred narrative' about Black people. The wider structural non-commitment to BH shown in its non-statutory place in the history curriculum, demonstrates the lack of regard shown to Black people (who depend on the education system to teach their children) and as such, Kevin can conceptualise BH in ways that are demeaning and insulting to their heritage or identity. Essed supports this suggesting

> The structural exclusion, marginalization, and repression of Blacks is consistent with and rationalized by existing ideologies problematizing and inferiorizing Blacks. If the macro is created and reproduced on a micro level, this can only mean that discrimination and prejudice and discrimination are inherently related...because discrimination and prejudice are fused in the notion of racist practices, there are no

> grounds…to identify intentionality as a necessary component of the definition of racism (1991:50).

However, as the findings reveal in the next example, there needs to be a consideration of intentionality to avoid assuming a 'myth of White ignorance' (Leonardo, 2009).

Micro-assaults

> A microassault is an explicit racial derogation characterized primarily by a verbal or nonverbal attack meant to hurt the intended victim through name-calling, avoidant behavior, or purposeful discriminatory actions (Sue et al. 2007:274).

<u>Example 1</u>

Kevin puts on a video 'Slavery and Plantation'

> Bushra (Asian girl): "Sir, I don't wanna watch this, it's horrible the way they're treated, I don't like it."
>
> Kevin: "What is horrible about it? Explain? How do you know how they were treated?"
>
> Keisha (dual heritage): "Why is it *not* horrible?"
>
> Kevin: "STOP! We need to watch to understand how it was horrible. It's *just* about slavery and plantations okay?! You'll be doing a film and role-play."
>
> SS: "Noooo…"
>
> Some students: "Yes! Boom!"

Example 2

Video is played in a minor key, shows images of "resident labourers" who are Black slaves shackled.

Kevin: "It says, "because of their primitive lifestyle", what does that mean?"

Aaron (BCB): "Is it because they lived in huts?"

Kevin: "Yes, what are you comparing it to?"

Aaron (BCB): "Europe."

Kevin: "Yes."

Ibrahim (Asian boy): "Because they had dark skin, White people thought they were hard workers."

Kevin: "Yes, hard workers, but they also thought they were easy pickings and less intelligent. Now I can reel off a list of names of people from Africa who were *he whistles* top notch up here" *points to head*

The video is paused on a Black man tied up, lying on the ground; he says, "not nice". Kevin shows image of slave with torture equipment around ankles and neck; Kevin says, 'it can't run fast and slows them down perfectly'. One student has her hands in her ears and she's told to remove them.

What was behind using African slaves? Asks the video clip.

Kevin pauses on a massive house and asks: "Who would like to live there?"

SS: "Yes!"

One remarks: "It has a balcony!"

Kevin makes a joke that they would eat muffins from there [this is a joke from earlier in which Aaliyah, an Asian girl, says she likes muffins]. Class laughs.

Kevin asks class if they noticed what slaves lived in.

Aaron (BCB): “A hut.”

Kevin: “Something worse than the hut. A different word . . .”

SS: “A cave.”

Kevin: “No it begins with ‘S.’”

SS: “A shack!”

Class: “Shacks.”

Kevin: “Yes, gaps between panels, 1 bedroom, creaky floorboards.” He points to pictures, “That’s why they had slaves so people who lived there (rich house) could continue to live there” [No response from SS].

Clip ends with ‘products were shipped to England’. No reflection on this; it’s a shame there was no linking to today.

Kevin says they’ll be working on a plantation “bring in your scruffy clothes and a hat and I’ll bring in a pick axe and we can all go out in the field and play at being a little slaaaave”.

Class: “WHAT?!?”

Kevin: “What’s wrong with what I’ve just said? No, we won’t go digging outside.”

Class: “Good!”

Kevin: “Right, what you need to do is . . .” (he writes on the board): ‘Plantation Life’. “You’ll be in groups and you’ll have 5mins to do a role-play, re-enactment of life on a plantation, but first you need to find out what life was like on a plantation. Use your iPads. Make a few little notes remember you have two genders in this class.”

SS: “Male and females.”

Kevin: “Yes, and were they treated the same?”

Class: "Noooo."

Kevin: "Children were also our on the fields. Why?"

SS: "Helps adults by doing little and smaller stuff."

Kevin: "Yes, men could work up top, things that drop on the floor, they (the children) could pick up. Also, they ate less food so they were cheaper to run."

<u>Example 3 – (Year 10 class for BHM)</u>

Junior (BAB) says since it's BHM, "Why are we learning about Indians? You said we have to do something" [someone sniggers at the back].

Kevin: "No, I didn't say we have to, I said we *can* do."

Junior (BAB) interrupts; Kevin stops

Kevin: "Alright, looking at this picture, they're not White, are they?"

Junior (BAB): "But they're not Black!"

Kevin: "I'm trying to explain, don't be smart. It depends on how you determine 'Black'. There are some Indians who are darker; if you go to Sri Lanka there are some very dark people, and darker than people in the West Indies."

He moves on…

Discussion

The findings of micro-assault expose an important consideration in understanding micro-level racism. The two sub-themes, micro-invalidation and micro-insults are unconscious; however, micro-assaults are *conscious* expressions of anti-Black racism, and the risk of viewing the individual as an agent of the institution is it could be perceived that Whites are

innocent of their racist practices. Put another way, Whites are not *unaware* of the attitudes and practices that marginalise Black people, and the various benefits and advantages they accrue by virtue of being White. I draw on Leonardo's 'myth of White innocence' (2009) to argue that Kevin is entirely aware of his racialised position in the classroom but also in society, and therefore he is able to use this position of power, to silence critical dialogue of racism. Therefore, the findings suggest racism is deeply embedded within the structures of schooling. This is because individual racism is a fallacy as it is a reflection of group power and wider structural-ideological racism, supporting Essed's concept of 'everyday racism' (1991).

In the first example, Kevin cannot understand the protestations from Bushra and Keisha about watching a video that they have seen before in which slaves are treated in horrific ways on a plantation. He becomes increasingly irritated at what can only be perceived as their *over*-reaction, and probes for a reason why these students would not want to watch it as it is "*just* about slavery" indicating how collective memories and collective forgetting has sanitised any basic, human emotions of disgust and anger at enslavement. In the second example, Kevin extracts key moments from the video he would like discussed further (African's "primitive lifestyle"), affirming to Aaron that he is correct in comparing this to Europe (read: Whites) and the racist trope of deficit understandings about Black bodies returns by suggesting slaves were physically superior but intellectually inferior. In the final example, Kevin instructs Junior "don't be smart" when he asks why they are learning about Indians during a month which is centred on the achievements/successes and advances of Black people. Kevin determines that 'Black' is determined by the hue of one's skin colour rather than ethnic, cultural or diasporic identity – or self-determination.

Leonardo warns that it is important for critical race scholars to avoid treading the path of assuming 'White ignorance' as it is a myth (2009). I explained in the theoretical chapter that White people especially, have been socialised within a White racial frame, but a key point of departure using Leonardo, is that Kevin is fully aware of the racial hierarchy in which he lives, works and benefits. Leonardo describes this as "White racial knowledge" and argues that this knowledge provides Whites with an awareness of who they are; he argues

> I do not suggest a conscious, self-present mode of thinking, but rather a social condition of knowledge, sometimes buried in the unconscious, sometimes percolating to the level of consciousness…very quickly, they build a racial cosmology where they assume a place of self-hood, whereas people of color pose as the other or as interlopers. From this learning, Whites gain valuable knowledge about the racial order…[Which] develops into a particular racial self-understanding that begins with a sense of belonging in two ways. One, Whites are born into a world that is racially harmonious with their sense of self…because being White means to belong. Two, it does not take long for White children to recognize that the world belongs to them, in the sense that Whites feel a sense of entitlement or ownership of the material and discursive processes of race (2009:112).

This is keenly expressed by Kevin in the first two examples especially, as the focus is on demarcating the civilised (White) from the uncivilised (Black) and on repeating through a video and class discussions, the inhumane treatment faced by the slaves rather than the White racial ideology underpinning chattel enslavement. In fact, in the second clip, when the video poses the question "what was behind using African slaves?" Kevin attempts to

coalesce student consent around wanting to marvel at the riches that can come from it: a mansion with a balcony. In the final example, Kevin can racialise Black bodies through the White racial knowledge in which he understands Blackness. His racial power to racialise Black groups results in him being able to dominate the discussion on definitions and rights to self-determination and as such, he can confidently move onto other tasks without being questioned further.

The other troubling finding of micro-assault suggests what Delgado terms, false empathy (1996). False empathy

> Describes a response to the plight of oppressed individuals or groups by privileged individuals who visualize themselves in the places of members of oppressed groups and ask what they, the privileged, would want if they were oppressed (Duncan, 2002:137).

In the first example, Kevin remarks about the insignificance of watching a video about enslavement and then suggests that as part of their classwork, the students will be creating a film and role-play to mimic what they have learned about the treatment of slaves on a plantation. In the second example, Kevin pauses on a Black man tied up, laying on the ground and says, “not nice”; he then shows a piece of torture equipment and says it “slows them down perfectly”. Finally, Kevin jokes that students should bring in their scruffy clothes to practice being (he elongates) “[a] little slaaaave”. I suggest it is not a stretch of the imagination to suggest these anti-Black attitudes are sadistic and false empathy is used to reaffirm his powerful (White, male, middle-class) position at the expense of Black students. What value could be gained from pretending to understand what life was like on a plantation? I argue that the focus for Kevin is on the humiliating treatment of Blacks,

providing a visual reminder of the socially devalued Black body and a reminder to the class not to forget that.

I have outlined the first sub-theme of racial microaggressions that I have attributed to teacher's attitudes towards BHM/BH and peoples of African and Caribbean descent. These attitudes conveyed "subtle, stunning, often automatic, and non-verbal exchanges which are 'put downs'" directed towards Black people and the study of BH (Pierce et al., 1978:66). I turn now to turn to humour which also conveyed similar negative attitudes towards BHM/BH and peoples of African and Caribbean descent.

1 b - Humour

I have suggested above, that the three sub-themes racial microaggressions, humour and stereotyping are characteristic of negative attitudes about BHM/BH and peoples of African and Caribbean descent. However, I suggest that humour and the final sub-theme, stereotyping, are not exclusive or distinct categories. Rather, I use humour as an extension of the third racial microaggression, micro-assault. Humour during BHM/BH at Limehart Secondary School was used to mask teachers' own ignorance about BH topics and contentious issues.

Racist humour is conscious and contains 'undeniable intentionality' (Yosso et al. 2009) in the same way micro-assaults are consciously held, racist beliefs about People of Colour. In racist humour, these beliefs are coded as humour; "indeed, a joke cannot make audiences laugh if they do not readily recognize the stereotypical assumptions about the group being chided" (ibid, p.669). Humour, like racial microaggressions, varies in severity and types.

When these jokes are directed towards People of Colour, it is a type of racism and thus, referred to as 'racist humour'. Therefore, I refer to this term throughout this sub-section. Weaver (2010) outlines that where humour has racist potential through making its object inferior or insinuating segregation from this inferior object, racist humour is an apt descriptor.

Weaver (2007; 2010; 2011) provides a comprehensive account, analysing racist humour and the rhetorical techniques within which these jokes operate. This section will not explore these various types, but instead use Weaver's analysis of the dual logic of racist humour, to focus on the culturally racist humour found in my research (2011). Cultural racism used in racist humour is a type of everyday language that contains deficit understandings about Black people based upon cultural codes of their inferiority. Yosso et al. explains this type of humour should not be overlooked as it "grants Whites 'in-group' status at the expense of People of Color. Racist humor seemed to offer White students a quick and easy method for gaining acceptance, status, and social capital in primarily White networks (2009:672). Weaver argues these codes are cultural, or embodied racism rather than the traditional, biological/scientific racism,

> The extant stereotypes appear in jokes that explicitly or implicitly connect intelligence to genetics, biology or race; and that juxtapose intelligence with reference to physicality – all of which give the depictions a distinct embodied dimension (ibid, p.672).

Husband (1988) supports this assertion, arguing that British humour based on race is culturally racist and underpinned by uneven binary positions. Culturally racist humour allows the joke-teller to escape the repression of ordinary, rational speech in which racist

sentiments or words are regarded socially, and lawfully, as unacceptable. According to Freud ([1905] 1960) joke telling in this way offers a relief from social repression as the act of telling the joke is pleasurable. However, although Freud does explicitly reference racism, he does use a term that could explain the objectives of racist jokes: 'hostile jokes'. He explains

> Where a joke is not an aim in itself – that is, where it is not an innocent one – there are only two purposes that it may serve, and these two can be subsumed under a single heading. It is either a hostile joke (serving the purpose of aggressiveness, satire, or defence) or an obscene joke (serving the purpose of exposure) ([1905] 1960:pp.96-97).

Freud expresses there is intentionality behind telling hostile jokes – including racist jokes – and this intentionality is not innocent. The purpose is ultimately to overcome what the joke-teller perceives as the enemy and like racial microaggressions, racist humour reflects and is reflected by, race ideology. The impact of this, according to Ford and Ferguson (2004) is that racist humour can increase tolerance towards disparaging a socially devalued group. This increased tolerance reduces the targeted group's culture to the trivial, "to be laughed at and not something to be valued" (Howitt and Owusu-Bempah 2009:62). Race ideology informs racial priming and according to Freud, hostile jokes too. He says,

> Though as children we are still endowed with a powerful inherited disposition to hostility, we are later taught by a higher personal civilisation that it is an unworthy thing to use abusive language…By making our enemy small, inferior, despicable or comic, we achieve in a roundabout way the enjoyment of overcoming him…A joke will allow us to exploit something ridiculous in our enemy which we could not, on account of

> obstacles in the way, bring forward openly or consciously; once again, then, the joke *will evade restrictions and open sources of pleasure that have become inaccessible* (1960:pp.102-103 italics original emphasis).

Weaver (2011) explains how this trivialisation and inferiorisation of a socially devalued group's culture is inherent within racist humour: it is underpinned by the dual logic of inclusion or exclusion. For inclusion, Weaver suggests such jokes make the 'Other' a source of exploitation – typically through stereotyping – and is a type of cultural or embodied racism, which focuses on the perceived deficiencies of the 'Other'. In exclusion, Weaver uses Zygmunt Baumann's analysis (1993) of fear and perceived threat of the 'Other' to justify segregation or destruction of that targeted person or group. The key function of jokes that are exclusionary is to segregate the joke-teller from the object of the joke, with the joke-teller possessing a fear of the object, known as 'proteophobia'. Despite these jokes being different in their processes, one being inclusion, the other, exclusion, Weaver argues the logic of both processes is to construct Black as a "connotative signifier in embodied racism" (2011:20) and this dual logic connects to wider forms of racism and prejudice.

White history teachers used culturally racist humour in ways that conveyed a mixture of Weaver's processes, inclusion and exclusion. I will highlight these processes in my analysis using examples of classroom interactions with Kevin, Joanna and Anne who were all complicit in racist humour, but Black students were also observed to participate in acknowledging the racist jokes. Yosso et al. adds that if people of colour "approve of the joke(s) through silence or through other verbal/non-verbal cues, Whites grant them peripheral, temporary, or token acceptance" (2009:672). In essence, if Black students were

to be accepted as British in the classroom – an "us" rather than "them" – then racist humour encourages a side to be taken, or as Freud states, "hostile jokes will further bribe the hearer with its yield of pleasure into taking sides without any very close investigation…This is brought out with perfect aptitude in the common phrase…'to bring the laughers over to our side'" (1960:103). The examples I provide below are taken from my observation of the Year 8 history classes led by Kevin, Joanna and Anne, and ends with a discussion section at the end of the examples.

Example 1

Starts roleplaying exercise

Kevin: "Time for an empathy role-play."

Kevin: "I'm the nasty sailor (looks around his desk) where's me whip? Where's me whip?"

Aaron (BCB) says he feels sick and asks to go to the toilet, but he doesn't leave; he stays. YouTube video is paused on a Black woman screaming. Aaliyah (Asian girl) who's asked to be a volunteer in the role play, asks Kevin to take it off the screen because it's scaring her. Kevin does this.

Aaliyah (Asian girl) lies on floor under a pretend ship (table). Kevin asks her how she feels, "horrible and uncomfortable".

Kevin: "Good empathy feeling."

Kevin calls Nasir (Asian boy) to lay next to her. Class giggles.

Nasir lies next to Aaliyah and says "hi slave number one" (giggles)

Kevin: “How do you feel now?”

Aaliyah: “Very, very uncomfortable” (laughs)

Kevin (to Nasir): “How about you?”

Nasir: “Like I want to die. It’s hard to breathe.”

Kevin: “Imagine this for 6 weeks.”

Nasir: “NO!”

Kevin adds another student, Samina (Asian girl)

Nasir: “I want to get out of here!”

Class giggles

Kevin: “We need to understand how these people felt. We can’t ask them but we can ask these” *pointing to SS under table*

SS (calling out): “Because they’re dead, man!”

Kevin: “We can have a giggle but we must also be serious.”

Samina (Asian girl): “I feel uncomfortable, I’m being squashed.”

Kevin: “How’s your back?”

Samina: “The floor is really hard.”

Kevin: “And the chains rubbing your ankle raw. Now imagine the heat: what will happen to cuts?”

Aaron (BCB): “They will get infected.”

Kevin: “Yes.”

Keisha (dual heritage): “Was the boats safe enough to hold them?”

Kevin: “Yes, the one I’ve seen were pretty sturdy.”

Keisha: “Were they allowed out or kept like that (laying down) for the whole 6 weeks?”

Kevin: “They would be allowed on deck if they were lucky a few at a time to have a wash. Mainly to stop sailors getting or catching infections. Imagine…” (asks all students to close their eyes he narrates a story)

The boat is moving, lots of movement outside, a rat runs across your face, you hear rain

Class erupts with “EWWWW!” Squeals

Kevin: “Rats are attracted to the blood.”

Role-play ends.

<u>Example 2</u>

They’re told they’ll be going to a lecture theatre to work on their performance. Another thing for them to think about on the sheet (when practicing their performance):

1. Evidence of research and historical accuracy
2. Empathy – being able to put yourself in someone else’s shoes
3. Good teamwork

The class keeps talking and Anne says, “do you want to get to the fun bit or not?” They’re quiet.

We’re led to a lecture theatre room, where students spread out and practice. Tomorrow they’re set to perform in the drama room hall for a bigger space.

The groups split up and plan their attempt to perform White power (through humiliation) at the expense of Black misery. The next day, students are led to the main hall for their performances…

Group 1 - with Aaron (BCB) and Jessie, (dual heritage girl, Black and White)

They differentiate field from domestic; give new names and brand slaves. Punishments dealt with "faster!" They show fatigue from talking all day; fed on knees and told, "Eat what Master has given you".

SS provide strengths and EBIs (even better if…). Supply teacher Julius (Black Caribbean man) says he would have liked to hear the sound of the whip hitting the skin to make it more 'real'.

Group 2 - with Shona, (BCG), Peter (White boy) and Imran, Hassan and Ahmed (Asian boys)

Peter is the overseer; he's vicious, mostly vocal and lots of shouting. As boy begs for water, he's whipped.

Group 3 - with Monica (BCG) who is the narrator

Rebecca (White girl) is the overseer, she tells a slave to whip another. Darren (White boy) is a slave who prays when he sees another being whipped.

It ends…

The focus of these performances was on punishment and humiliation for all three groups. Anne is happy they've demonstrated "historical accuracy". We finish 5 minutes early so students take out iPads and for "selfies" [taking a picture of oneself]. At the end of the lesson, I ask Anne how she feels the lesson went; she says, "chaotic". I ask what is next for them to learn and she seems confused because there's still "lots to do", including British involvement in slavery. I interject saying "that's good!" and she says, "but it's better to do abolition and then modern day slavery which is MORE interesting."

Example 3

Joanna says she's being kind today after hearing my input yesterday at the staff meeting. She says to the class that they've been looking at "pretty depressing stuff" and so now they'll look at "good stuff like the film The Butler and Oprah Winfrey is in it, so it *must be good!"* (Smiling)

The students are excited.

Joanna: "Time to focus on the good achievement of Blacks including Civil Rights."

In the film:

The Black actor says to trainee butler, "you need to make them [White people] feel non-threatened" and "White people are powerful".

The butler learns to refine i.e. strip his Blackness to the barest, only visible minimum in order to serve his new, White masters in bars.

Priyah (Asian girl) asks, "When does it show all the abolition and all the good stuff she [Joanna] was talking about?"

Joanna: "It's a film for 2 hours; let it develop" [she laughs].

Discussion

The findings of my empirical study at Limehart Secondary School lend support to Howitt and Owusu-Bempah's assertions that "Black people are commonly. . . insulted under the pretext of humour" (2009:47) and that this plays an integral role in racist discourse that makes up the White racial frame of English society. Like conscious and unconscious racism, Howitt and Owusu-Bempah concur with critical race scholars that racist humour is "an aspect of racist society and not just an idiosyncratic feature of a particular individual or

group" (2009:pp.47-48), which strengthens the argument that racism is a normal and embedded feature of British society. Racist humour as a feature of the White racial frame, according to Howitt and Owusu-Bempah,

> Reinforces one's superior position; and it enhances and affirms one's social membership…jokes are communicative acts which play a significant role in social exchanges – a medium through which society disseminates and generationally transmits its dominant attitudes towards outgroups. Racist jokes, therefore, act as propaganda in support of racist ideology (2009:51).

All people are able to tell, or at least *understand* racist jokes because the White racial frame subsumes all people and through the socialisation process, stereotypes are a common feature comprising racist humour. The use of humour establishes a 'light-hearted context' in which laughter is encouraged; reactions to the contrary, are seen as inappropriate and perhaps the listener being unable to 'take a joke' or having a 'chip on their shoulder' (ibid). Therefore, racist humour immobilises Black listeners in the classroom and in this type of everyday racism, is especially pernicious when told by professionals working in institutions that purport to be equal opportunity spaces that abhor racism (Howitt and Owusu-Bempah, 2009).

Despite the different types of humour used by Kevin (to humiliate), Joanna (unintentionally) and Anne (to encourage compliance), the common thread throughout their jokes was the use of "violence against other ethnic groups and their cultures" (Howitt and Owusu-Bempah, 2009:52). Ultimately, using Weaver's dual logic of racism, these jokes provided a legitimate space within the classroom for teachers and students to 'take a

side' if they wanted to distance themselves from the stereotypical tropes of the primitive, intellectually inferior, dirty, hypersexualised, and uncivilised image of the African. Minority ethnic participation in racist humour was either to gain temporary White acceptance, or as a strategy of survival from all the other acts of racism they faced during lessons.

A question commonly raised about racist humour is whether it is ever ethical to do so and where it exposes the indefensibility of racism, if that is permissible to tell. This section does not seek to outline the debates but I concur with Crenshaw about the impact of providing racist humour a legitimate space, no matter its ostensibly well-meaning intentions on the one hand, or the charge 'it is just a joke' on the other. Crenshaw argues, "implicit in these defences is the assumption that racist representations are injurious only if they are devoid of any other objective or meant to be taken literally" when in the case of People of Colour, racist humour is consistent with subordination and "the claim of intending only a joke may be true, but representations function as humor within a specific social context and frequently reinforce patterns of social power" (2009:242). Humour, according to Lockyer and Pickering "is far from trivial. It is integral to social relationships and social interaction" (2008:808) so when directed towards students of African and Caribbean descent, racist humour reflects wider anti-Black discourses and for an already socially devalued group, this further entrenches their marginalisation. Therefore, I concur with Howitt and Owusu-Bempah's assertion that racist humour serves to "reduce cultures to the trivial, to be laughed at and not something to be valued" (2009:64).

In the first example, the processes of inclusion and exclusion are clear: in the former, Kevin is establishing a light-hearted, theatrical context by searching for a ruler to mimic a

whip. Then, asking 13-14 year old students, to lay under a table in a socially awkward and embarrassing situation, and asking them to (seriously) imagine what it is like being a slave, seems far removed from acceptable teaching let alone using this pedagogical approach to encourage empathy. I read this as an example of 'false empathy' (Delgado, 1996) in this process of inclusion as the Black body is a source of exploitation, and whose experience could be mocked by a member of the dominant group (Kevin). Kevin accepts explicitly, laughter from students saying that they 'can have a giggle', but the legitimate space afforded to humour serves the process of exclusion. In exclusion, Kevin's narration about slaves catching infections and being a source of danger *to the sailors*, justifies viewing the Black body as dirty and worthy of exploitation.

Kevin's use of humour centred on false empathy and placing students under a table mimicking a slave ship. However, the second example was perhaps the most distressing watch for me. Anne used humour as a behaviour management technique, to obtain students' compliance with her instructions. The processes of inclusion and exclusion are less explicit in this example; however I suggest they are present. In the former, the performance was supposed to be another way to develop empathy rather than a reflective and sensitive topic, worthy of study. Anne's expectations of students conveying "historical accuracy" was by encouraging students to create a Black victim: students who whipped or hit 'slaves', shouted and belittled 'them' as much as possible through name-calling and displays of disgust, were the most authentic in their portrayal – the process of exclusion. For me, Anne's linking of slave performances with 'fun' is ironic. Anne is Jewish. We had many informal conversations in the staff room about our backgrounds and particularly, her desire to incorporate her degree-level knowledge about Africa pre-colonialism, into the classroom. Her religious background, one would assume, would bring a particular

sensitivity to the study of slavery, as she went to a Jewish school and understands the history of oppression and discrimination. I wonder to what extent she would have made the same statement about performances of the Holocaust, or if this would have been an area that would have been dramatised. Later on in the interviews, it is clear that the Holocaust is a protected topic and thus, would not have been reduced to a performance in the same way elements of Black History was. Perhaps her comment reflects a clear removal from popular consciousness about the Black experience of slavery and instead, as Bunce and Field (2014) suggest an 'abolitionist myth'. This is clear by her reliance on focusing on abolition rather than White British complicity and enrichment in slavery.

In the third example, it is even more difficult explicitly to understand the dual logic of racism through processes of inclusion and exclusion. It is a type of 'everyday racism' that is more subtle than Kevin's, for example. For this, I draw on Howitt and Owusu-Bempah's analysis of racist humour to explain that

> Much racism is perpetuated as a routine and even casual activity – sometimes by individuals who regard their actions as well-meaning – and forgetting this can distract attention from subtler and perhaps more dangerous forms of racism (2009:48)

Joanna's statement about being 'kind' is significant. Its significance is twofold: firstly, it conveys the influence my Blackness had on placing their approach to BH under a critical lens as it was entirely based upon Black victimhood; secondly, it conveys how even well meaning Whites can perpetuate the racist narratives they seek to dismantle. Joanna believes the focus for BH has been too negative thus far, and wanted to provide a different, more positive narrative. Despite Joanna's desire to show the good achievement of Black

people, The Butler film reinforces White power and Black misery. Using Weaver's process of inclusion, the Black butler must reduce his Blackness to the barest possible minimum (only at the visible, phenotypical level) to serve White masters and appear non-threatening. He is in a serving role, pretty much in the same capacity as the enslaved role. The White men are in positions of power and the Black men shuffle in silence and deference around them. The film entrenches rather than dismantles racial hierarchy and there is no critical engagement in class. It was an accurate and valid question asked by Priyah (Asian girl), but she is, in some respects, silenced by Joanna's reply. The ostensibly humorous assertion here is that the achievement of Blacks will come, but it will take time –justifying their exclusion. Joanna's statement implies an end to prejudice and a happy, progressive march towards freedom and equality, which parallels wider racist discourse in which we live in an ostensibly equal, colourblind society. Another extension of micro-assaults can be found in the use of stereotypes, which deeply reflect patterns of racial power and racial subordination of Blacks. It is to stereotypes that I now turn.

1 c – Stereotypes

The findings thus far have shed light on the various types of observable, verbal responses from teachers towards BH and peoples of African descent. These responses conveyed negative attitudes about studying these topics in the form of racial microaggressions (and their nuances) and the use of racist humour. The next sub-theme stereotypes, has unconscious or conscious assertions of White superiority based on Black inferiority. In order to explore the final sub-theme, stereotypes, I analyse stereotypes of Blackness and its relational counterpart, stereotypes of Whiteness. This is because they are relational: the

Black-White binary is dependent upon each other's existence, and each informed the other during the study of BH at Limehart Secondary School.

Pierce (1974), Lawrence (1987), Solórzano (1998) and Delgado and Stefancic (2000a) argue that subtle and micro-level racism is under-researched and in particular, research about the dominator as well as the dominated. Whiteness has sustained its invisibility and power - and White people their corresponding privilege - precisely because research into race/racism focuses on the dominated. Solórzano argues, "racial stereotypes, whether in the popular or professional literature, are continuing to increase. As educators, we must critically analyze their source, rationale, and impact on the *people doing the stereotyping and those being stereotyped*" (1997:15).

According to social psychologist, Gordon Allport, a stereotype is, "an exaggerated belief associated with a category. Its function is to justify (rationalize) our conduct in relation to that category" (1979:191). Allport suggests the category 'Black' could be neutral or factual, but it becomes a stereotype when the category is 'frightened' with images and judgments about this category. For example, conflating the category 'Black' with all manner of negative associations such as lazy, dirty, unintelligent or hypersexualised. A stereotype is a fixed mark and prevents other ways, or more critical ways of thinking about the category; Allport says "the stereotype acts both as a justificatory device for categorical acceptance or rejection of a group, and as a screening or selective device to maintain simplicity in perception and in thinking" (1979:192). I draw upon Solórzano's three-part adaptation of Allport's stereotypes, to understand the nuances of Blackness and Whiteness racial stereotypes (1997). Solórzano explains that racial stereotypes can be placed in at least one of three categories, "(1) intelligence and education; (2) personality and character;

and, (3) physical appearance" and these are applied to a category, such as Black people, justifying their unequal treatment (1997: 9).

I stated earlier that attitudes although interrelated, are different from beliefs. A belief is a subjective truth or falsity that an issue or topic has a particular characteristic. This section is about the expression of attitudes towards Blackness (including BH and peoples of African and Caribbean descent) and Whiteness, based upon subjective truths (beliefs) about their characteristics. Racial stereotypes are determined by the "amount of consensus in people's choices of traits as typical of members of an ethnic group" (Oskamp and Schultz, 2005:381) and for this reason, the term racial stereotypes will be used. The examples I provide are from observations of Year 8 and Year 9 classes, and ends with a discussion section at the end.

Example 1

Lesson opening question: Define the word 'slavery' in your own words

Leads to class discussion including: 'physically or mentally chained', 'taken away from town', 'against will', 'treated horribly', 'no mercy…no reward'

Joanna: "excellent buzzwords."

Definition from Anti-slavery International put on the board – 'forced to work', 'treated as property'

Joanna shows a video: 'Human trafficking modern day slavery in America' from Youtube.

Video narrates the story of "Nicole and Zena" from West African nations, Ghana and Togo.

Traffickers as the worst/to blame…video shows Black traffickers.

“Why?” Asks the White narrator.

“Money pure and simple” – White lawyer is in disbelief that this happened in 2010 when video what shot. Secured their conviction.

Jerome (BCB) told to sit up as he was leaning his arms on table

When the women were found, a book was found with the statue of liberty on the front.

Video narrator remarks, “finally they were free”

Lawrence (a White boy) speaks of a situation similar in America, a girl called Amanda Berry in slavery. Tells another in 1980.

Lesson task: Does slavery still exist today?

iPad use: research in slavery in the modern world. SS asked to research and link African slavery to modern day slavery i.e. sex trade, forced labour, bonded labour, child labour, forced marriage.

The work will lead to a presentation to the rest of the class. Students choose ONE of the above.

Katie (White girl) offers the story of an illegal immigrant in Britain who nearly forced a British woman to marry him if it wasn’t for immigration/customs ‘getting him’.

Priyah (Asian girl) offers a story of a guy grooming girls and managed to get them to his house but finally one girl got out by setting a fire.

Joanna offers: ‘Taken’ film and child soldiers in Africa who are drugged. Film ‘Prisoners’ by Asian boy.

Joanna sits in front of Jerome (BCB) asks what he’s doing and compares his lack of writing to Monica’s (BCG) next to him

The work focus is on slavery abroad, individual research project and silence is encouraged.

Example 2

This is the Year 9 class that several Black students organized their own BHM in class on the Black Panthers. The class were exploring contemporary slavery during a Baccalaureate class I was invited to attend for BHM. I will refer to the teacher as Jack and he is a White British male, of Irish ancestry.

Lesson starter: What do you see? [There's a picture of several White women with the banner 'ABOLISH SLAVERY'.

Michael (BCB), who teachers say is trouble, is absent.

SS offer the picture is about 'people's rights' and 'protesting against slavery'. Carmen (White girl) says the protest is against slavery and [the women] saying to the government that this is "wrong".

Jack says he enjoys teaching about BHM: "lots of time for reflection, recognition and activists". He highlights where we've been able to make changes and bringing it to now i.e. contemporary slavery and links to modern slavery is important.

Jack explains "large part of [cities in England] built off the back of wealth from slavery".

Last lesson was about contemporary slavery based around Seba's story [person from sheet].

Question 1: Come up with a sentence about what it means to be a slave

SS offer: "treated disrespectfully" "no human rights" "they're being forced to do something" "to be owned by someone and to have limited basic rights" "get controlled and limited freedom".

Jack explains he wants them to look at contemporary slavery and to choose one person they're interested in. Sources used = Contemporary Slavery Teachers' Resources

Groups split up to six randomly selected. What's interesting about these sheets is the fact that the "type" of slavery looked at involves some sort of physical bondage. All of the cases looked at are in poor conditions i.e. American Samoa, Mali, Sudan, China etc…It's far away; it's not here in the present. I note there's one British case about Karina from Latvia who took a job from "gangmasters" posing as legitimate employment agencies.

Jack asks class why look at this during BHM and I've asked you to look at pivotal figures like Rosa Parks etc…Why contemporary society?

Simone (BCG): "People know. There's more to [Black] people than just Malcolm X."

Jack: "Yes, who else?"

Lu (East Asian girl): "Different types of slavery; other people."

Carmen (White girl): "It's best to do it this way. We know the 1800s people got beat; people need to understand it's not the 1800s, it's now, and it's not outdated. It's still here and we need to sort it out."

Jack: "BHM allows us this point of reflection. Bring it up to today as you (students), global citizens; we need to be aware of that."

Next lesson will be started with their presentations.

<u>Example 3</u>

Lesson task: selling slaves in an auction

SS use small cards to read out who they are i.e. "Strong man", "Spent all my life in the village", 'Good worker", "Helped mother in a hut".

Kevin made these resources after he felt the auction from other class, didn't go as well as students didn't know what to say about Black slaves

CLASS ERUPTS WITH OFFERS

This time, students who "bought" a slave, walk up to the front of the class to collect their property.

Kevin asks: "what do you buy when you go shopping?"

Class: "Clothes" "Food" "Shoes"

Kevin: "How do you feel?"

Class: "Good" "Excited"

Class proceeds with another slave who may be 'more' or 'less' useful to the slave owner. For the last slave, Kevin explains to the slave trader (auctioneer) that the last one would be in the worst condition like a "rag-end vegetable at a supermarket at the end of the day".

Kevin asks slaves (students) how they felt

David (BAB): "I FELT DEAD."

Bushra (Asian girl): "Not a human."

Keisha (dual heritage): "Not normal because you don't buy people."

Nasir (Asian boy): "I felt that no one wanted me because I wasn't strong or human."

Aaron (BCB): "I felt like my identity was stolen from me. Who you are and people have taken it away and made you someone else…that you don't want."

Peter: "I felt used; they used me to make money."

Students enquire whether they would see their families again and teacher explains very rarely or if they went to church and by happenstance, saw their relatives.

Aaliyah (Asian girl): "Oh, that's nice then."

Homework: Write an account of the auction OR draw a poster advertising the auction.

Aaliyah (Asian girl): "The men who bought the slaves, were they all White?"

Kevin: "Yes, no Black person owned a plantation"

An Asian boy whispers "racism"

Aaron (BCB) saying it twice: "Racist! Racist!" (Quietly…)

Kevin: "Or they might be from Brazil in which case we'd say they had a very good suntan."

Aaliyah (Asian girl): "Were the slave owners male or female?"

Kevin: "Property always belonged to the man."

Class: "Why?"

Kevin: "Because in those days, men owned property and women didn't."

Aaron (BCB): "Sexist!" (calling out)

Kevin: "Ok, ok, right, homework…"(he explains the homework again).

Discussion

In the above examples, Blackness has been the negative counterweight to the positivity of Whiteness. The stereotype of Black people in the examples reflects White racial ideology of White superiority and Black inferiority – a product of White supremacy. Although the analysis is applied to the US context, I concur with critical legal/race scholar, Harris's analysis that Blackness is central to

> White supremacy…Black people embody the *nigger* in the American imagination: a creature at the border of the human and the bestial, a being whose human form only calls attention to its subhuman nature. To be a nigger is to have no agency, no dignity, no individuality, and no moral worth; it is to be worthy of nothing but

contempt…Blackness is the worst kind of non-Whiteness (Espinoza and Harris, 2000:443).

The findings reveal the applicability of Harris's analysis to the Anglo-centric context. In the first example, the Black body is a source of exploitation by fellow Blacks and the White saviour, living in the West, provides a colour-blind safe space from (Black) evil. In the first example, Black intelligence and personality is placed under scrutiny: the stereotypical poor Black immigrant, being trafficked by an evil Black aggressor. If the racial dynamics of this video are not enough to convince you that this video was indicative of Joanna's experience of White racial priming - Black aggressors and Black victims, who needs a White saviour to pursue justice - then the next part of the video should. It explains that when the women were rescued, a book was found with the "statue of liberty on the front". The White saviour narrator remarks, "Finally they were free". The lesson task by Joanna after stopping the video was: does slavery still exist today?" The positive counterpart, Whiteness, is attractive as the US/West is stereotyped as a pillar of freedom and equal opportunities, providing a safe space for people of colour still held back by the primitiveness of greed and selfishness of fellow people of colour.

The statue of liberty symbolises freedom and the White narrator and lawyer converge in promoting liberal values as a White pursuit and White aspiration. Joanna does not consider the inherent problems with "freedom" in America not being a term that includes everyone, equally, but rather assumes human trafficking is a Black issue, and the (White) West is a safe haven from harm. The students then confirmed they understood Joanna's instruction by providing examples of illegal immigrants in Britain who nearly forced a British woman to marry him if it was not for immigration, "getting him" (Katie, White girl); or girls being

groomed (Priyah, Asian girl); or Joanna's example of a film about child soldiers in Africa who were drugged. The message is clear: by creating a Black victim, or at least one that shares experiences of oppression *by* people of colour (by other Blacks), White liberal values and the White saviour narrative is given legitimacy and looks more appealing, than exploring critically, White liberal values and the White saviour narrative.

In the second example, I suggest BH has a functionalist role: to allow reflection on the intellectually and culturally inferior people of colour who still engage in barbaric acts of enslavement. I argue that the linking to modern-day, sexual slavery is not without intention and allows for the White racial ideology underpinning African chattel slavery to be deracialised: in modern-day slavery, all 'races' can be seen to participate in enslavement so there is nothing specific or exceptional about European colonialism. It is a type of colourblindness that dismantles opportunity to engage in critical dialogue about the reasons society is racially stratified along political, economic, and cultural advantages and disadvantages today. Bunce and Field as I explained in the micro-invalidation section, attribute this to a larger establishment amnesia, which has the negative consequence of ignoring and silencing the long and sustained struggle by Black activists (2014). This is because its stereotypical images of lacking in intellectual worth and character can be used to reinforce hatred of the Black body. In this way, White people who participated in the slave trade are worthy of the students' forgiveness in a way that Black people are not because they were intelligent enough to see the error of their ways, and ultimately, freedom and equality for all was achieved because of *White* liberal values of equal opportunities.

In the third example, which involved performing Black victimhood and White superiority, stereotypical traits of the downtrodden savage, keeps the image of the nigger alive

> A source of contempt mixed with anxiety, shame, and self-hatred for Blacks. The image of the nigger keeps individual racism alive, providing a powerful emotional engine for the institutions of White supremacy, from individual unconscious racism to notions of "merit" based on contrast with the nigger (Espinoza and Harris, 2000:443).

In reinforcing the stereotype of the despised and pitiful Black slave, the examples revealed the "close relationship between the stereotypes and the prevailing images of marginalized people" and especially as the person in positions of authority in the classrooms were White men and women, reinforces patterns of racialised social power (Crenshaw, 2009:242). Kevin uses his White racial knowledge of the Black other, to consciously or unconsciously, inform his choice of words for the slave auctions. They were based on stereotypes of the slaves' intellectual and physical characteristics and all humanity is removed from the "rag end" slave. This is evidenced by students' claims they did not feel human and lacked an identity. In using a slave trade re-enactment to convey White superiority and Black inferiority, Kevin is justifying pitying and resenting the Black image for not being valuable enough; for being the lowest form of humanity and for not being like Whites. Its positive counterweight, Whiteness, is stereotyped as aspirational because as Kevin explained, Whites owned people and property, and possessed the power to place a value on a person. He does not challenge this when Aaron (BCB) suggests this is the result of racism and sexism. Indeed, Delgado and Stefancic suggest that

> The depiction of ethnic groups of color is littered with negative images…for example, during slavery society needed reassurance that Blacks were docile, cheerful and content with their lot. Images of sullen, rebellious Blacks dissatisfied with their condition would have made White society uneasy. Accordingly, images of simple, happy Blacks, content to do the master's work, were disseminated (2000b: 227).

Although the image of the Black person changes depending on the historical, political and cultural context, this image in the West is never far from the pseudo-scientific tropes of intellectual inferiority and physical superiority.

The political discourse around the KS3 history curriculum is that it provides a colourblind narrative of British history that develops a collective sense of cohesion all students can share. However, I argue that 'our island story' is deeply inscribed with a White racial master script through positive stereotyping of Whiteness and negative stereotyping of Blackness. The purpose of BH is to reaffirm and reproduce this seeming inevitability. At the professional level, institutions such as schools, stereotypes manifest differently because legislation and professional standards prohibit explicit racial derogation (Solórzano, 1997). However, stereotypes still exist there, but are camouflaged using coded language such as "illegal immigrant" (first example), "no human rights" (second example), "spent all my life in the village" (third example). I argue that these racial stereotypes of Whiteness and its counterweight, Blackness justifies a separate and distinct BH unit, which could be used in one of two ways: to project White anxieties about Blackness and to subtly propagate White superiority.

Summary of racial microaggressions

All racial microaggressions are racism and the examples of micro-invalidations, micro-insults and micro-assaults reveal that

> Racial microaggressions are often unconsciously delivered in the form of subtle snubs or dismissive looks, gestures, and tones. These exchanges are so pervasive and automatic in daily conversations and interactions that they are often dismissed and glossed over as being innocent and innocuous. Yet, as indicated previously, microaggressions are detrimental to persons of color because they impair performance in a multitude of settings by sapping the psychic and spiritual energy of recipients and by creating inequities (Wing Sue et. al., 2007:273).

So far, the tone of the analyses on racial microaggressions, racist humour and racial stereotyping has been negative. Pierce (1995) has characterised the subtle forms of racism as a type of torture for non-Whites, and the examples I provided, help to shed light on the ways racial microaggressions undermine, silence and continue to entrench Black students' marginalisation in the English education system. Minorities have been historically pushed to the margins, but hooks suggests that less is known about the margins as a site of resistance (1990). Minority students in education have resisted and in certain cases, subverted racism in an attempt to 'prove Whites wrong' (see Yosso, Smith, Ceja and Solórzano 2009).

Using Allport's (1935) explanation of the readiness of attitudes to propel behaviour and the two motivations that propel behaviour: dynamic and directive, I now move onto the second

major theme that demonstrates a consistency between attitudes and behaviour or as I have described it, *teachers' approaches and Black students' approaches for (dis)engaging with Black History.* Although I argue that their approaches were underpinned by conscious and unconscious racism, the manifestations of these approaches could not have been realised *without* support from institutional (school) and national policy anti-Blackness. This is because racism saturates all levels of the English education system. The second major theme I identified from ethnographic data contains some of these strategies for resistance as an attempt for self-care.

<u>Theme 2:</u> Teachers' approaches and Black students' approaches for (dis)engaging with Black History

The analysis of this theme is split into two sections; the first will contain teachers' approaches for (dis)engaging with Black History and the second, will contain Black students' approaches for (dis)engaging with Black History. I am deliberate in writing (dis)engaging as two separate but linked words, rather than 'disengaging' as a singular word because both teachers and Black students disengaged and engaged with Black History in very purposeful ways, based on their attitudes towards the topic of it. Further, for both teachers and Black students, there was a mutual process of *simultaneously* engaging and disengaging with BH through their behaviours. For example, teachers who possessed as I have previously analysed, negative attitudes towards Black people and Blackness, and corresponding positive attitudes towards White people and Whiteness, supports Smith's (2004) assertion that they have had a long history of White racial priming, influencing their attitudes.

Therefore, in approaching the teaching of BH, White teachers found ways that supported their established attitudes about the victimhood of Blackness, and innocence and positive influence of Whiteness. Indeed, the findings suggest that Whiteness has the power to enact change and strive for aspirational (White) liberal values of equal opportunities and antiracism. In order consciously or unconsciously to promote this message, Kevin, Joanne and Anna had an interest convergent relationship with BH: finding opportunities within BH to still convey privileging White interests. They simultaneously disengaged with BH by not valuing other aspects of BH outside of the White-saviour narrative of slavery, or engaging in dialogue that would have put Whiteness under a critical lens. Both acts of engagement and disengagement with BH were supported by wider institutional and structural anti-Blackness, as one of the aims comprising the KS3 history curriculum is to "gain and deploy historically grounded understanding of abstract terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation'" (DfE, 2013b). This assumes that Whiteness is universal and *value-free* rather than deeply exploitative and destructive.

For all students, including those of African and Caribbean descent, the findings of the preceding theme suggest that they responded to teachers' attitudes towards BHM/BH in positive and negative ways, depending on the context. Students demonstrated race consciousness (Omi and Winant, 2015), such as calling out 'racism' when they perceived particular injustices to be racially motivated, and they also defended against overt and conscious micro-assaults such as racist humour, despite being reproached for doing so. Negative responses towards BH by Black students took the form of joining in the majoritarian narrative about the East, or primitive Africans, but this was done, I argue, to gain temporary acceptance from their teachers in the classroom.

Positive and negative responses towards BH by Black students and their corresponding approaches characterised by various acts of participation and non-participation, engagement and disengagement, support Du Bois' concept of the 'double consciousness' ([1903] 1994). This double consciousness could explain the difference in approaches towards history teachers and Black students, as du Bois defines this as

> The Negro is a sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world, - a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness. An American and a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder ([1903] 1994: 2).

Black students had to bear the brunt of White racial priming; therefore were acutely aware of the deficit understanding about BH and peoples of African and Caribbean descent. Black students' (dis)engagement with BH then, could be explained as acts of self-care and survival - using the margins as a site of resistance (hooks, 1990). These acts included micro-level forms of resistance: playing games on iPads, talking to each other rather than concentrating on the work set, or not participating at all, or larger acts of resistance such as requesting if they could organise their *own classes* for BHM. The findings suggest they simultaneously engaged with BH through acts of participation and non-participation, and disengaged by finding opportunities to define BH *on their own terms*. I turn now to examples from history teachers and Black students to illustrate my points.

2 a – Teachers' interest convergent relationship with BH revealing the continuing presence of institutional racism

According to Huber and Solórzano, "institutional racism can be understood as formal or informal structural mechanisms, such as policies and processes that systematically subordinate, marginalize, and exclude non-dominant groups and mediates their experiences with racial microaggressions" (2015: 7). To understand how the racial microaggressions I outlined in the first major theme dominate the experience of African and Caribbean students, it is important to see racial microaggressions in their wider context. These acts are not just isolated incidents, but symptoms of a larger 'disease' – White supremacy (Judge Carter, 1988). Therefore, it is important to extend the analysis of teacher interactions *beyond* the micro-level, to avoid the old trope of a 'few bad apples' argument. Parochial conceptualisations of BHM/BH are supported by institutional (school) and structural (national policy) racisms, so that even if Kevin, Joanna and Anne were not the students' teachers, the climate of anti-Blackness towards BH would still occur.

The KS3 history curriculum has been characterised by Ball as 'cultural restorationism'– a curriculum based on traditional subjects, canonical knowledge and a celebration of all things English; a curriculum of facts, lists and eternal certainties" (2013:19). The non-statutory nature of BH means that schools can choose whether or not to engage with diverse histories and from a CRT perspective, this is not without intention: the larger racist project characterised by the preservation and proliferation of White supremacy, supports Gillborn's assertion that,

> The evidence suggests that, despite a rhetoric of standards for all, education policy in England is actively involved in the defence, legitimation and extension of White supremacy. The assumptions which feed, and are strengthened by, this regime are not overtly discriminatory but their effects are empirically verifiable and materially real in every meaningful sense. Shaped by long established cultural, economic and historical structures of racial domination, the continued promotion of policies and practices that are known to be racially divisive testifies to tacit intentionality in the system. The racist outcomes of contemporary policy may not be coldly calculated but they are far from accidental (2005:499).

One way racial domination is preserved and proliferated is through the curriculum. Ladson-Billings suggests the curriculum is a "culturally specific artefact designed to maintain a White supremacist master script" (2009:29) meaning that whilst the rhetoric is that all students should learn ‘our island story’ through the KS3 history curriculum, only White identities, cultures and histories are prioritised. Black people are left unable to ‘see’ themselves within this narrative - especially because BH is entirely *optional*. Therefore, racist sentiments are deeply embedded in the mean making structure of the history curriculum and this is demonstrated in what is valued as knowledge; whose history is defined as British; and who will be privileged as a result of this type of ‘island story’. There is no insistence, statutorily, to teach BH; therefore, the discourse of ‘our’ island story is laden with White privilege as it encourages the subordination or complete erasure of more diverse histories. This erasure from national policy impacts upon schools as teachers are encouraged to interpret BH *outside* of the mainstream British narrative, thus creating opportunities to reduce BH topics to the study of Black essentialism. As such, this

subordination of histories or in the case of BH, erasure, directly supports Macpherson's findings of institutional racism (1999).

Institutional racism has micro-level, classroom consequences. The year before my arrival (and notably, the year before the revisions to history), Limehart Secondary School had a BH co-ordinator. The coordinator organised events and workshops, and was responsible for the integration of BH. After structural revisions to history, there was an institutional decision to disband the role of a BH co-ordinator and leave the option to engage with BH, up to individual teachers. The Head of Humanities explained they could 'put something on' during BHM. This suggests congruence between macro, meso and micro racism, as there was a congruent pattern at each level. Therefore, teachers were not working in isolation at Limehart Secondary School. Though I analysed some egregious examples earlier in the chapter, they are not solely responsible for Black students' negative experience of history. Putting the responsibility onto teachers was problematic as BH was not only optional, but influenced by teachers' interpretations about Blackness: based upon a set of beliefs or taken-for-granted assertions about the essence of 'Black' people as a victim, without value or subhuman. I argue that teachers had an interest convergent relationship with BH, as elements of it were engaged with *so long as* Whiteness could dominate its scope and direction, revealing the myth of antiracism and equal opportunities. Kevin, Joanna and Anne had an interest convergent relationship with approaching the teaching of BHM/BH, because they were reflecting wider institutional and ideological deficit understandings about Black History and Black people. The concept, interest convergence, originates and was applied to the US historical context of racial reform, by African-American law professor, Derrick Bell. He defines the concept as

> Black rights [being] recognised and protected when and only so long as policy makers perceive that such advances will further interests that are their primary concern (Bell, 2004:48).

I argued in Chapter Two that the primary concern for English policy makers is the structural privileging of White supremacy, achieved in part through the promotion of Fundamental British Values (DfE, 2014b). Although this obligation came into effect in schools from November 2014, the discourse around dismantling progressive statements on multiculturalism in favour of communities ostensibly sharing a common set of democratic values including tolerance and respect for each other, has a much longer history. The ostensibly colour-blind discourse dominating our political discourse today is characteristic of aggressive majoritarianism: policies that will threaten White approval are marginalised, the consequence of which, is a return to the assimilationist policies of the 1950s-1960s (Gillborn, 2008). Although BH has a non-statutory place on the KS3 history curriculum, the legislative requirement of FBV means that BH *could* be recognised in schools – through BHM or within the curriculum – and used to promote wider liberal values of tolerance, social cohesion and equality. However, the non-statutory place of BH means that teaching elements of more diverse histories can also be forgotten if schools choose not to engage with it, so in either circumstance, BH serves to advance the interests of policy makers. In the former, to privilege White histories, successes and achievements under the narrative of 'our island story', or in the latter, by incorporating BH irrespective of content or relationship to the mainstream history curriculum, so institutions cannot be accused of racism. A similar lack of statutory obligation during teacher training, for meeting the demands of culturally diverse classrooms, provides opportunities for reproducing repetitive victim-centred topics, compounded by a lack of time, confidence, and available resources

to integrate alternative narratives outside of the 'abolitionist myth' (Bunce and Field, 2014).

Teachers' approaches reflected an interest convergent relationship with BH at Limehart School. In other words, BH was permissible at the school *so long as* White self-interests, or in other words, the proliferation of White privilege, could dominate its scope and direction. Their approaches continued to reflect Feagin's notion of collective memory and collective forgetting by synonymising Britishness with Whiteness (2010). For this reason, *empathy* was employed as a tool for teaching BH and White people recognised as the force driving positive change and advocating for the equal opportunities 'we' enjoy today.

From the very first day of my observations, Kevin, Joanna and later, Anne, structured their lessons to engage with BH by positioning the 'slave' as something rather than someone, to be pitied. I say something rather than someone because there was a distinct lack of associating the image of the slave with humanity: rather it was associated with property and the inference was that a slave was by default, a Black person. In pitying the image of the slave, this created opportunities for all three teachers to project assumptions of a slave's primitiveness, stupidity and physical prowess. Stereotypes affirmed by their experience of White racial priming about the nature of the 'other', and the attractiveness of White liberal values and took the racial sting out of Whiteness, as I analyse later.

Kevin stated clearly that he wanted students to know and understand what the term empathy meant. Students understood that he wanted them to explore what it would 'feel' like to be a slave on the Middle Passage, with the additional instruction, "deep, meaningful thinking". Answers included, "scared", "helpless", and "vulnerable". Kevin, Joanna and

Anne's preoccupation with empathy as a useful and ostensibly anti-racist tool for teaching BH led them to ignore the impact on Black students, of commodifying Black experiences in humiliating ways and supporting this pursuit of enforced, heightened feelings of sadness. "Slave music", which according to Joanna was a "multisensory experience", participating in "slave auctions", and rehearsing plantation life where students received most praise for being authentically slave-like: docile, obedient, worthy of punishment and downtrodden, created opportunities for students to think like the victor (read: White).

Interest convergence in the classroom context is worthy of further exploration. Rather than critically investigate the importance of White ideologies on African chattel slavery, BH was simultaneously engaged and disengaged with by Kevin, Joanna and Anne in purposeful ways that supported White privilege. Their approach to engaging with BH involved using empathy about the plight of African slaves and the victimhood of poor Blacks and then decontextualising their experience with that of child slavery and human trafficking today. What is significant about this is that the child traffickers and child slaves were people of colour and so the assertions were that: 1) everyone took part in slavery at some point and so understanding specificities of White racial ideologies are not important to consider, a type of colour-blindness; and 2) Whites abolished this barbarity long ago, so it is the backwards and regressive People of Colour still taking parts in these acts that need to be regarded as evil, essentially taking the 'racial' dimension out of Whiteness.

Kevin also simultaneously engaged and disengaged with BH. He engaged in attempting to get students to "empathise with the slaves on the Middle Passage". He asked Katie (a White girl) to read Ottobah's testimony, but because she was not in his view, authentically slave-like; he instructed her to "put some emotion into it!" And then, "put some oompf into

it!" Kevin uses this lesson to not only reduce the Black experience to a piece of dramatic literature, but to reaffirm his experience of White racial priming by explaining to students that, "there is a big problem with slavery in Northern Africa and the situation of kidnapped girls in Nigeria is an issue". Lawrence, (a White boy) expands on his knowledge of the kidnapped girls and the other students expressed disgust. In the lesson preceding this one, Keisha (dual heritage) asks why they have to learn about slavery. After Kevin explains that it is because it was "not very nice" and 'we' should not be proud of it, she then replies, "yes, but it's not *our* fault so why do *we* have to learn it?" This exchange suggests the inherent problem with using empathy as a tool for approaching BH.

Deracialising African enslavement, by taking it out of context, assumes that this was something that occurred by simply, 'bad' people and its impact and legacy bears no consequence on society today. Furthermore, a collective 'we' assumes equal enjoyment of liberty in the West. However, Kevin's subsequent response reasserts the stereotypes of Blackness being primitive, ostensibly still shackled by their cultural ignorance and inability to act in a civilised (read: White) way; he says, "Well slavery isn't over in the world today is it, so we haven't learned from history. There's slavery happening in England today, those girls who were kept as slaves [Rotherham reference: White girls groomed by Asian men and kept and trafficked as sex slaves]. Right let's get back to the video…"

Kevin explains to students a few days later "in 1833 it [slavery] was abolished in the British Empire and nowhere across Britain or England did that happen". Kelly (a White girl) asks: "but it still happens today? Just not like that" (pointing to slave ship). So there is an acknowledgement of a distinctiveness of African slavery, but teachers are quick to

disengage with discussions about racism - which is at odds with their understanding of the innocence and universality of Whiteness - and rather, stuck to promoting the civility of White liberal values.

Anne, the student teacher, was also complicit in simultaneously engaging and disengaging with BH. The schedule for teaching BH was supposed to involve British involvement in the slave trade; however all three teachers attributed this disengagement with British involvement in favour of abolition, to lack of time, knowledge, resources and agency. I would argue that this was not without intention as the findings suggested from the first major theme, teachers' *attitudes towards BHM/BH and peoples of African and Caribbean descent.* The Black image in the White mind is one dominated by racialised stereotypes and assumptions. Anne stated in October 2014, "there's still lots to do, but it's better to do abolition and then modern day slavery as that's more interesting". In the staffroom before one of her lessons, she explained a few days later that she had *only prepared abolition* and the lesson objective was to *create a group presentation about one key person or event concerning the campaign for the abolition of slavery*. It should not be a surprise who the key proponents were: they included Adam Smith (a White man) who believed, according to the sheet, that freeing slaves would be good for the economy - interest convergence in itself - but also Elizabeth Heyrick (a White female). When I asked Anne at the end of the lesson if she would go back to Britain's involvement in the slave trade, she said, "there isn't time. [Instead] they'll do abolition and modern day slavery as that's more important". This supports Bunce and Field's contention that policy discourse around enslavement centres around an 'abolitionist myth' (2014): amnesia around White complicity in enslavement and the legacy of colonialism, instead focusing on the White saviours who pursued the liberal values of equality and antiracism.

The findings suggest teachers had an interest convergent relationship with BH. They engaged with teaching elements of it so long as they could dominate its scope and direction consistent with structural-ideological anti-Blackness. They achieved this by creating the image of a helpless Black victim and Black aggressor who could not let go of the primitiveness of enslavement in order to make money, and the White saviour who lives in the West, free from the constraints of barbarity. The assumption is that White people saw the error of their ways long ago and were instrumental in fighting for the freedoms and liberty 'we' all enjoy today. Bunce and Field characterise this view as 'establishment amnesia', which entrenches in the public imagination, White achievements only, at the expense of Black achievements and resistance (2014). They disengaged with BH by refusing to acknowledge racism or White racial ideologies; not teaching about Britain's involvement in enslavement that would have led to a critical dialogue about the legacy of slavery today; and not exploring the seemingly uncomplicatedness of White liberal values of equality and antiracism. The focus remained about the backwardness of People of Colour and supported Bell's interest convergence covenant guiding the relationship between the dominator and the dominated parties in racial reform and the pursuit of equality. He explains

> Blacks as well as their White allies, are likely to focus with gratitude on the relief obtained, usually after a long struggle. Little attention is paid to the self-interest factors without which no relief might have been gained. Moreover, the relief is viewed as proof that society is indeed just, and that eventually all racial injustice will be recognized and remedied (2004:56).

Joanna's lesson that took place after Anne's on 15th October continued with the same trajectory. The lesson objective was to, "investigate arguments for and against slavery" and from a PowerPoint slide, students had to copy the following, verbatim:

> "1. The campaign against slavery was the first mass campaign in Britain which involved the full range of its citizens at a time when a very small proportion could vote and women had a minimal role in politics and public life. 2. In the late 18th Century an anti-slavery movement began to get a lot of support."

When challenged about the repetitive nature of engaging with BH in this way, Waleed (an Asian boy) states, "this is all we learn; this year, the year before that and the year before that!" Joanna retorts sarcastically that last year they were in Year 7 and some "don't even remember that so this is like a refresh". This is an explicit expression of disengaging with other elements of BH, which would contradict her historical experience of White racial priming. The campaign leaders were: Thomas Clarkson, William Wilberforce and Olaudah Equiano. The women against slavery were: Elizabeth Heyrick, Anne Knight and Hannah Moore. The logical inference of portraying the pursuit of equality for all as a majority White achievement, ignores and erases the long and sustained Black resistance to enslavement, and again, supports the structural privileging of White interests within the wider KS3 history curriculum. Interest convergence in this context is useful in explaining that BH will only go ahead so long as Whites can be accommodated and White privilege propagated in some way. 'Equality' and 'antiracism' are White pursuits and achievements and this was particularly poignant during a lesson in which they had to sympathise with the slave traders who would have lost money and property as a result of abolition, and the author of Amazing Grace who repented through the song for raping African women.

I argue, the logic of the BH unit at Limehart goes something like this:

> *Even when Whites commit atrocities, they are able to see the error of their ways and pursue liberal values of freedom and equality for all. The corresponding message about Blacks is thus: even when Blacks are given freedom and equal rights, they will still behave in primitive ways that are contrary to the values White people fought for, and therefore, they should be pitied or despised.*

As Kevin, Joanna and Anne did not consider, the impact of their simultaneous engagement and disengagement with BH, it is unsurprising that the assessment for BH would also follow this pattern. Again, their approaches to the assessments for BH reflected institutional non-commitment to BH. The assessments for BH, unlike topics of study such as The Holocaust and World Wars I and II, were not compulsory. Therefore, teachers reflected a similar non-commitment to BH in terms of the knowledge being assessed and approach taken towards assessment. They initially planned to assess the students' performances of 'Life on a plantation' by video recording them; however the vehement refusal to be filmed by Katie (a White girl), meant that Joanna explained to the class that the assessments will be "about the same as the one in Year 7". Shona (BCG) responded that the assessment "was so easy", to which Joanna replied, "I know". In the staffroom a few weeks later, I spoke to Joanna about the assessment and she said "the class did a *stupid* assessment [she made] out of sources" and the question designed to inform students' grades was: '*What was life like on the Middle Passage?'* Kevin, a month earlier, set a similar question for his main group: *'What was it really like on the Middle Passage?'*

The message this sends to Black students about a module ostensibly designed to explore 'their' history, is that BH is not a topic that is valued by teachers and can therefore be simplistic in design. They engaged by having an assessment, but disengaged by focusing simply on conditions on the Middle Passage - which would place enslaved Africans in a position to be pitied - rather than the critical questions about enslavement. The most poignant demonstration of this came from Kevin, who stated at the beginning of the unit that history is "generally written by men who are White and the story is generally the same, but changed *slightly*." He goes on to add that history is generally written by the victors and he is trying to raise awareness of non-White people, but the colourblindness of his original assertion (that the story is generally the same) reflects the "acts of disregard" they display towards 'othered' voices and the ones *doing* the othering: we are all the same, so only one voice really matters, and that is a White voice (Davis 1989:1576). At a structural level, the lack of insistence on assessing knowledge about BH is reflected by teachers who could choose to build assessments based upon their own ignorance, and a multicultural focus on teaching the White about the Black.

By illustrating teachers' interest convergent approach towards teaching BH, am I suggesting that all White teachers should avoid teaching BH if I am accusing all three of being complicit in everyday acts of racism, directed towards students of African and Caribbean descent? Teachers' demographics from the Department for Education could explain the lack of knowledge teachers have with teaching Black British history. Statistics show that teachers in state-maintained schools, who self-identify as White British, comprised of 87.5% in 2014 and 87.0% in 2015. This does not include those groups self-identifying as 'Other White Background' (3.7%) or White-Irish (1.7%) in 2015 (DfE, 2016). This is significant because "we are hobbled by the paradox of a largely White

teaching staff whose practices, consciously or not, contribute to the racial achievement gap yet who are unable to see what they are doing" (Taylor 2009: 9). *It is the duty of CRT scholars who work towards a more equitable future, to illuminate those racist practices that are virtually unknown or not considered by teachers that marginalise students of colour.* I explained that White people have a long history of racial priming and thus, will encounter, approach and interact with Black people in ways that are congruent to their understanding of Blackness. The empirical findings shed light on teachers' attitudes towards BH being underpinned by various forms of conscious and unconscious, racial microaggressions. Consistency was shown in their behavioural approaches towards BH, characterised by interest convergence, but this could only have been legitimated by support from meso (school) and macro (national policy) anti-Blackness.

Summary

In sum, elements of BH were engaged with in a way that still privileged Whiteness: liberal values of equal opportunities and antiracism, and White people who were the pioneers driving abolition. I suggest this has been allowed to happen, that is, legitimated and strengthened, because of the persistence of institutional racism and wider White supremacist ideologies. Indeed, "schools play a key role in the production and reproduction of power and social inequality" and Black students continue to bear its brunt as this power and social inequality is also *racialised* (Graham and Robinson 2004:655). Schools such as Limehart Secondary School are able to avoid the charge of racism because they have BH *in the first instance*, rather than considering its content and impact on students in the classroom. The everyday acts of racism in the classrooms I observed – racial microaggressions, humour and stereotyping – are legitimated by the wider

institutional and ideological racisms of White supremacy. Put simply, these acts by Kevin, Joanna and Anne are not specifically their fault, but rather, they are permissible precisely because they are reflecting, and are reflected by, wider racisms. Institutional and national policy non-commitment to BH encourages a climate of anti-Blackness through the structural privileging of Whiteness. These effects are psychologically draining and a source of frustration, anger and feelings of alienation amongst persons of African and Caribbean descent (Pierce, 1995).

Therefore, identifying racist practices and centring the experiences of those harmed by direct and indirect racism from a critical race perspective, also serves as a source of psychic preservation for marginalised groups: being able to express their experiences without fear of reprisal or accusations of 'playing the race card', helps to 'heal the wounds caused by racial oppression' (Ladson-Billings, 1998 in Taylor et al., 2009:24) and expands anti-racist scholarship on Black experience of schooling. I am not suggesting that White teachers should avoid teaching BH, but illuminating marginalising practices, policies and wider deficit understandings about Blackness, goes some way in working towards a more equitable future for Black children in English schools.

2 b – Black students and 'Double consciousness'

In the opening to this second major theme, I stated that Black students' behavioural approaches towards BH could be explained using du Bois's concept of double consciousness, as there was simultaneous engagement and disengagement with the KS3 unit ([1903] 1994). Du Bois outlines two components that define a Black person's

consciousness in America are; first, looking at oneself, or measuring oneself through the lens of White racism

> It is a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness - an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder ([1903] 1994: 2).

I take this concept further and suggest that Black students at Limehart Secondary School simultaneously engaged and disengaged with BH, but this took a different form than Kevin, Joanna and Anne's whose approaches were informed by their experience of White racial priming. Black students' approaches for engaging with BH, conveyed they understood White assumptions about the essence, or nature of Black people. They joined in with racist stereotyping such as suggesting Black slave traders were stupid; that the slave ship was dirty and smelly; that Africans needed the West because they only had primitive weapons like spears and sticks; that Black skins could handle the heat and enslavement because they were physically strong. These students castigated the East for being primitive and a culturally backward place that still participated in 'slavery' and attempted to bring those practices over to the West where 'we' (read: civilised people) live. They possessed what Omi and Winant argue to be, race consciousness (2015). These acknowledgements of racial difference in society indicated that Black skins are viewed as inferior and as such, the life chances of these groups are negatively affected.

Black students bravely took part in slave auctions and slave performances and Kevin congratulated Shona (BCG) for getting the slave role as the others in the group, had already chosen the "good jobs". Aaron (BCB) put on a faux-African accent for his role as overseer and giving himself the name, 'Kwako Obaka', attempted to display his most authentic slave-role by *imitating* the victor: vicious, uncompromising and demeaning. With a ruler in his hand as a makeshift whip, he shouted, "do your work or I'll get into trouble" to a 'slave'. A group nearby watches and laughs at Aaron rehearsing with his group; "it's funny, sir" one says, to which Kevin replies, "yes" and walks off. David (BAB) in another group is also the overseer. He takes pleasure in telling me, "if she [points to Keisha, dual heritage] runs away, I'll get to whip her!"

Perhaps their participation in the majoritarian view of Black people - the temporary suspension of their Blackness as they cross over into Whiteness - offered a brief respite from the daily assaults they had to bear during the BH unit and for a moment, their teachers gave them temporary inclusion and acceptance. This acceptance and inclusion was of course dependent on Black students reaffirming White superiority and Black inferiority, so it involved belittling the nature of Blackness, and by extension, themselves. All the while, the other group looks on in 'amused contempt and pity' (du Bois [1903] 1994 p.2). These daily conscious and unconscious racial microaggressions, which included racist stereotyping and humour, was physically and emotionally exhausting for students of African and Caribbean descent. Kevin, Joanna and Anne compounded these racial microaggressions by silencing critical dialogue, such as instructing Black students to, "forget racism!" (Kevin) when they called the word out when learning about the treatment of slaves. Similarly, ignoring students' further calls for context in relation to why slavery started and whether 'people just woke up and started' (asked by Keisha, dual heritage)

immobilised Black students from understanding the topic in a meaningful, sensitive and context-driven way. Rather, Black students were pushed to the margins by "acts of disregard" (Davis, 1989) and as such, simultaneously *disengaged* with BH, by using adaptive techniques for survival *and resistance* (Pierce, 1995).

Bell hooks states that the margins are commonly associated with a "site of deprivation" rather than a "space of resistance;" however she stresses that the margins provide an opportunity for counter-hegemonic discourses and thus, "radical openness and possibility" (1990:149). hooks argues there are two types of marginality, the first, is an imposed marginality by the oppressor, and the second, one in which the marginalised person accepts their marginality, but occupies this space as one of strength. The findings suggest that Black students' behavioural approaches for disengaging with BH were demonstrative of these two types of marginality and in particular, an attempt to defend and define BH *on their own terms.* In these acts of self-determination, the other component to du Bois' double consciousness is apparent: the ability for Blacks to reconcile being Black (African descended) and being British; to be both "without being cursed and spit upon by his fellow, without having the doors of opportunity closed roughly in his face" ([1903] 1994: 3).

The various acts of racial microaggressions and pedagogical approaches that included asking Black students to enact a role in enslavement or lie under tables (with fellow students) and pretend they were on a slave ship, culminated in Black students' behavioural acts of disengagement. Non-participation was a behavioural response to these instances of harm. I witnessed Black students during lessons, singing in class, leaning backwards on their chairs to speak with their friends about topics unrelated to the lesson, yawning,

secretly listening to music through earphones, falling asleep, 'blowing raspberries', and using their iPad tablets to play games. They were 'signing out'. There were physiological consequences of racial microaggressions. Black students expressed not wanting to watch the film Amistad again, in which naked and bound Black bodies, including a woman holding her baby, jumped overboard because as Aaron (BCB) put it, "they would rather choose death than [a life of] pain". On more than one occasion, Black boys stated they wanted to leave the lesson; could not write; one stated he felt sick at the thought of slave owners raping African women; another explained watching Amistad made him want to vomit. What is the impact of the persistence of 'everyday racism'? I explained in the theoretical framework chapter, Pierce (1995) identified African-Americans suffer from race-related stress as a result of racism, but an excellent extension of this comes from Smith, Allen and Danley who use the concept, 'Racial Battle Fatigue' (2007). Racial Battle Fatigue is defined as

> A theoretical framework for examining social-psychological stress responses (e.g. frustration; anger; exhaustion; physical avoidance; psychological or emotional withdrawal; escapism; acceptance of racist attitudes; resistance; verbally, nonverbally, or physically fighting back; and coping strategies (2007:552).

These behaviours are reflective of the adaptive techniques Blacks must use to minimise the harm of racial microaggressions. Moreover, Smith, Allen and Danley assert that societal ideologies about Black inferiority legitimises the social conditions under which they encounter microaggressions and thus, for African-Americans, Racial Battle Fatigue is the result of "constant physiological, psychological, cultural, and emotional coping with racial microaggressions in less-than-ideal and racially hostile or unsupportive environments

(campus or otherwise)" (2007:555). Racial Battle Fatigue is a very real psychological consequence for minorities living under an uncertain, precarious and in some cases, dangerous 'racial climate' (Solórzano, Ceja and Yosso, 2000). This includes self-doubt, frustration, isolation, discouragement and exhaustion (ibid), and physiological symptoms including headaches, high blood pressure and fatigue (Harwood et al., 2015).

On many occasions, Black boys in particular were in conflict with teachers for defending against a right to own and determine the label 'Black': Kevin defined it as those with dark skin, and told Junior (BAB) "not to be smart" when he challenged this definition. In the practice role-play, David (BAB) is pulled aside (for an unknown reason) and given a stiff talking to; he walked out the classroom as he witnessed Kevin writing on his report card. At the end of the lesson, Kevin calls him back to return his report card and wagging the report card in his face, Kevin says, "a little bit over-excited today." Aaron (BCB) asks why the students were laughing through their performances of life on a plantation and is bitterly reprimanded; he is told to 'grow up as life is not fair' and afterwards, does not speak for the rest of the lesson. Jerome (BCB) turns around to the students sitting at the table behind him and asks whether they think the slave traders were ever nice people; Kevin says, "turn around again, and we are going down the disciplinary route."

Behavioural approaches towards BH that conveyed disengagement was the result, in part, of imposed marginality by teachers at Limehart Secondary School and their adaptive techniques were for survival because of unrelenting, reinforced messages from White society about Black inferiority. I have drawn upon Pierce's concept of mundane, extreme, environmental stress (MEES) to explain the consequences of these approaches towards BH. Mundane because of the everyday, conscious and unconscious racisms attached to

teaching BH; extreme because the experiences are psychological: Keisha (dual heritage) told me, "it's boring because [we] learn it every year and it's the *same thing* every year." For this reason, she would be dropping history after KS3. The experiences are also physiological as I witnessed students unable to write after watching particular videos or feeling physically sick. Environmental refers to the readiness of Kevin, Joanna and Anne to use BH to aim against Black males in particular with whom, teachers were in conflict at times; and stressful because time is spent at the margins behaving in one of two ways:

1. Suffering at the margins and enduring various acts of racism directed towards them and peoples of African and Caribbean descent, rather than using their time in lessons to learn and ask critical questions about the content of their learning; or,
2. Defending against an attack on Blackness which is threatened by homogeneity by repetitively studying *one* aspect of BH as though these are truth claims about the cultural essence of Blackness.

It is to this defence against the attack on Blackness that I now turn, drawing upon hooks' second configuration of the margins as a site of resistance.

During Anne's lesson, I was approached by Joanna in the main hall where students were practising their 'Life on a plantation' performance and I was told that some Year 9 students requested to organise their own classes for BHM. Their teacher, Simon, was available for me to talk to, so we left the hall together and went upstairs to his classroom. Simon explained that several Black students approached him to ask whether they could organise classes for BHM. He said that they used to have a whole unit as "time would allow it, but now it seems to have fallen through the cracks and there just isn't the time in the

curriculum to deliver this anymore." The Black students organised everything, "so we [teachers] didn't come up with anything," explained Simon. He added that students took a particularly "interesting spin on BHM, looking at the Black Panther Movement and whether we agree with their methods." Joanna added that she teaches the slavery unit to coincide with BHM in October, but Simon suggested BHM was about "looking at BH in a different way, not just as "victims," but good ways too like heroes and positive contributions." He ended by saying that he took to social media to send a photograph to a co-founder of the Black Panther, of his students' BHM lesson.

It is possible to draw upon hooks' analysis of the second type of marginality being one of acceptance and strength to the BHM organisers. Black student organisers have accepted that the institution marginalised and devalued their histories to the extent that at Year 9, they do not even learn about BH outside of slavery and Civil Rights (at KS4). However, this was a source of strength because they were then able to redefine BH on their own terms. It is important to consider their subject choice – the militant methods used by the Black Panthers - as an overt way to tell the institution not to forget their racialised difference and, they they too, have a valuable story to tell about Black struggles against White oppression. I had the opportunity to speak with those students about their rationale for using their marginality as a source of 'psychic preservation' (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) and strength and I will explore this further in the interview section.

Summary

In sum, the findings suggest that Black students' internalisation of White society and teachers' negative attitudes about BH, lent support to Bois' concept of a double consciousness. This manifested itself in observable behavioural approaches towards BH that were simultaneously engaged and disengaged with by African and Caribbean students. They engaged with BH to the extent that they participated in their marginalisation, but simultaneously disengaged due to the psychological and physiological stress this caused and an attempt to redefine BH on their own terms. This created an opportunity for radical possibilities. I now turn to understanding the specificities of indirect racism at Limehart Secondary School through imposed marginalisation by exploring the final theme: pedagogical tools for teaching BH. The findings suggest that pedagogical tools were an indirect way of strengthening racist beliefs and approaches towards BHM/BH, backed by the institution and reflective of wider anti-Blackness.

Theme 3: Pedagogical tools for teaching Black History

3 a - Silencing students' critical dialogue of race/racism

In this section, I analyse the specific ways in which pedagogical tools in the classroom were used to silence critical dialogue about race/racism, avoid group discussion in favour of individual working and the unquestioned use of source material (please also refer to appendix 1). The overriding argument is that BH is a multicultural learning opportunity rather than historical topic of rigorous enquiry.

The resources drawn upon and pedagogical approaches to BH, including an overreliance on individual, silent working where researching 'facts' about African enslavement is concerned, contributes to securing the conditions in which Whiteness dominates. Leonardo states that, "Whites today did not participate in slavery but they surely recreate White supremacy on a daily basis" (2009:79). In the context of BH at Limehart Secondary School, by ignoring discussions about the specificities of the African experience – instead finding parallels with modern-day slavery and White involvement in abolition – obscures critical discussions about *domination* and the continuing legacy of White supremacy at structural and ideological levels. As Leonardo explains,

> Whites enjoy privileges largely because they have created a system of domination under which they can thrive as a group…set up a system that benefits the group, mystify the system, remove the agents of actions from discourse, and when interrogated about it, stifle the discussion...When it comes to official history, there is no paucity of representation of Whites as its creator. From civil society, to science, to art, Whites represent the subject for words, White imprint is everywhere. However, when it concerns domination, Whites suddenly disappear, as if history were purely a positive sense of contribution. Their previous omnipresence becomes a position of nowhere, a certain politics of undetectability (2009:88).

3 b – Black essentialism

As I explained in sub-theme 2a (teachers' approaches), BH's organisation at an institutional level fell under the remit of a co-ordinator. Once that role ended, this created an opportunity for teachers to reflect a similar non-commitment to BH in the classroom in

terms of whether or not they engaged with elements of it. BH was kept, ostensibly as a tool for anti-racism and equal opportunities though the aims of what this would look like, and to what end, were ill-defined. Therefore the approach to BH was more in keeping with the state multiculturalism of the 1970s: focusing on difference lifestyles, the cultures and exoticism of Africans' lives creating a binary of White superiority and Black inferiority. Inter-ethnic dialogue was discouraged and opportunities to develop social cohesion were lost during role-plays on plantation life.

The consequence of this multicultural approach was that BH was divorced from the mainstream British history narrative, supported by a lack of resources at national policy level for teaching BH, reduced teaching the Black experience to oppression. Despite the good intentions of teachers to use role-plays to develop empathy, we have a period of racism without racists (Bonilla-Silva, 2003) and White guilt blocked the pursuit of antiracism. The counterweight to their pathological approach to Blackness was the structural privileging of Whiteness by focusing on moral crusader Whites who saved Blacks from oppression. Students were encouraged to focus on gross acts of ownership and *overt, individual* racism as a measure of how far 'we' have come, rather than the legacy of enslavement or the Black British experience as part of the greater British narrative. Therefore, any protestations from Black students about the presence of racism were sharply criticised, thereby silencing critical dialogue about race/racism.

Summary of ethnographic data

In my analysis of ethnographic data at Limehart Secondary School, I have drawn upon the CRT concepts: racism as normal and interest convergence. The findings suggest that racism is a normal and endemic feature of the KS3 history at micro, meso and macro levels. The CRT concept, racism as normal, is useful and applicable to BHM/BH at this school, as I have identified various types of direct and indirect racism, supporting Essed's assertion of 'everyday racism.' Direct forms of racism were observed in attitudes towards BHM/BH and peoples of African and Caribbean descent: racial microaggressions, racist humour and racist stereotyping. It was also observed in teachers' behavioural approaches, or (dis)engagement with BH that was underpinned by the concept of interest convergence. Kevin, Joanna and Anne would engage with BH so long as the content would privilege Whiteness consistent with a White saviour narrative. Therefore, ignoring British involvement in enslavement, and silencing critical dialogue with students about race and racism, allowed for teachers to focus on abolition and an uncritical promotion of White liberal values of 'equality of opportunity' and 'antiracism.'

I argued that their approaches to BH could not solely be explained by racist views consciously or unconsciously held by Kevin, Joanna and Anne; rather, wider institutional and structural-ideological processes, based upon White supremacy, strengthened and legitimised their deficit understandings of Blackness. These reinforcing messages about White superiority and Black inferiority legitimated the negative experiences of African and Caribbean students in the classroom. Institutional and ideological racism could be observed within the very construction of the KS3 history curriculum because BH does not have a statutory place at any point along the chronology of British history despite the

presence of Black peoples for thousands of years (Fryer, 1984). However, BH could be adopted by schools to meet their statutory obligations for promoting Fundamental British Values or SMSC. The consequence of this as evidenced at Limehart Secondary School is that schools engage with BH in a repetitive, tokenistic way rather than critically exploring its content. This draws clear parallels with the lack of definition BH faced in the 1970s and strengthens Carby's (1979) assertion that multiculturalism is for White audiences as it serves their interests.

The school's loss of a BH coordinator encouraged a lack of commitment to engaging and integrating elements of it; therefore, assessments were equally poor quality. Compound this with pedagogical tools that inaccurately decontextualises and deracialises African, chattel slavery, and worksheets and performances that silenced critical discussion about White racial ideology, and you have a hostile climate for Black students. This hostile climate had psychological and physiological consequences that I observed. I argue, based on the findings, that the KS3 history curriculum supports Macpherson's assertion of the permanence of 'institutional racism' (1999). The selection of material might not be explicitly chosen in order to promote a racist message, but the *outcomes* of policy decisions most certainly are racist.

The next part of this chapter will involve firstly presenting the findings from interviews with Kevin, Joanna and Anne to understand their conceptualisations of BHM/BH; their rationale for keeping BH at Limehart Secondary School despite its non-statutory status in wider school and within national policy; and, their rationale for approaching BH with ostensibly empathetic performances for social cohesion and anti-racism.

I then move onto presenting and analysing the findings from Key Stage 3 students to understand what they perceive to be the purpose of BH. I end by presenting and analysing findings from interviews with African and Caribbean students, whose attitudes and behavioural approaches were supported in this section, by using du Bois' concept of the double consciousness.

Part 2: Interview Data

The second part of this chapter is split into two parts. Firstly, I will thematically outline interview data with KS3 history teachers, Kevin, Joanna and Anne. Later, I will thematically outline interview data with the 25 KS3 students that participated, including boys and girls of African and Caribbean descent. The data was obtained during November 2014 and the CRT concepts that I draw on in the second part of this chapter are: a critique of liberalism and centring the experiences of those who face various acts of marginality, by recognising the value of illuminating racist practices from the perspective of Black students. The critique of liberalism from a critical race perspective could be applied to interviews with students and their teacher, but with Kevin, Joanna and Anne, their historical experience of White racial priming meant that they saw liberalism as an *attack on White people*. Contrastingly, Black students' experience of a double consciousness meant that their understandings of liberalism were dominated by viewing it as encroaching on difference and the right to self-determination.

There were three White history teachers at Limehart Secondary School: an English male who was in charge of History (Kevin); a Scottish female (Joanna) and an English female

student teacher (Anne), who secured a permanent position post-teacher training in 2015. I interviewed them in November 2015 in their classrooms. My interview questions were centred around the following points: how they conceptualised BHM/BH which would support my inference based on their attitudes and approaches to teaching BH; why they based the teaching of BHM/BH on empathy and corresponding performances for antiracism and social cohesion; their reflections on the revisions to the KS3 history curriculum and what they felt the impact of the revisions might be on anti-racism and social cohesion in English schools. The emerging themes from their responses suggest a critique of liberalism for being too inclusive *at the expense of White people*; that Black History suffers from external rather than individual and systemic limitations and as such, lack of time, knowledge, resources and teacher agency are to blame for parochial and repetitive approaches to BH. Consequently, there are *protected* histories that will take precedence to BH, creating a hierarchical and racialised understanding of BH by students and teachers. Pedagogical approaches reflect this hierarchical and racialised understanding of history so that protected histories could be sensitively taught in ways that BH would not be.

KS3 history Teachers: Kevin, Joanna and Anne

1. Conceptualisations of Black History Month/Black History

The teachers' conceptualisations of the purpose of BHM/BH supported their attitudes and behavioural approaches to teaching elements of it. The overriding message from Kevin, Joanna and Anne is that there is an ostensibly distinct essence that makes BH distinguishable from normative (White) history.

Joanna: "[I think of] education, learning, 1960s, for me, mostly 1960s, civil rights movement, Black Panthers, although that might just be because I saw the kids doing their lesson."

Kevin: "Diversity. Part of the whole. Knowledge. Understanding. Where possible something like empathy...a lot of Black History is *different* cultures and *different* beliefs so it's to understand those and quite often it's difficult to appreciate where people have come from. Let's say to know where you're going, you've got to know where you come from and to empathise as such to people with *different* beliefs and *different* outlooks on life."

Anne: "Well, civil rights, slavery, I think some more traditional African history should be there but I don't know if it is...Music, I think you can look at it from many angles, really."

Their assertions are that Black people are associated - by their nature - with victimhood and oppression. Based on these assertions, all teachers felt that in order to be anti-racist and socially cohesive (by providing inter-cultural *understanding*), BH would take this direction. However, Anne even admits that this view is too simplistic, she states,

Anne: "I think people often focus too much on the – not just with Black history, with all kinds of, like, persecution, like the same (pauses) I went to a Jewish school where the Jewish history, a lot of the focus is on persecution not on positive contributions."

They were unaware of their interest convergent relationship with BH but it was clear that their approach was indicative of their historical experience of racial priming. Before understanding why empathy was used - as I observed, it reinforced Whiteness - it was important to understand why BH was kept *in the first instance*: the purpose of teaching BH at Limehart Secondary School. I asked all three teachers their rationale for keeping BH at their school despite there being no statutory requirement, nor was there a BH co-ordinator at the school, in the same way as there was someone coordinating events the year before I arrived. I was told that the encroachment of multiculturalism - that is, the acceptability of multiculturalism and inclusivity in schools - meant that they are almost compelled to teach BH:

> Joanna: "Yes, coming from a Scottish person – [White history is] overdone, and underdone at the same time because I think perhaps we shy away from looking at our own culture, or my own culture, for instance, because I want to tick all the boxes and make sure that I'm not offending anyone, if that makes any sense."

However, Anne did recognise this approach too often resulted in negative approaches to BHM/BH:

> Anne: "I think it's – I can obviously see the point in having it but at the same time, it's, again, it does focus a lot on the, kind of, persecution, which of course is important that people know about, but I think it could be done in a more positive way and a more celebratory way rather than just look at all these terrible things that happened to these people and, you know, I know there is stuff like civil rights that shows all the good stuff

that happened as well, but I still think it's done in quite a negative way and it could be more positive."

I was given the impression from all except Anna that White history was under attack as a consequence of general adherence of schools to equal opportunities and antiracism (however ill-defined). Their critique of liberalism was inverted from the typical critiques offered by CRT scholars who suggest liberal values such as equality of opportunity and meritocracy have White beneficiaries (see Calmore, 1992; Delgado, 2003; Solórzano, 1997; Yosso et al., 2009). Rather than liberalism being exclusive of minorities because it is underpinned by Whiteness, White teachers expressed that in order to be inclusive, White people and their histories were undergoing a period of erasure:

Kevin's interview

Researcher: "Schools don't ever say, now we're having White week. Now we're having White History Month...Why?"

Kevin: "Yes. That's… that is a very, very difficult question and I think, to be honest, I think if a school actually did say we're having White history this, then I think there would be very bad publicity."

Researcher: "Really?"

Kevin: "The more… the way things are… the way things are at the moment, this is why I believe that because with a rise of extremism, if you were to do that, then it would *open more cans of worms* than the school would really want, so I'm sure that they would do it covertly. They wouldn't advertise it as such, because I can see that there would be problems with it."

Joanna's interview

Researcher: "You feel like you're treading carefully?"

Joanna: "Treading carefully, yes. I want to just, I think, because I'm a Scottish person in England, I'm multicultural and I'm the diversity in this area but for instance, when I was back in Scotland, everything was White, everyone was White in the towns that I worked in and, like, we looked at our own history, which was extremely White, and we didn't really look at anyone else's. We looked at slavery but not very much and for me, it's very different from down here, so much more diverse, but my experience in Scotland is overdone but *down here is underdone*."

Researcher: "That's interesting, so you would say that…"[interrupts]

Joanna: "For White history, I mean."

Frankenberg's (1993) and Bell's (1992) research into some of the defining characteristics of Whiteness reveals that when Whites are confronted with their privileged position, they deny it, become angry or highlight minority examples in which liberalism has supposedly accommodated special pleading for non-White groups. I explained to them that I observed a lot of emphasis for BH was placed upon the topic of slavery and portraying victimhood, and I wanted to understand why that was the case and why other elements of BH were not taught. I suggest their responses to my questions are institutional 'speak' as a form of 'White terror' (hooks, [1992] 2015) as they pointed to the influence of institutional (school) and macro (national policy) constraints on their engagements with BH. Specifically, a lack of time, resources, knowledge and teacher agency impacted upon their parochial pedagogical decisions. These micro, institutional and macro constraints had a terrorising effect on Black students. I was told:

Time

Kevin: "We could do with more time, which would then allow us, right, this is the popular perception of Africa. However, what is Africa like. Now you can go to some cities in Africa and they're the most westernised cities in the world. You can go to some cities in Africa that are literally two dirt tracks that, shanty towns and I think that's what we have to try to do. We have to try to separate so that we don't stereotype and again, the number of… we last year, I don't whether they still do it in Geography, because I taught Geography last year, last year we actually did a unit of work on Africa and one of the key things we had to get over, is Africa is not a country."

Agency

Anne: "I think it really does depend on the school and the department and the person that you're working with as well, so at this point I'd probably say no. I don't have much say in what I do."

Researcher: "Can you remember, and that bit was, kind of, cut out and why was that?"

Anne: "Well, they were supposed to do – they're supposed to do abolition and then that focuses a lot on Britain, which they should have done but I think that was when I was off."

Researcher: "Okay, or British involvement in the slave trade before abolition?"

Anne: "Yes, I think there was supposed to be a bit on that. I'm not too sure; I think that was when I was off, so maybe it got skipped over because there was so many supply teachers and things but I think they were supposed to cover that."

Resources

Researcher: "Okay, so talk me through the assessment and criteria for the Black history unit."

Joanna: "Well, now you're asking!" (She exhales loudly)

Researcher: "That you planned on having."

Joanna: "That we planned on having, that we couldn't find, that they had done. The students were – I think their assessment was the Middle Passage, the experiences of the Middle Passage, and we also did another little mini assessment because we couldn't find the ones they had done, which was again about the Middle Passage, and for me it was too constricted. It was too, just middle class. It was just, you've done nine weeks of learning, but we're only going to test you on two weeks' worth in the middle. I mean, I suppose assessment for learning is more about a variety of different assessment types but then just the Middle Passage...I mean, I have no idea about the assessment criteria because I didn't get to see the assessment."

Knowledge

Anne: "I think people just look at – I don't want to say lazy, but I think because there's certain resources that have, you know, there's so many resources on slavery so it's easier to build up, you know, a scheme of work on that than it is… you'd have to start from scratch and you'd have to put a lot more time and work in and teachers are already concentrating on the time as it is. So I think you'd have to put so much more work and effort in to putting together something that they hadn't really done before, but that's why, for me – because I'm a student, a lot of history that's on the curriculum aren't the strong areas. Most of the things that I did at degree level aren't really things I'll be

teaching so most of the things that I have to do anyway I have to start from scratch, so for me, I would be quite interested in if that was an option, if that was given to me as, why don't you try and look at this, you know, like Black people in Britain or pre-slavery Black African history or Caribbean history, because I know a little bit about when Columbus first went to the West Indies and the reaction that the natives there, I suppose, so I could draw on that. But yes, then again, even when I am preparing resources, even when it's something I don't know about, if you go online and look at everything, it's all driven towards civil rights and slavery so you would have to – I mean, there's templates there you can use of different things you can do on those topics whereas you would have to really start from scratch with the other things."

I wanted to understand further, the rationale for an approach to BH based upon empathy. What was the significance of empathy? Was this a feature used in other history units?

2. Performance

Kevin: "A lot of the… a lot of the children in the school are very good verbal and artistically but because a lot of them English is the second language and they're not specifically gifted in expressing those things in writing, it gives them that opportunity to do it so it gives everybody an opportunity."

Joanne: "I think – well, when the other teacher wrote it, the senior teacher who wrote the course, I think it was to try and be a bit more empathetic, to try and show understanding, to show a bit more understanding and just to make it a bit more realistic for the students because you learn a lot more by doing so the students can then put

themselves actually in the place of slavers and children watching their parents be auctioned off and, you know, things like that, and buyers. I think that's probably why we did it. I mean, for me, I didn't actually get that whole section. That was – this is because I only get a little half of the time so that I – I've, like, discussed why they might have done it, pure conjecture."

Asking students to perform slave auctions, life on a plantation and Middle Passage, was utilised to ostensibly strengthen empathetic feelings amongst peers with the ultimate aim of them recognising the importance of antiracism and social cohesion. Why was this incorporated? What did Kevin, Joanna and Anne see as the value of doing this? If there was a ⅔ majority acceptance that the use of performances was ineffective and even insensitive, why did they persist with this?

Researcher: "So do you think there are some things, just like slavery, just like the Holocaust, that you can learn about and you can appreciate how bad it is but you don't need to act it out to know how bad it is?"

Joanne: "I think if it was sympathy, it would be condescending. I think having the empathy is perhaps we're maybe taking the SMSC, which is the social, moral, spiritual and cultural – SMSC, I think we're taking the link for that for the empathetic, like, getting our students to be more than just books on legs, or trying to make our students feel how others feel and again, it's to try and make sure that it doesn't happen again. That's my personal view. I just think that that's why it could be, and sympathy is condescending – that's really sad, and, yes, it's really sad but how do you think they felt?"

The findings suggest that teachers at Limehart Secondary School, despite their diverse student cohort, reflected the institutional culture of Whiteness in a variety of ways. As mentioned previously, I characterise one particular theme emerging from interviews with White history teachers as 'institutional speak as a form of White terror'. These set of speech acts were justifications for why they conceptualised and approached BH in parochial ways, but in doing so, pointed to deficiencies at institutional and national policy level that impacted upon their practice. Indeed, a lack of statutorily ensuring teachers – at teacher training stage and throughout their careers - are equipped with the knowledge and tools for teaching for a multicultural society, and that their practice is anti-racist and sensitively taught, has implications on their capacity to teach diverse knowledge and students.

I draw upon hooks' ([1992] 2015) concept of 'White terror' to analyse how this institutional 'speak' continues to negatively impact on the experiences of history by students of African and Caribbean descent. Whiteness underpins the teaching of BH at Limehart Secondary School and this is reflected by history teachers' narrow conceptualisation of BH: to default the ostensibly homogenous experiences of Black peoples to slavery and then abolition, owing to lack of time, resources, knowledge and agency. These factors are acts of 'White terror;' therefore "it is useful, when theorizing Black experience, to examine the way the concept of "terror" is linked to representations of Whiteness" (2015:174). So what exactly is 'White terror'? hooks argues

> To name that Whiteness in the black imagination is often a representation of terror. One must face written histories that erase and deny, that reinvent the past to make the present vision of racial harmony and pluralism more plausible (hooks [1992] 2015:172).

McLaren explains the consequences of not engaging with specificities of Whiteness means "the supposed neutrality of White culture enables it to manipulate the other but not see this otherness as a White tool of exploitation. Whiteness does not exist outside of culture but constitutes the prevailing social texts in which social norms are made and remade" (1995:50). To point to institutional and national policy constraints such as a lack of time, resources, knowledge or agency, Kevin, Joanna and Anne provides signifiers of what institutional Whiteness does or rather does *not* value. There is the underlying assertion that teachers could avoid being directly complicit in the negative experiences of history by students of African and Caribbean descent and therefore Kevin, Joanna and Anne believe they are speaking neutrally. However as McLaren shows, "rhetoric and grammar always intersect in particular ideological formations which makes language unavoidably a social relation. And every social relation is a structurally located one that can *never be situated outside of relations of power*" (1995:50, italics my emphasis). Institutional non-commitment to BH has a profound impact on teachers' approaches of BH. It is important to stress this institutional 'speak' is not only specific to White people; minority teachers can operate within this language too and Ahmed (2007) suggests this is because

> Becoming a 'part' of an institution, which we can consider the demand to share in it, or even have a share of it, hence requires not only that one inhabits its buildings, but also that we follow its line (p.158).

Institutions have a culture: a dominant meaning system, which is deeply embedded within the ideology of Western imperialism and patriarchy (McLaren, 1995). Schools *institutionalise* Whiteness that is, to embed its normative values, unequal power relations and privileges within all areas of the school environment, including the curriculum. They institutionalise Whiteness by not interrogating what White culture or identity is – accepting rather, its universal applicability of its properties; as Dyer suggests, being simultaneously everything and nothing (1997). History (read: White history) is just history until the normative label comes into contact with difference; then you end up with a clear demarcation of that which is not history: Black History. The effects of this are to normalise and naturalise the existence of Whiteness and use as the marker with which difference is judged and 'othered'. For schools to demonstrate 'inclusivity' they do this by bringing non-*White* groups and histories *within* the wider culture of institutional Whiteness, so that BH is afford its own module and 'special' events because of its perceived difference, but White history has the benefit of universality. McLaren suggests, "perhaps White culture's most formidable attribute is its ability to mask itself as a category" (1995:52). I quote Ahmed's work at length because of its importance in supporting my suggestion that the history teachers reflect and are reflecting institutional Whiteness, which continues to negatively impact – through decision-making, language and actions – Black students:

> Spaces are orientated 'around' Whiteness, insofar as Whiteness is not seen. We do not face Whiteness; it 'trails behind' bodies, as what is assumed to be given. The effect of this 'around Whiteness' is the institutionalization of a certain 'likeness', which makes non-White bodies feel uncomfortable, exposed, visible, different, when they take up this

space. The institutionalization of Whiteness involves work: the institution comes to have a body as an effect of this work. (Ahmed, 2007:pp.157-158).

3. The future for the KS3 history curriculum

I asked all teachers to reflect on the KS3 history revisions and its intended purpose to have a unified identity that provides all students the opportunity to identify with Britishness and understand 'our' nation's past. How did they perceive this attempt? What did they believe students should come to expect from the revisions? What might be the impact on social cohesion and antiracism as a result of these revisions? Their responses suggest that attempts to coalesce students around an ostensibly colourblind identity is problematic though none of them explained they would attempt to counter this narrative. Joanna and Anne explained that policies underpinned by aggressive marjoritarianism (Gillborn, 2008) would be difficult to achieve in modern day, multicultural classrooms. Kevin, however, attributed the lack of applicability to classrooms to the students who were still held back by their own minority cultures.

Kevin's interview

Kevin: "It's one of these things that, in an ideal world, it would be wonderful. But I think we have to be very realistic about this. We have to… it's not going to be a quick fix. It is not going to work. This is my personal view, necessarily with this generation."

"But what it is doing, you are *sowing seeds that will start to grow* and it will start to build up so that if we can make inroads into this generation, then they… we can make

inroads into the second generation with what this generation have, a bit like sort of like the, you know, the third generation in [Northern town], for a fact I know there was a lot of third-generation who do not consider themselves to be Asians. They are British because they're third generation and we used to find that when I lived around there that these people, they were British. And they all spoke with a very, very strong [Northern town] accent and they would go to their place of worship or whatever and they would come out and, "what did I do that for"? To keep my mum and dad happy."

"So they are now the ones who are now becoming this generation of transition from the old to the new. And I think we just need to get into those, the next generation and especially in the fact that we seem to be having a lot of and I mentioned the demographics of this school, and we see lots of Somalis coming in, a lot of other people coming in."

"They have… they don't have that background base of their parents being taught British values, whatever that is. Their grandparents. Whereas in the older… in the old mill town areas, their great-grandparents were the first ones to come across, so they picked up some of the British ideals and they passed it on and so on and so on, so I think it is a *generational thing and it is going to take a long time*. I really don't think there's a quick fix."

"And it was the same go back quite a few years ago when there were good cricketers, when the West-Indies played. You would be amazed how many people suddenly became West-Indian again. Because the West-Indies were being very good at cricket so

there… they fought for years to be accepted as British, and then because there's a cricket match, it sets them back numerous years."

Drawing upon the work of Perry (2001) Kevin's response could be the result of seeing White people as cultureless, and Black people still held back by their cultural traditions. Perry argues,"culturelessness can serve, even unintentionally, as a measure of White racial superiority. It suggests that one is either "normal" and "simply human" (therefore, the standard to which others should strive) or beyond culture or "postcultural" (therefore, developmentally advanced)" (p.59). Part of understanding White privilege is uncovering the White racial privileges accrued by the construction of a curriculum designed to privilege White *cultures*, to expose that history is not *just history,* but rather, the manifestation of a White supremacist text. Joanna and Anne's interview excerpts will be placed together because they share a similar understanding about the problems of attempting to create a colourblind identity for all to share.

Joanna's interview

Joanna: "I think, like, it sends, you don't belong here, like this isn't your country. You came here and we let you in, and it is very much a case of, you know, those posters on the side of Conservative vans – go home, you know; illegal immigrants go home, that kind of stuff. So it's, kind of, the idea of if you don't like it, you shouldn't be here."

Joanna: "It's if you come to Britain, you've got to be British. You've got to abandon everything else you want because I know there's racism in this country where they try to talk about sharia law and people instantly get their backs up because it's not British. Even though these people, these Muslims are British Muslims, they don't like it because

it's not traditionally British, so I think British traditions in modern day multicultural Britain don't exist anymore, or shouldn't exist anymore because they're backwards in my opinion."

Researcher: "Okay, what sort of traditions?"

Joanna: "Messages, the messages that I get from the government and the media is if you come here, you've got to act like us and if you don't act like us, don't bother coming here."

Anne's interview

Anne: "Well, I think it's a bit – his idea of Britishness might be completely different to, you know, a pupil at Limehart School's idea of Britishness. He comes from such a limited kind of, you know – he's from a very upper class White English background, where he went to a public school so his idea of Britishness would be very different to my idea of Britishness or your idea of Britishness. So I think it's quite difficult to categorise it; I think you can't really say what Britishness is. I think Britishness is about multiculturalism and, you know, how many people could say that they truly are English that live in England, if you want to trace it all the way back to the Anglo Saxons, or even before that, if you want to trace it back and say, yes."

Researcher: "So it's a bit narrow, do you think?"

Anne: "Yes, I think it's a bit narrow. That's what I'm trying to say."

[Later when asked about the Baccalaureate they offer which engages with themes of identity, social cohesion and antiracism, I asked whether it was doing the job of History]

Anne: "Well, you'd hope that they all do [the baccalaureate], so you'd hope they'd all link it in but then it's not explicitly – you're right. It isn't explicitly in history that we have to teach that…I think there should be, really, because, you know, it's – I think you have to pitch history, especially, well, in any school, really. You have to make it relatable, so you have to know who it is that you're working with, so if you're in a really middle class, kind of, school with most predominantly White children, you have to know how to pitch it to them. But then you have to know how to make it relatable to everybody, you know, so I think that you have to be aware of diversity anyway. Even if you're not teaching it, you have to tailor what you are teaching to the diversity that's around you, I suppose."

Despite an awareness that attempts to understand 'our' nation's past through the KS3 revisions, is fraught with racialised consequences for Black students, and the impact could be that minority students feel they do not belong to Britain. Clearly, the KS3 history curriculum as a site of antiracism, equal opportunity and social cohesion is a myth because it privileges White interests even within a unit designed to incorporate diversity. I asked them why the topic of 'race' was notably absent from the BH unit and topic of enslavement and indicate their responses grouped below.

Kevin's interview

Kevin: "[Race] is looked at in GCSE more when they're a little bit older and they do look at multiculturalism within RE and again that's a GCSE. I think sometimes it's… it's all well and good approaching these subjects to a young age and I agree that the younger we can start to educate people, the better.

However, we have to be careful of not putting if I use the phrase *"ideas in their head"* that they are not aware of and I do think sometimes that as a nation or as a civilisation we do look at things and say, well, don't do this, but they haven't really thought about it. And if you look at the vast majority of the children walking around the school, race means nothing to them. All they are, is Year 7, 8, 9, 10 or 11."

"You're in this house, that house, so they kind of like use the houses, if I use the phrase *tribal as opposed to race*. So sometimes you… you want to mention it, and you want to make sure that they know why we don't, but then are you putting the idea in their head that's not there in the first place. So again, *you've got to tread carefully*."

Joanna's interview

Joanna: "It's quite nice actually, but I like to – personally I like to try and not stick on the murder and the hatred and the evil because I, as a White person in Britain, start to feel a little bit of guilt, thinking, yes, my country did this, and as a Glaswegian, I feel guilt as well. It's always at the back of your head and you go past a sugar mill in Glasgow or, like, the docks and think, hang on."

"I think, for me personally, I think it's good that students know about it so it doesn't happen again or, you know, it's just like we teach the Holocaust so it doesn't happen again and the students here are quite good at picking up on that. They know that we learn about these things so we don't repeat our actions. Part of me feels also very guilty. I think the students sometimes can feel a bit of guilt when they realise that Britain was built off the back of slaves vicariously. I know Glasgow was built off the back of slaves, which can often, when you tell students in Glasgow that their city has developed and

thrived because of the slavery trade, they don't quite get it. They don't quite realise how bad it could have been, you know, or how bad it was. I think a little bit is about guilt, a little bit about – obviously a lot of it's about not repeating your mistakes, but a lot about just acknowledging that, yes, it happened. You can't forget; it's like Holocaust deniers, you can't deny slavery, like – it happened, you know. People did it; Britain did it; we have to still get over that. I suppose it's, kind of like, penance almost that we teach about Black history so that we can – it's like, personally, I feel it's like personal punishment. We did this so we have to make sure that people know our shame, does that make sense?"

Anne's interview

Anne: "Yes, I do find that when I'm – because obviously I've come out of doing things at degree level, where everything is a lot more, you can go on tangents with things and you can explore things in a depth where nothing is categorised completely because there's so many grey areas, whereas you get to this point now where you have to say, this is what it is, this is what this certain portion of history is, whereas there should be so much more debate about it, really, and I think that if you are teaching history, history's not just what happened, it's a discipline and part of that discipline is talking about, is that the only way to look at it."

Their responses strengthen my observational findings in part 1: simultaneously engaging and disengaging with BH in a variety of ways secured racialised White beneficiaries. For Kevin, antiracism and social cohesion can be achieved though the history curriculum by *actively ignoring race* as he perceived his students to be race ignorant, and unaware of the effects of race. Rather, Gove's aim to unite students under a common British identity

should be engaged with, but will take time due to (minority) inter-generational challenges. For Joanna, BH could be used to ultimately achieve antiracism and social cohesion by focussing firstly on the perils of segregation, the horrors of overt anti-Black racism and discrimination and then, the successes in terms of freedom and equality gained under the US Civil Rights period. The aim for Joanna is to show the positives of integration. Her response also revealed that BH has a *liberatory* function for Whites: enslavement is part of a White person's shame and there is personal penance to be earned from reliving the racism *of the past.* Leonardo explains, "White guilt blocks critical reflection because Whites end up feeling individually blameworthy for racism. In fact, they become overly concerned with whether or not they "look racist" and forsake the more central project of understanding the contours of structural racism" (2009:pp.78-79). By disengaging with discussions of race, Joanna engages with the positive aspects of integration by personalising racism, rather than critically engaging with the concept of integration as it pertains to equality of opportunity and antiracism beyond the interpersonal level. For Anne, engaging and disengaging with BH and contentious topics such as race in favour of colourblindness, is the result of institutional constraints at KS3 that stifles opportunities for debates, rather than also the result of an unwillingness to create a 'safe space' (Rollock, 2012) to discuss these issues. Paradoxically, at Limehart Secondary School, there is a unit racialised as BH, separate from the Whiteness-as-normal KS3 history curriculum, with unwillingness amongst teachers to discuss race/racism.

There was a fear amongst teachers that opening up about race and racism would be a difficult topic to manage; however these students were racially aware and these conversations were happening - in and outside the classroom. It was naive to assume students at Limehart do not bring with them, their gendered and racialised experiences to

school and this informs their view of ambitions, failures, contributions and 'fit' in school and wider society. The matter of race having an impact on the type of histories studied and the different pedagogical experiences came up again when I asked about protected histories. There was an indication that the pedagogical strategies, institutional commitment and attitudes towards BH may not have translated in the same ways to other histories and I wanted to learn further about this.

4. Protected histories

Protected histories were another significant finding during interviews with Kevin, Joanna and Anne. Were performances used in the teaching of other histories for impact? If not, why not? I sought to frame my question based upon choosing a topic that is entrenched in the public and political consciousness as a tragic moment in human history. One that resulted in the mass persecution and genocide of a group of individuals, based on their religious identity: The Holocaust.

Joanna's interview

> Joanne: "I think I've never ever taught slavery as an interactive activity, like getting under the tables or playing the music or things like that, but I can see why some people will do to, again, put the students in the place of what it was like. I mean, I've – for me, the *Holocaust is a different kettle of fish*, not worse but different in the fact that, yes – and I'm not belittling the experiences of slaves in the slightest, but they were taken from their homes and they were taken to somewhere else and forced to work whereas the Holocaust was the *mass genocide* of six million people *simply for being*, and there are very similar things where Hitler thought he was better than the Jews. White people

thought they were better than Black people and decided to do something about it. I think that line is very blurred. I wouldn't personally feel comfortable re-enacting a slave auction, re-enacting the Holocaust, re-enacting the ship. I suppose I can see why some teachers would, does that make sense? It sounds quite insensitive but I'm not trying to be insensitive, or I'm saying that slavery wasn't as bad as the Holocaust. *It's more like it's a different horrible, it's a different kind of evil*."

Researcher: "So do you think there are some things, just like slavery, just like the Holocaust, that you can learn about and you can appreciate how bad it is but you don't need to act it out to know how bad it is?"

Joanne: "Yes, I think so. I think there is a line and personally, me, I would feel uncomfortable making students physically, you know – there's getting to understand what it's like or there's visualising it in your head, you know, squishing 40 people in a tiny corner of the classroom or there's, close your eyes, imagine you're in a coffin. That's how much space you would have had. There's ways of doing it, ways and means. I mean, like we got the students to, sort of, have a mini protest about abolition but they were all on the side of the abolitionists so it was different that way, where they all have a common goal of ending slavery and, you know, like they all had, like, yes, we're positive now. I think it came after the negative of, we're in a slave market, you know. That to me, personally, is just – it's gaudy, I suppose, would be the word I would use."

Kevin's interview

Researcher: "So for the Holocaust, will you be having a performance for that?"

Kevin: "What we're actually doing is for the Holocaust, we've been invited to go to a Holocaust memorial day and actually do, I won't say do a performance; do a presentation and some of our Year 11s last year were able to go to the first Memorial Day for Shrevenitza. So they're going to do a presentation on the mothers from Shrevenitza. So we'll do that at, I think it's borough-wide. It's Trafford Council so it's a full thing and they, the council; the people that are organising it are actually quite excited about it."

"As far as within school goes, we will *obviously commemorate* it. In fact, it's 70 years. The 27th of January next year is 70 years, which is quite an important date so we won't necessarily celebrate, which is the wrong word. We will remember or commemorate that and we will something… we will be doing something but at this stage, I don't know what we'll be doing."

Researcher: "Could you do a performance? Because I couldn't imagine this class, because I mean, you know, the tables you had."

Kevin: "Yes."

Researcher: "And you had the students underneath and they had to relay how they felt, being trapped."

Kevin: "Yes."

Researcher: Could you turn it into a gas chamber?

Kevin: "That would be…"

Researcher: "Can you imagine what that would . . ." [interrupted].

Kevin: "*That would be difficult*. We… probably because put about 20 in the little store-room behind you, but, no."

Anne's interview

Researcher: "Do you think that they would have a unit on performing the Holocaust?"

Anne: "Probably not."

Researcher: "Okay, so why is it that they would do performance of Black history but not the Holocaust?"

Anne: "I don't know. I think there's a *lot more of a taboo with the Holocaust*. I don't know why that is."

Researcher: "Because you learn in the books and they know that it's such a horrible thing that happened, that they were rounded up just by being different and, you know, just tortured and that, and they know the horrors of that without having to perform it. But then there's a performance of Black history."

Anne: "Yes, see, I'm not a fan of doing, like – so just from my own experience as a pupil at school, I hated doing anything drama based so I probably wouldn't include that in my own. I mean, it's good for them to do it, I suppose, for certain things, but yes, I was never into that, and also I remember, when I was in school, for part of my English GCSE coursework was to write a Holocaust diary entry of someone in the concentration camp, and I really objected to that. I did do it because I had to pass my coursework but I said, how can I possibly be able to put myself – okay, I can empathise but how can I possibly put myself in that role as somebody in the Holocaust. I think that's insulting to them to do that, so it's the same thing, really."

According to Dyer, The Holocaust reveals to Whites, the extremities of Whiteness as their special virtue – civilisation – resulted in wholesale human destruction (1997). The human eugenics movement created 'very White White' characteristics and thus fractured Whiteness into two parts: extreme Whiteness and ordinary Whiteness. Dyer explains that these two parts coexist where the former is exceptional and excessive, and the latter is non-extreme and plain. The Holocaust is maintained in English schools and the wider political narrative to serve as a distraction to Whites; Dyer explains

> If in certain periods of derangement – the empires at their height, the Fascist eras – White people have seen themselves in these images, they can take comfort from the fact that for the most of the time they haven't. Whites can thus believe that they are nothing in particular, because the White particularities on offer are so obviously not them…The combination of extreme Whiteness with plain, unWhite Whiteness means that White people can both lay claim to the spirit that aspires to the heights of humanity and yet supposedly speak and act disinterestedly as humanity's most average and unremarkable representatives (1997:223).

The Holocaust then occupies a statutory place within the seemingly universal, ordinary and unmarked Whiteness of the history curriculum and can be taught sensitively and with more respect precisely because it is a reminder to *Whites* more than Blacks, about the extremities of Whiteness. Sensitive approaches towards the Holocaust at Limehart Secondary School were further supported by institutional commitment (commemorative days and external networks) and wider national policy support through funding. This is the complete opposite for BH.

Summary of teachers' interviews

The findings provided from Kevin, Joanna and Anne's interviews suggest that they believed BH has a functionalist perspective rather than simply being historically significant. That is, to teach students about the interpersonal racism suffered in the past, to earn penance for Whites' role in enslavement and, to foster social cohesion through empathy. BH or more diverse histories, according to these teachers was the result of encroaching liberalism; namely accommodating wider school values of equal opportunities and antiracism, marginalised White history. Although there was recognition about the difficulty with Gove's 'our island story' narrative because it was underpinned by a turn back to assimilation, the teachers pointed to institutional and national policy constraints inhibiting their capacity to teach more diverse histories. Rather, it was hoped by Anne, that other subjects should plug the gaps missed by history so students would have an opportunity to discuss critical questions. For a unit demarcated by race, discussions about race during BH was notably absent. All teachers avoided engaging in race discussions adhering to colourblindness instead. This sent the message that there are protected histories worthy of being sensitively taught and interviews with teachers indicated this to be the case. The Holocaust was even legitimised institutionally through commemorative events and embedding it statutorily in the curriculum, and also by the Local Authority. Overall, teachers viewed the Holocaust as a different kind of evil, but this type was worthy of serious (and sensitive) enquiry.

KS3 Students

There were two different Year 8 groups and 1 Year 9 group (including the organisers of BHM) that I interviewed in November 2015. A total of 25 students participated in my research and I asked them all to self-define their ethnicities on the recording. I interviewed a mixture of students owing to the demographics of the school, but also interviewed students of African and Caribbean descent separately where possible in order to centre their experiences. I interviewed students in separate classrooms away from teachers to give them the opportunity to speak as freely as they wished without fear of offence or reprisal. During focus groups with all KS3 students, my interview questions centred on the purpose and role of BH in schools; their reflections on the revised KS3 history curriculum and the impact these revisions might have on social cohesion and antiracism.

My questions with African and Caribbean students centred on the following points: how they conceptualised BHM/BH which would support my observations of attitudes and approaches to understanding BH being based upon du Bois' concept of 'double consciousness'; how they experienced the KS3 BH unit based upon empathy and performances for social cohesion and antiracism; their reflections on its revisions and what they felt the impact of the revisions might be on anti-racism and social cohesion in English schools more broadly. The emerging themes from KS3 students' responses suggest a critique of liberalism for being too exclusive in terms of representing the *diverse* histories that comprise the British island story. In so doing, various types of racism – at a micro, institutional and ideological level – are still a feature of a Black child's experience of schooling.

This section is divided into three parts: first, the findings with all KS3 students sheds light on the role of BHM/BH reaffirming Black victimhood and oppression, which indicates race consciousness rather than race ignorance as Kevin believed them to be. Secondly, I centre the experiences of African and Caribbean students, their engagement and disengagement with BH through their reflections on the performances, their views on protected histories and collective agency to determine their own version of BH. Lastly, I will include all KS3 students in an analysis of the consequence of the KS3 history revisions for social cohesion and anti racism more broadly.

The purpose of Black History Month/Black History at Limehart Secondary School

Interviews with teachers suggest that BH had a functionalist role at Limehart Secondary School. I wanted to explore this with students. I started every interview with teachers and students in the same way: asking them to play a game of word association. For example, if I said the word 'tree' they might say 'leaf' or 'branch' so, when I said the words 'Black History' and 'Black History Month,' the responses from the KS3 students (including those of African and Caribbean descent) were as follows:

Class	Black History	White History
Year 9 - Black History Month organisers: Teresa, Maria, Odette and Tony (three Black Caribbean girls and 1 Black Caribbean boy)	"I think of slavery" "Hard times" "I think it's about learning how far we've come" "Black people, [relations] between the Black man and the White man" "Ancestors" "Racism"	"World War" "I think of England…" "Fish and chips" "The Queen and stuff" "Royalty"
Year 8 (Class 1) – Katie, Rebecca (two White girls), Tommy (one White boy), Bushra (one Asian girl), Shona (one Black Caribbean girl), Jessie (one dual heritage girl)	"Slaves" "Slavery" "Tragedy" "Martin Luther King" "African people" "Mistreatment" "Middle Passage" "Unfair"	"Florence Nightingale" "Winston Churchill" "Mankind" "Crimes" "Kings and Queens" "Henry VIII"
Year 8 (Class 2) – Mohit, Kaleem, Ibrahim (three Asian boys), Piryah, Aaliyah (two Asian girls), Keisha (one dual heritage girl)	"A boat" "Nelson Mandela" "Rosa Parks" "Martin Luther King" "Slaves"	"Transatlantic slavery" "A different month" "White people" British wealth" "Owners"
Year 8 (Class 2) – Aaron (one Black Caribbean boy), David (one Black African boy)	"Martin Luther King" "Racism" "Torture" "Slavery" "No freedom"	"British sold the slaves for money and stuff such as sugar…"
Year 9 students who experienced BHM from the organisers – Carmen (one White female), Ming (one mixed girl, Chinese and White), Sanaa (one Iraqi girl), Kyron (one Black Caribbean boy), Charlotte (one dual heritage girl), Simeon (one dual heritage boy), and Ali (one Black African boy)	"Slaves" "Contemporary slavery" "White people" "Oppression" "No civil rights and cultural development" "Segregation" "The time of Nelson Mandela" "Martin Luther King" "Malcolm X"	"War" "Bombs" "Constant conflicts…" "Rude" "Stereotypes" "Lincoln" "John F Kennedy" "Alan Turing"

I asked why they made a distinction between Black and White history and in particular, the former being one of oppression and the latter, of largely celebration and achievement and illustrate a few of their responses below:

Year 9 - Black History Month organisers

> "Because a large part of the Black History is portrayed as slavery and not being given the rights that deserve what a large part of history about like we study in school is and Henry VIII and World War, and how White people were the heroes of the country."

Year 8 (Class 1)

> "Because like if you say what like Black History, then it would so it like it reminds you of the sort of the happened to Blacks in the middle passage and stuff like that and slavery. Like if you say like White history, then like nothing that bad has really happened to like White people."

Year 8 (Class 2) - Two Black boys

> "It's because they've been killed, thrown overboard, whipped, and not in a good environment. They've been basically put in prison nearly all their lives."

Year 8 (Class 2)

> "Because they [teachers] think everyone [who is White] is successful."

Year 9 students who experienced BHM from the organisers - mixed ethnicity and gender interview group

"…I think there's more [to Black History]. It's just no one talks about it."

The findings suggest that they view the role of BH through the lens of White racial ideologies: that is, they showed race consciousness (Omi and Winant, 2015) having an effect on the life experiences of Black peoples. Rather than race ignorant as Kevin suggested, all students demonstrated a racialised, hierarchical understanding of history, countering the established myth of colourblindness within 'our island story.' Not only did students convey the binary of White superiority and Black inferiority, but some also indicated that this was dependent upon each other; for example, "constant conflicts" for White history is dependent upon "White oppression" and "oppression" for Black History. For a unit entitled BH, it is important now to turn to the experiences and reflections provided by those whose (singular) history it purports to represent: African and Caribbean students.

Counter-narratives with students of African and Caribbean descent

In the ethnographic section with Black students, I drew upon du Bois's concept of double consciousness to explain that Black students engaged with BH through participating in slave trading and life on plantation performances, demonstrating they were looking at themselves through the lens of White racism. Black students disengaged with BH using avoidant techniques in the classroom to counter the effects of these performances and some

Year 9 students even took it upon themselves to teach their own BH classes. I wanted to explore their rationale for this further.

1. Performance

In light of their responses indicating race consciousness what is less understood is how African and Caribbean students experienced BH. In particular, the integral part of the unit was developing empathy through slave trading and life on plantation performances. Students were to imagine how they would feel being a slave in that scenario. So I asked Black students to reflect on their experiences of the performances.

Year 8 (Class 1)

> Shona (BCG): "And it's like when you're acting out, you're only like acting out like in front of your teachers and then you could just hear of the music that would actually have been there and knowing that you're only acting it out and it's actually like 10 times worse than you think."
>
> Jessie (dual heritage girl): "It's kind of… it's kind of… I like to learn about Black History but when it comes to actually acting out I find it quite…Quite distressing like I like to learn about it because it's good to know what our past was like, it's quite distressing because it's just quite strange."

Year 8 (Class 2) - Two Black boys

I asked the boys about the appropriateness of the performance for impact and whether it is a tool that should be used again:

David (BAB): “Yes, if people have to find out the truth, yes, but the thing is, I don't want people laughing, because if it was them in that position, they would not be laughing, they would be crying their eyes out.”

Aaron (BCB): “Oh, right, that. I think that wasn't bad, actually, like if they just stopped the joking around. They don't really have to change anything about the performance, but they just like, stop making jokes and see the seriousness of why we were doing it, and if they would just like… All the stuff we were using, if like, the rulers for whips and that remote for that thing where you burn them…”

Researcher: “The branding?”

Aaron: “Yes. If you actually place in your head the actual pictures, they're not going to be laughing.”

Year 8 (Class 2)

Keisha (dual heritage girl): “And while we were doing it, everyone was like arguing because we didn’t want to be slaves. So people didn’t want to be the owner and stuff.”

Researcher: But how did you feel doing it? Acting it out.

Keisha: I didn’t really want to do it.

Researcher: Yes, I remember that. What was it that you didn’t want to do? I know you didn’t want to act it out, but what?

Keisha: “I didn’t want to be a slave because it was like just… because like...It’s frustrating. We didn’t want to act [interrupted]. . .”

I then explained to the Year 9 group about the performances I observed for BHM/BH with the Year 8 groups, and I wanted them to reflect on their school's interpretation of BH. The next 15 minutes of the interview, the students sat in disbelief, expressed anger, interrogated me about which teacher it may have been - though I did not divulge this - and told me a story about a Black teacher who was 'loved by all races' but left because of the alleged racism he faced by his colleagues. Here are a few of their responses:

Maria (BCG): "That's not right"

Teresa (BCG): "First of all, why they say scruffy clothes. This school [interrupted]…we didn't have scruffy clothes at all, so why can't you say do it in your school uniform or, like, is the school uniform not good enough?"

Odette (BCG): "I'm shocked and I'm annoyed. I'm upset at the same time because how can you say bring your scruffy clothes."

Tony (BCB): "Tell me, tell me what is what is slave music?"

Maria (BCG): "A whip?"

Tony (BCB): "I want to know what slave music is"

Teresa (BCG): "Miss, was this lesson done when you were in the room?

"Is this real?"

Teresa: "I'm shocked."

Odette (BCG): "Upset."

Maria (BCG): "Do you know what they're doing is, they're [teachers] taking the mick."

Their responses lend support to Pierce's concept of Mundane Extreme Environmental Stress (MEES) (1975a). *Mundane* because BH is taught through the lens of White racism:

being authentically Black means playing the role of the inferior, docile and subhuman slave and with various types of conscious and unconscious racism that I observed, the consequences are also extreme. *Extreme* refers to the psychological consequences of the performances and this includes not wanting to associate oneself with being Black as indicated by Keisha (dual heritage girl) in one class; or finding it distressing as indicated by Jessie (dual heritage girl) in another, or really considering the impact and wanting to cry according to David (Black African boy). The *environment* also contributes to stress and the use of the physical environment is evidence of this: Aaron (Black Caribbean boy) explained that they used rulers as a prop for whips and branding equipment, and I observed Kevin asking students to lay under the table to get a sense of being trapped on-board a slave ship on the Middle Passage.

The "multisensory experience" Joanna and Anne wanted to create with "slave music" and the use of the Drama Hall, the physical space became a hostile environment for Black children. Lastly, *stressful* is the result of re-enacting something that can never be re-enacted. There are sensitive and respectful ways to teach BH that could explain enslavement (amongst other histories), and the continuing impact of this, that does not involve performing oppression. I wanted to explore this idea further and so chose a topic that is similar in severity to enslavement: The Holocaust. I wanted Black students to consider whether empathy could be utilised in the same way for the teaching of The Holocaust.

2. Protected histories

Protected histories were another significant finding during focus groups with Black students. As the findings suggest, they had a clear understanding of a racialised, and hierarchical approach to teaching history; consequently they came to expect different pedagogical experiences to reflect this. In the same way that I sought to investigate this further with Kevin, Joanna, and Anne, I sought to frame my question based upon a topic that is entrenched in the public and political consciousness as a tragic moment in human history, resulting in the mass persecution and genocide of a group of individuals, based on their religious identity: The Holocaust. *All students agreed that teachers at Limehart Secondary School would not ask them to perform the Holocaust for social cohesion and antiracism, in the same way BH was approached.* However, I wanted to centre the analysis around students of African and Caribbean descent as often they played the role of slaves or overseers. I include their responses below:

<u>Year 8 (Class 1)</u>

There was a resounding and firm, 'No!' from all students, when I asked whether the teachers would set the class up to resemble a gas chamber in the same way teachers asked them to lie under tables and pretend they were on a ship on the Middle Passage.

> Shona (BCG): "It's like it's easier to do for slavery because it's just like you just say "you stand there and whip someone" and then someone has to tell you off. But with the Holocaust, it was like, not more complicated like there's stuff that, there's stuff that you wouldn't be, you won't be able to act out as part of Holocaust."

Year 8 (Class 2) - Two Black boys

David (BAB): "I think the Holocaust and the thing is actually the same, because they were being racist to Jews, and in Black History Month, they were being racist to Blacks. It's just basically the same thing, but it's just a bit different, because they were just killed straight away, and the slaves, they were tortured and worked to death."

Aaron (BCB): "Well, I don't think they'd act out the Holocaust, because… I'm not really sure, actually. I just generally don't think they would act it out. *I bet we'd still learn about it*, but acting things like that [performances], I don't think they'd be done."

Year 9 - Black History Month organisers

Maria (BCG): "All we learn about is slavery and that's all about it, it's slavery and it's not all about that."

Odette (BCG): "And even when we were in Year 7 they did in Project 7 we did slavery and like we did it like twice in a row, the same video about the slave trade!"

Teresa (BCG): "Because I think when they say sometimes I feel that when they say Black people their [teachers] first word that come into their head is slaves. Because our ancestors were slaves but it's not all about Africa. There are different continents."

Their responses suggest a critique of the Fundamental British Values promoted in English schools because White racial ideologies of White superiority and Black inferiority guide the structural and pedagogical processes for BH and the wider history curriculum. Therefore, their responses strengthen Leonardo's assertion that White supremacy refers to

direct processes that secure domination and the privileges associated with it (2009). With the Year 9 students, although they did not participate in the performances, I asked why they thought teachers would not use performances for the teaching of the Holocaust:

Year 9 - Black History Month organisers

> Teresa (BCG): "Because they're too afraid. Because… because I think that we've learned so much about the Holocaust in our history lessons, and they're portraying it so bad and so evil and there's… but then… but when we think of the slavery, they would think, they would teach us, oh, it's just culture, it's just, you know, but they shouldn't… they shouldn't think of two events in history that are very similar because evil did happen and suffering did happen but they treat one differently because it's… because they're too scared, because they're too scared of seeing how the reaction would be."

Their responses suggest that racialised White histories are privileged at the expense of Black History. Concerns about White disapproval, parallels Gillborn's characterisation of policy-making in Britain being a form of 'aggressive majoritarianism' (2008) in which anything that meets White disapproval, is marginalised and excluded. Black students recognised that the history curriculum is laden with White privilege and so for Black History, a few students decided to disengage formally (rather than behaviourally as I observed) by teaching their own history classes. It is to this that I now turn.

Disengagement - reconciling Blackness with Britishness by accepting both as valuable

I draw upon du Bois's concept of the double consciousness to analyse the ways in which some Black students took it upon themselves to formally disengage with BH at Limehart Secondary School and instead, recreate it in their own likeness. Put another way, the victim-centred narrative and repetitive processes involved in teaching BH since Year 7 (same videos, same worksheets, same assessments) meant that by Year 9, some students decided to take matters into their own hands and resist this narrative from the margins. I say from the margins because there was no school-wide focus for BH since the BH co-ordinator role had disappeared and as such, it was up to individual teachers to 'put something on' if they wished as was explained to me by the Head of Humanities. I sat with the Year 9s and wanted to understand their rationale for this and how they went about recreating their own version of BH for their peers.

3. Black students' agency to teach Black History

I asked the students to explain to me exactly how it came about that they had organised their own classes for BHM.

<u>Year 9 - Black History Month organisers</u>

> Teresa (BCG): "From the start, I went to my teacher, [Jack], to say, to ask if we could, if me and Odette could do a presentation and there were members, Tony and Maria had a huge impact on Black History because they have a strong like a hobby. So that's when we made up the decision to teach them a little but I think we could have done more if

we had more lessons but the problem was we couldn't come out of our compulsory lessons."

Tony (BCB): "And I think she got the idea when her brother one day was like talking to her about Black History or he showed her this movie and then she came and started speaking to all of us about it and then Black History month came."

Researcher: "What was it?"

Odette (BCG): "The Black Panther Party for Self-Defence. We taught that to the Year 9s."

Researcher: "Was it just one lesson?"

Odette: "Yes."

Tony (BCB): "It was *meant* to be two, but one… but I'm not sure the reason why they… one of them got cancelled because they [teachers] hadn't planned the lesson right, like the time but we was all prepared to teach but *they* didn't get the slot or the time right for us."

Researcher: "Right, okay. So you talked about Black Panthers?"

Tony: :Yes, it took two lessons."

Researcher: "Two lessons. How did you find it?"

Maria (BCG): "It was good. I thought everyone was like positive about what we were saying and I don't think anyone had anything negative to say like when we had like a couple feedback after… a couple of people gave us feedback after it, like some of my

friends, like, oh, that's good, [names the organisers] did really well, people saying like we were good so I think it made the impact."

Tony (BCB): "And the teachers were glad that we taught it because some teachers felt like it should… it needed to be taught rather than it just not having anything to… only being optional so they were glad that we taught it, so."

Researcher: "Anything else to add?"

Odette (BCG): "Oh. When we talked I think the class behaved well, compared to a normal lesson because if you go back to our lesson now, there are Black History lesson would have been better behaved students because I think like they really were interested in the topic instead of like how we just have to learn subjects."

Year 8 (Class 2) - Two Black boys

I then asked the Year 8 Black boys to reflect on why they believed the Year 9s were taking matters into their own hands:

Aaron (BCB): "I remember, because in like… I was with them when we was doing a reggae band, and a lot of them were like, sir, we don't really have any like, stuff for Black people, especially with the music and stuff, because we had Diwali and we had the Indian music and they had some English music and stuff, but they're like, you don't have anything for Black people, so we started the reggae band, which is like, a lot of Black people that sing the music."

The students had set up their own BHM - resisting at the margins against a school that no longer had a BHM co-ordinator and did not plan on having specific events for BHM. Even

then, their attempts to reconcile their Blackness was curtailed - through the process of interest *divergence* - due to teachers not allowing them to promote their messages across school, and poor planning management. This meant BH was cut from two to just *one* lesson. I argue that parallels could be drawn between the school's partial incorporation of Black students' version of BH and then a sharp curtailment by disallowing its dissemination, to the incorporation of opposition Omi and Winant (2015) explained with the US Civil Rights' gains. Omi and Winant (2015) explain that once demands are *institutionalised*, this has demobilising consequences: for the Black students, this was restricting them only to their class and also, only one lesson.

Put another way, by incorporating opposition (a pro-Black message) into the wider Whiteness of the institution, Limehart Secondary School cannot be accused of being racist – in fact, the liberal values of equal opportunities and antiracism are played out in this context by incorporating the fight against racism into lessons and allowing Black students to deliver it. However, their BH presentations were part of a Baccalaureate lesson, which is a *separate* course the school was attempting to get accredited. It was not part of established History lessons. As such, the Black students were in essence, filling the gap left by the overwhelmingly White and exclusive history curriculum, but this has the demobilising consequence of conveying to the school - and to students - that they are committed to diversity, whilst reaffirming White privilege in a 'hard' and academic topic such as history.

4. The colourblind narrative of 'our' island story

I wanted to understand how Black students interpreted the revisions to the history curriculum and whether the changes would indeed coalesce all students around a common British identity.

Year 9 - Black History Month organisers

Tony (BCB): "How is Henry VIII having eight wives, and killing, like killing all of them making me feel British? I don't understand it. And learning about when the British went to… went to Africa in the Zulu war, helping them, helping me feel British?"

Teresa (BCG): "The school teach us normal things like Guy Fawkes and Henry VIII, but really they don't know how people feel about that because when I learn that, I don't think it has any impact on me or what my life or what my history is but still we have to learn it and when it comes to Black History, that's our month. We only get a month but then *they* get a whole year."

Maria (BCG): And thinking about it, it's only trying to make White people feel British because how are you going to make an Asian person feel British?

Odette (BCG): Especially if they migrated from a different country and they yet they can… and if you come here… you come here from young, then when you come and they're just teaching you White stuff, you're not going to really remember about your actual heritage if you're getting taught it at home and like Maria said, when you're in a

new… England or in your actual where you're born, and you're a different race, you don't feel British, but then when you go to a country where there's loads of Black people, you feel foreign. Like because everyone's talking in an accent and you know, and they notice and like, hello. How are you? And they're just like, they just give me these weird looks and [interrupted].

Year 8 (Class 1)

Jessie (dual heritage girl): "I don't think that's right because I think that as [another speaker] said, that there is different races and Britain's much multicultural and if we didn't like remember like maybe what like Black History and different cultures' history, then Britain wouldn't be how it is like Britain's not just…[interrupted]. It would make certain people feel like outcasts and less British."

Year 8 (Class 2) - Two Black boys

David (BAB): "I think everyone should know the truth about all the histories, not just White history."

Aaron (BCB): "And not all British people are White, either."

David: "You know, sometimes, in school, people start being racist. If they know the truth, people might not be racist anymore, in the school."

"Because every time I learn my own unit, it feel like I belong in Africa, not in here [in England]."

Year 9 students who experienced BHM from the organisers

Charlotte (dual heritage girl): "I don't think they can make you feel British."

Ali (BAB): "Like if you want to feel British, then you'll feel British."

Kyron (BCB): "You can be British, you don't actually have to feel British. British is just like the way you are."

Their responses to the indefensibility of Gove's inclusive island narrative really illuminates the extent to which there can ever be a singular narrative with token Black histories annexed on the side. Alexander et al. supports this, stating,

> This is not to argue simply for the inclusion of 'black history/histories', but for the necessity of a radical rethinking of the way in which 'core' British history is taught. It points to the need for rethinking of the way in which British history is considered apart from, and counterposed to, 'world history'. This is not just an issue of balance, but of definition and of fundamental reorientation – to reconsider what 'British' and 'world' history might mean and question, in part, whether the temporal and geographical borders between them are viable (2012: 8).

The changes to an exclusive White British history curriculum have very real consequences for fostering social cohesion and antiracism; I explored this further with them next.

5. Consequences of a lack of Black History: Increasing tolerance for racism

All students, in all groups agreed that teaching and maintaining BH was highly important despite demographics of schools or locality. Black students in particular explained the racial consequences of structural non-commitment to including more diverse histories including: increased incidents of racism (as they provided examples to me even that interview day); an increase in intolerance towards Black people; an increase in the acceptability of racism in public spaces; stereotyping Black people as a result of erasure in school; and Black erasure providing a legitimate basis for people to use the 'N' word towards Black people.

Year 8 (Class 2) - Two Black boys

The Black boys here explain to me that the teachers' focusing on White British history erases the racism and oppression felt by Black because of the biased and exclusionary nature of re-telling history. Aaron explains that Black people growing up learning this type of history will feel 'hoodwinked' into thinking life is fair and equal, but when they face the reality of White racism, they will feel resentment, suffering a severe sense of alienation and disconnection towards Britain:

> Aaron (BCB): "I think the same, everybody should know about all the histories. Like, you talk about White history, and it doesn't mention, like, Black people. It might say, like, oh, they had a good life and all of that."

David (BAB): “Yes, they think they had a good life, and they find out they had a bad life, they find out, they'll just be like, oh, I wish I was never in this country or anything, because I just feel imprisoned, like they were.”

The Black boys explained to me that racist incidents happen in school; I include one example below:

David: “Once, someone called me a Black bitch, so I went and said, if you're calling me a Black bitch, well, that's my own… I'm proud to be a Black person. What about you, are you proud to be your own colour? That's what I said, once.”

I was then provided further examples of people being racist in wider society and the warning to me was that the revisions to the KS3 history curriculum would encourage and legitimate, further racist incidents such as the one provided below

David: “Some people, because you know Britain nowadays started being racist, because you know once, the other day, I watched some video, and I saw a lady, she was being racist on the train in London, to Black people. She was saying, go back to your country, go back to your country. That's what people do nowadays, being racist.”

Year 9 - Black History Month organisers

By only having BHM in October, you risk drowning it out with a host of other activities and social/cultural events; all agreed that BH should be incorporated throughout the year.

Odette (BCG): "October is Stop Smoking Month. People are… mostly White people are going to be interested about Stop Smoking. And it's Stop Drinking month.

Maria (BCG): "You stop drinking for a child because if you're drinking and driving and there's a child in the back, you could risk… risk their lives and as… as… as Speaker 3 said, I mean, Speaker 3 said, there's Halloween, there's bonfire night, there's loads of… I mean, not bonfire night, but that's close to it and that's… *that's pushing people away from Black History*."

There are also wider implications of not teaching BH and this was in response to my question about the KS3 history revisions being a tool for social cohesion and antiracism. Interviewees were keen to warn me that:

Tony (BCB): "[Students are] not going to be in school forever, where they're only just with White people. They're going to end up getting a job and then encountering other people of other races as well."

A lack of teaching about BH and the positive contributions Black people have had on Britain, may result in an unspoken license for people to freely use the 'N' word directed towards them, without knowledge of its racialised origins or the impact this has on them. As a result, an increase in racially-motivated crimes could be the consequence of Gove's revisions:

Tony: "Now, people think it's okay now to like just to be going around, saying that and we're thinking it and thinking it still has no meaning to us. Because they don't know

what we've been through or the Black History of where that word came from, they think it's just okay to just say it.

Teresa (BCG): Yes, like, it's like they keep using the same… the same sort of explanation, saying that it's oh, it's Spanish for Black, but was that it before they started using it, or was it after, because no one knows. And even on Facebook, this White lady, girl, person, put on a video saying oh…"

Year 8 (Class 1)

This sentiment is shared by the Year 8s who warned me that racism is widespread now, but in a covert fashion. The revisions to the KS3 history curriculum may result in racist stereotyping as a result of erasure, and White people could look upon Black people as an 'alien' presence in Britain.

Jessie (dual heritage girl): "Yeah, more than anything racism is still happens and it's like stronger than ever like, more, like, like, stronger than ever, than it's ever been. It's just behind closed doors now. Like 200 years ago if they saw a plane in the sky, they'd probably freak out and think it's like, really shocking; like alien. But like if we stopped… if we stopped teaching Black History in a couple of years it could be like that about Black people.

Researcher: So what can be done in schools to stop or prevent stereotypes?

Jessie: [firmly] Make it part of the curriculum like normal history.

Year 9 students who experienced BHM from the organisers

On entry to the classroom, a dual heritage boy (Jamaican and White) was agitated and most students were talking to him to get more information. I asked, "What's happened?" It was after lunch and so I thought that perhaps he had a disagreement with a friend over sports as he was just in a shirt, rather than the school jumper. I was wrong. A racist incident happened that same day. I needed to know more and so I used the interview as an opportunity to speak about it, if he wanted, because he had not sought assistance from a teacher as far as I was aware.

> Simeon (dual heritage boy): Like someone said to one of my mates that: "you think you're bad because you're Black."
>
> Researcher: Okay. How did he react?
>
> Simeon: He wanted to punch him.
>
> Students [to him]: What?
>
> Researcher: He got angry?
>
> Simeon: [nods] And then some of his mates got angry and just pushed away the table.

The consequences of revisions to the KS3 history curriculum revisions are increased instances of racism both inside the school walls and outside in wider society. A structural non-commitment to BH and a privileging of White British cultures pushes Black students to the margins and instead, they feel a profound sense of alienation. Instead, it legitimates anti-Blackness at an institutional and micro-level, creating opportunities for the reproduction of various types of conscious and unconscious 'everyday racism.' I turn now to centring a warning provided by all students to Michael Gove, Nicky Morgan and now, Justine Greening (the current Secretary of State for Education), about ways in which the

KS3 history curriculum could more meaningfully reflect an inclusive island story in a socially cohesive, and anti-racist way.

6. How the KS3 history curriculum could be made more socially cohesive and antiracist: a counter-narrative from all KS3 students

All students agreed that the revisions to the KS3 history curriculum privileges White students at the expense of more diverse minority British histories. They explained to me how the KS3 history curriculum could be made more socially cohesive and anti-racist by including non-White and Black histories.

Year 9 - Black History Month organisers

> "It [history] should all be evened out."

Year 8 (Class 1)

> "If you don't filter it like if you don't leave out the big bits, if you… if you leave it all in, then you get the perfect idea of how it was like, don't filter it, and get rid of a part of it just because if like one school believes… if their headmaster was like, 'I don't want you teaching that' then other teachers have to not teach it because it's what they've been ordered to do but that's taking a massive big chunk out of British history because it's a part of Britain. It's almost like if you think of Germany, you think of World War II and if you and it's like you can't if you think of Britain, it's always going to be that part of Britain, Black History and all the other stuff, that's always… that's always going to be part of Britain, there's no way of changing it and you can just… *you live with it*.

Year 8 (Class 2) - Two Black boys

"[Include] all different colour and Black *histories*."

Year 8 (Class 2)

"Show successful Black people throughout the whole year. Because you can't just have one month for like showing the best Black people and after that saying bad things about them!"

Year 9 students who experienced BHM from the organisers

"Show how similar other races and other cultures can be like how similar they can be to British."

I then asked all students if the history curriculum could help to bring all students closer together and relate better to each other if it included more diverse narratives, and I received a resounding and firm, "Yes!" from all.

Summary of interview data

Focus group data with KS3 students provided counter-narratives to the established national and institutional discourses about the English education system being equal opportunity and antiracist spaces for all students. A few Black students found alternative ways to disengage from the mundane, extreme, environmental stress (Pierce, 1975a; 1995) accrued during BH. They used the margins as a site of resistance and empowerment rather than silence (hooks, 1990) however, processes of interest convergence and divergence mediated

the position, depth of study and duration of BH. For those students that could not use the margins as a site of resistance, I would suggest this was because the dominant ideology that racism is overt, crude and individual – but also a thing of the past – means they disengaged with BH in informal (behavioural) ways in the classroom. All students that I interviewed at Limehart Secondary School were race conscious rather than race ignorant, and viewed the history curriculum as one of the explicit manifestations of White society's 'racial project' – reorganising and redistributing resources (the curriculum) along racial lines (Omi and Winant, 2015).

Conclusion

The empirical data and analysis presented in this chapter, suggested that racism at a micro-level is supported by institutional and national policy level anti-Blackness. This is most clearly demonstrated by a lack of statutory commitment towards BH, making the reproduction of everyday racism normalised and taken-for-granted. Racism still guides the experiences of Black students studying history because Blackness is viewed in deficit terms. White racial ideologies, couched in the myth of the colourblindness of 'our island story', permeates the KS3 history curriculum at Limehart Secondary School and thus, the history curriculum structurally privileges White interests. Whiteness is the ordinary, universal and unmarked guiding hand that guides the processes and practices with White people, the beneficiaries (Dyer, 1997). Consequently, teachers at Limehart Secondary School reflect, and are reflected by, White supremacy.

All students provided a critique of the liberal values underpinning the KS3 history curriculum, and Black students gave tangible examples of racism occurring within their

school as a consequence of wider anti-Black attitudes. For Key Stage 3 students, the purpose of BH is to reflect White superiority and remains the 'poor cousin' of the White-as-usual history curriculum. Black students felt a sense of disconnection with the Whiteness-as-usual history curriculum, and the incessant focus on slavery and victim-hood for BH. Therefore, this thesis supports previous academic studies in this area (Traille, 2006, 2007; Grever, Haydn and Ribbens, 2008; Hawkey and Prior, 2011; Harris and Reynolds, 2014).

Chapter 6: Data findings and analysis at Parsley High School

Introduction

The previous chapter discussed and analysed the findings of my research during BH and BHM at Limehart Secondary School, drawing on critical race concepts to read ethnographic and interview data. This chapter discusses the ethnographic and interview data from Parsley High School. The following critical race concepts: racism as normal; silent racial-sacrifice covenants (Bell 2004); interest convergence; and, a critique of the liberal values of equal opportunities, antiracism and meritocracy, support my analysis of these data.

Split into two parts, this chapter contains the following: in part 1, I thematically outline ethnographic data during the final lesson on BHM in October 2014 and the integration of BH during WWI, with Year 9 students in November 2014. I then returned in the Spring Term (April-June 2015) and obtained further data during the BH unit with Year 8s and the integration of BH during WWII, with Year 9 students. The critical race concepts that I draw on to discuss and analyse the key themes that emerged from the ethnographic data are: *racism as a normal* and endemic feature of the history curriculum, and a *critique of liberalism* because liberal values are exclusionary, contributing to the entrenchment of Black students' marginalisation. I suggest this is evidenced by topics that portray Black people, throughout history, sacrificing themselves in a variety of ways for a greater 'White' good.

The second part of this chapter thematically outlines interview data with the KS3 history teacher, Dhana and later, with Black students. Data was obtained after BHM in November 2014 and then in July 2015 after the BH topics. I draw on the CRT concept, a *critique of liberalism* to interview data with Dhana as she illuminated the myth of equal opportunities and antiracism for being fundamentally flawed. I conducted focus groups with a total of 22 KS3 students and data with Black students especially, revealed that *experientially-grounded counter-narratives* are an effective way to expose various acts of direct and indirect racism as they have to bear its consequences (Delgado Bernal, 2002). The findings of the ethnographic, focus group and interview data at Parsley High School suggest that the current institutional pedagogies for teaching BHM/BH reflected and reproduced White privilege at a micro and institutional level. Consequently, Black students experience BHM and BH negatively.

Part 1: Ethnographic Data

Major themes	Sub-themes
1. Teacher's attitudes towards BHM/BH and Black peoples of Asian, African and Caribbean descent: the *role* of Black people in the White imagination	1 a - Silent racial-sacrifice covenants: Personal Sacrifice 1 b - Silent racial-sacrifice covenants: Economic Sacrifice 1 c - Silent racial-sacrifice covenants: Cultural Sacrifice
2. Incongruous approaches between Dhana and wider school towards engaging with Black History	2 a - Dhana's approach to BH influenced by Restorative Justice 2 b - Wider school's approach to BH: Commodifying the Black experience
3. Pedagogical tools for teaching Black History	3 a - Silencing students' critical discussions about race/racism through a lack of continuity

Three major themes emerged from the ethnographic data: teacher's attitude towards BH underpinned by an awareness of unacknowledged silent racial-sacrifice covenants Black people participate in, for the support of White supremacy. Secondly, Dhana's restorative justice approach revealed the limited extent to which 'our island story' is anti-racist and socially cohesive, and in tension with the wider school's commitment to liberal values, equal opportunities and meritocracy. Thirdly, pedagogical tools for teaching BH silenced students' critical questions and lacked continuity.

Within the first major theme, *teacher's attitudes towards Black History*, there was a distinct sub-theme that emerged, characterised by what I observed to be distinct conceptualisations of the purpose of BH: silent racial-sacrifice covenants. This informed Dhana's approaches later on in terms of restorative justice. I contend that these conceptualisations of BH dominated Black students' experiences and converged to send denigrating and humiliating deficit understandings about the essence of what it means to be 'Black': it involves various forms of personal, economic and cultural sacrifices.

Within the second major theme, *incongruous approaches towards Black History,* there are two distinct sub-themes that emerged from Dhana and Black students and they were enactments or behavioural responses that I observed based upon their verbal constructions of BH. Firstly, I argue Dhana took a restorative justice approach whereby her practice and use of classroom dialogue conveyed recognition of the harm and violence caused by White racism, and how colourblindness erases Black people from the majoritarian narrative of Britishness. The findings suggest Dhana sought to use the classroom as a community space to make amends and work towards empowering all students in recognising the positive contributions of Black groups. Although her approach was an individual one, Dhana

inadvertently reaffirmed the marginal position of Black people throughout history, by reducing their contributions to repairing White harm. Unwittingly, her actions were entirely consistent with privileging the victim-narrative about Black people she sought to dismantle.

On the other hand, the school took a contradictory approach, which I contend, upheld the liberal values that Dhana was trying to expose as limiting for Black students. I argue that the school, through the use of a prize for completing the BHM booklet, commodified the Black experience of oppression. Black students responded to this approach using what I have argued to be a cost-benefit analysis. Ultimately, the booklet was not taken seriously and most students gave up. As the findings suggest later, the school's approach lends support to Gil's concept of 'structural violence' (1999). In some respects, the analyses underpinned by restorative justice and commodifying the Black experience, are not consistent with the conceptual tools provided from a CRT perspective. As I explained in the theoretical framework chapter, the conceptual tools are not prescriptive. Despite having to draw on concepts *outside* of the basic insights from CRT, both the approaches from Dhana and the school reflected and reproduced Whiteness. Therefore, they supported theoretical assumptions of normal, or 'everyday racism' (Essed, 1991).

Within the third major theme, *pedagogical tools for teaching Black History,* the overriding conclusion was that Dhana was unable to provide any coherence to the impact of racism today, as the BH topics changed every week, were without context and jumped from studies in Africa to Asia. Students expressed that they did not understand the purpose of studying history and the intended purpose of learning Black contributions to 'our island story' was lost. In addition, the BHM booklet sought to commodify the Black experience

and insinuate that racism is a thing of the past. Black students in the main disengaged from the BHM booklet arguing that it was a waste of time. I now outline the major ethnographic themes – and their relational sub-themes to illustrate my points.

Theme 1: Teacher's attitudes towards Black History Month/Black History and Black peoples of Asian, African and Caribbean descent: the *role* of Black people in the White imagination

The schemes of work for BH were devised by the second-in-department, Dhana, a British woman of South Asian descent. She tailored the KS3 history curriculum because as she stated during our initial meeting in November 2014, Parsley High School was a largely ethnic minority school and 'they (the students) would be turned off by all that White history.' What was most apparent to me during my time spent in one class at Year 8 covering BH specifically, and one class at Year 9 looking at the role of colonial soldiers, was the *trust* non-White students placed in her: they could show their racial awareness of oppression and inequalities without fear of reprisals or sanctions. I would attribute this to her racialised positionality. What I found interesting and perhaps surprised me was that although the students were so young, on many occasions, they showed awareness of White power and privilege being *causally* linked to, Black misery and sacrifice. Throughout the major theme, *teacher's attitudes towards Black History,* I use the term attitudes to refer to "a predisposition to respond in a favourable or unfavourable manner" with respect to the unit BH at Key Stage 3 (Oskamp and Schultz 2005: 9). Attitudes about the role of Black people in the White imagination dominated Dhana's approach to BHM/BH and the experience of Black students in her classroom.

The prevailing attitudes towards Black peoples of African, Asian and Caribbean descent centred around racial awareness having inequitable outcomes for these groups. Racial awareness, I argue here, is the acknowledgement of racial difference in society and in contrast to White people, Black skins are viewed as inferior. Consequently, the life chances of these groups are negatively affected. Ultimately, the overarching conclusion from students and their teacher was that throughout history - learned from either what they were taught in school or elsewhere - Black people have had to sacrifice themselves personally, economically, or culturally, for a greater White good. Put simply, students and their teacher were almost resigned to accept the following principles guiding the lives of Black peoples: racism against Black people is inevitable; justice for Black people will not be achieved without struggle or may never be achieved; and, Black people must find subversive, or maladaptive techniques to integrate themselves in the mainstream.

Silent racial-sacrifice covenants

At Parsley High School, the observable, verbal responses from Dhana towards the subject of BH, conveyed an awareness of the multiple sacrifices Black people throughout history have made, in order to achieve racial equality or (White) recognition of their contributions to wider society. In analysing her attitudes, I draw upon and apply Derrick Bell's concept of *silent racial-sacrifice covenants* (2004) to explain the multiple sacrifices Black people are observed to make during the BH unit. I then expand and develop Bell's concept by suggesting how her attitudes could be reduced to three general principles guiding the lives of Black people, characterised by their role in the White imagination as a result of *being* sacrificed.

Bell explains that sacrifice of innocent lives or animals was used by people throughout history to atone for the irritation or upset they caused their gods and this is a similar feature used throughout American history, "to settle potentially costly differences between two opposing groups of Whites, a compromise is effected that depends on the involuntary sacrifice of Black rights or interests" (2004:29). White privilege thus depends, in part, upon Black subordination and the involuntary nature of sacrifice means that this relationship is oppressive. And exploitative. Why *silent* racial-sacrifice covenant and not simply, racial-sacrifice covenant? Bell explains that this is because these rules are unspoken and unwritten, but inferred and therefore, a deeply coded and inscribed set of rules mediating White and Black relations;

> There is the reliance on silent covenants that those involved in them believe will increase profit, promote harmony, or eliminate discomfort for Whites. They do not acknowledge the sacrifice of Black interests in fair dealings, and, of course, when charged with racial discrimination, their denials are filled with outrage (2004:pp.46-47).

The findings lend support to the applicability of Bell's concept to the English context and I explore further, three types of unacknowledged sacrifices that became apparent during BH at Parsley High school: personal, economic and cultural sacrifices. I then explain how Dhana's attitudes towards BHM/BH could be reduced to three general principles guiding the lives of Black people, in terms of their sacrificial role in wider, White society. The examples I provide support the larger theoretical framework, racism as a normal and endemic feature of education.

Key of abbreviations used

SS – Student (Where I was unable to see who asked a question)

BCB – Black Caribbean boy

BAB – Black African boy

BAG – Black African girl

1 a - Silent racial-sacrifice covenant: Personal sacrifice

Year 8s were studying various BH topics including the Zulu tribe and the Indian mutiny, and the Year 9s were studying the World Wars. Dhana included Asian histories within the context of Black History with Year 8s and Year 9s, so there will be examples of South Asian topics studied that I have referred to as Black because of that reason. Both classes understood based on what they learned, that Black people suffered personal sacrifice. This involves a high probability of loss of life, or, actual loss of Black lives for a greater good - the freedoms 'we' enjoy today. Dhana was keen to stress that students should view critically, the political narratives underpinning what they learn, as for example, the war effort was ostensibly a British sacrifice for 'all,' but their textbooks and source material revealed that British meant White soldiers - White sacrifice - and thus, commemorations for British soldiers did not include an acknowledgement of Black sacrifice. This sends a denigrating message to Black students that history textbooks and wider White society, propagate the following assertions: 1) Black people did not contribute in any significant way to the war effort; 2) Risking Black lives provided no value to the war effort and therefore, Whites do not need to remember them; and, 3) The pursuit for the freedoms we all enjoy was a Whites-only endeavour. As such, the greater good I mentioned earlier should now read: Black sacrifices for a greater White good.

Example 1

[Year 9] International Colonial Soldiers: Which other countries were involved in WWI?

Video explains they [colonial soldiers] heard a call from "The Motherland" and they answered that call; 18-19 are buried in Seaford.

Dhana explains they sacrificed, [had] little training, [wanted to] be appreciated and valued and they were forgotten in the first place. That's why they're being remembered.

Dhana: "when you look around the classroom, there are many different nationalities. What about in a 1914 classroom?"

SS: 1 and that's England

Dhana: "you can imagine the reaction about seeing colonial soldiers in Britain and it's important to put it [the reaction of White people] into context before saying they were racist, because we're talking about 100 years ago and England then isn't the same as England today."

Daniel (BCB) calls out: "It's racist!"

Four cards are handed out; SS are asked to read through and write down what their experiences were based on what the card tells you.

Source A (The Guardian)

Mentions White soldiers fought and Blacks did dirty, dangerous jobs

Dhana: "How were they treated?"

SS: "As slaves!"

Dhana: "How would you describe it?"

Daniel: "Slavery; racist!"

Dhana writes “unfair treatment” and explains it was hard work; they were there to contribute.

Dhana: “If you never had the change to fight, you never had the chance to become what?”

Daniel: “A hero.”

Dhana: “Yes, so they [White people] narrowed their [Black people’s] chances; limited their opportunities.”

Source B (The Guardian)

Indian soldiers and deaths

Source C (Newspaper article, “The Black Peril”)

White outrage at girls ‘consorting’ with coloured men

Source D (The Guardian)

Indian soldier awarded a medal

Sources show some colonial soldiers had different experiences in WWI i.e. ‘some saw ‘action’ [fighting] in Egypt, Palestine.

Dhana says there were some exceptions to the rule: that some had different experiences during WWI so there wasn’t a blanket rule.

Source C – a SS says that’s racism [in reference to the article]

Dhana: “Well can you be that harsh?”

Lola (dual heritage girl): “They didn’t have an experience of Black people.”

Dhana: “Exactly. It’s called ignorance; lack of knowledge. An overreaction to White girls dating and hanging out with coloured men. WWI gave English people a chance to experience men from different countries.”

The famous Rudyard Kipling line, “Lest we forget” (1897) is a common phrase used in political narratives to highlight the importance of remembering the bravery of soldiers who risked their lives during the World Wars. It is commemorative. It is reflective and respectful. Only, in this example, Black soldiers who gave their lives for the war effort faced racism *during* their sacrifice, curtailing their opportunities. Additionally, they were forgotten because of a White rejection of their sacrifice and contributions having an impact on Britain’s capacity to win.

Example 2

[Year 8] The Scramble for Africa

Starter: There’s a picture of the Suez Canal and the question – Why was this a reason for the British to control Africa?

Students to write their answers on paper.

SS: “British can benefit from their land.”

Cole (White boy): “Offers strategic naval routes for control over mines i.e. diamonds”

Ahmed (Asian boy) returned parental letter straightaway expressing he doesn’t want to take part; he sits on his own at a computer desk [He has SEN].

Dhana: “What was the approach to Africa? The question is ‘why the scramble for Africa?’ What does ‘scramble’ imply?”

Cole: “European continents wanted it.”

Dhana: “If more wanted it what does it mean?”

SS: “More competition and wars”

Fran (White girl): “Is it because White people wanted to take Africa?”

The picture on the board shows the ‘mad scramble for Africa’ with European men tugging at the continent [Spain, Portugal, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Britain and Italy surround and tugging the image of the African continent].

Task

Picture of African continent

Use iPads to find out which countries occupied which countries in colour codes.

Dhana: “Carve up Africa like the Europeans did for their own personal benefit for competition, to have more than other people.”

Given 15 minutes to complete

Dhana infers from the example and her explanation that the ideology of Whiteness is a system of domination that resulted in Black subordination and this allowed for unearned White privilege. The ultimate aim of the personal sacrifice Blacks made, as a result of colonialism, was to satisfy the opposing greed of the colonisers. That a greater White good was dependent on sacrificing Black lives so colonisers could ‘carve’ up Africa for their own benefit.

Example 3

[Year 9] Title: Winning the War, 1942-1945

Dhana explains before class starts that she's wrapping up WWII before moving onto the Holocaust. She wants to change the slant on VE Day by including Senegalese soldiers assisting Paris and how the government wanted VE celebrations to only 'look' like White people helped in the war effort so the excluded these men from attending the celebrations. This lesson is to tie into VE celebrations that happened in London and elsewhere on 8th May 2015.

A hand-out is given to students which reads: 'Who else was freeing France and Paris? Class to read.

BBC papers reveal "White only victory" – V.E. Day. Black, mainly West African (Senegalese) soldiers helped. Germany regarded them as 'sub-human savages'. Even though they helped, they didn't get recognition for helping take back Paris [The Senegalese Tirailleurs].

Dhana: "They were used; the French occupied Senegal, 17,000 lost their lives and the Germans shot them on the spot, executed [them] because they saw Black men and thought they were sub-human. They weren't allowed to take part [in the V.E. celebrations]. Why?"

Mo (BAB): "Because they didn't want Black people there; Whites only."

Dhana: “They didn’t value their help. Don’t forget the people in the background, it’s not just the Americans or the British with the dramatic shoot outs. Other people helped too.”

Dhana explains runner Jesse Owens, an African-American, won 3 gold medals and Hitler was fuming they had to clean up the racist images of Black people and hide their true colours. Jesse Owens showed he was far superior than any of the others on the track.

… [Some time later]

Class activity

1. Describe each factor that helped
2. Explain how they helped; what did they gain?
3. How did they affect the German army?
4. Which countries were liberated?
5. Also include other factors that you have studied i.e. role of women as spies

Daniel (BCB) shouts that he hates history.

This example provides explicit reference to establishment amnesia in political discourse, ‘White-washing’ history to view the sacrifices of soldiers being a Whites-only endeavour (Bunce and Field, 2014). Similarly, Feagin (2010) explained this in terms of collective memory and collective forgetting being instrumental in reorientating the political narrative around privileging White people. This fits and supports White people’s experience of White racial priming and Dhana is instrumental in providing a counter-narrative to this taken-for-granted assumption. Had she not provided this counter-narrative, students at KS3

studying the World Wars under the revised KS3 history curriculum may have assumed that Black personal sacrifice and contributions were unimportant compared to White lives lost. Political narratives, influenced by White racial ideologies, have a powerful way of inscribing on racialised bodies, a system of value in which White bodies are valuable and worthy of recognition, and Black bodies are devalued and unacknowledged (Omi and Winant, 2015). Drawing on Bell's silent racial-sacrifice covenants, the findings help to shed light on the unacknowledged *personal* sacrifices, Black people made, for a greater White good. From this, I was able to further develop Bell's concept by deducing the first general principle guiding the lives of Black people based on their sacrificial role in wider, White society:

> *Principle 1: Black people should expect to face racism - when we live in a 'White world,' we inhabit 'their' space and so White people hold power to oppress or dominate the experience of Black peoples.*

1 b - Silent racial-sacrifice covenant: Economic sacrifice

Personal, as well as economic sacrifices are judged through the lens of Whiteness; W.E.B du Bois explained that Whiteness is a global phenomenon ([1903] 1994). From the BH units at Years 8 and 9, students learned that the economic sacrifices Black people have to make, are predicated upon having to prove their economic credibility to White authority. This was shown during the organisation of their lives, or capacity for self-rule or, proving their value as citizens deserving of recognition. In all scenarios, Whiteness determined how Black economic sacrifices could increase profits for Whites. Allowing White authority to judge the economic worth of a Black person's sacrifice, students learned that

the economic sacrifices for Black people were unfair because there are no guarantees of achieving equality.

<u>Example 1</u>

[Year 9] Today's lesson is on "significance" and the title is Indian Soldiers and WWI

<u>Starter:</u> What does Indian independence have to do with WWI?

SS filter in; Dinesh (Asian boy) sees board and says, "Yes, India!"

I'm told this is the 2nd lesson on the role of the colonies. Dhana will "go back to normal" next week.

Dhana: "[Britain] took money out of India and brought [it] to Britain. Independence means they don't need anyone to run them, they can run themselves."

Daniel (BCB): "That if they fought they'd be free."

Dhana: "Yes, it's like give and take, in the hope that Britain [she's interrupted]. . ."

Daniel: "They said [Indians] helped and risked their lives so England…[he's interrupted]. . ."

Dhana: "They'll give something back."

Daniel: "Yeah, they might get money too."

Frank (White boy): "Indians have done well."

Dhana: "So, Indians have proved themselves that they can fight, that they're honest and there to support. [Indians] hoped they'd get the support from England to leave their country."

From this example, it is clear that Whiteness is the lens through which Black personal sacrifice and economic competence is judged. This lens is underpinned by White racial ideologies and as such, this relationship is not reciprocal; rather, it is oppressive and exploitative, with no guarantees that Black sacrifice will lead to emancipation. Instead, the lens of Whiteness determines the economic value that can be achieved for Whites.

Example 2

[Year 9] WWII – What role do you think Noor Inayat Khan played in World War II?

This is a focused case study on the role she played during the war.

Picture of Prince Philip paying tribute to her statue.

Mo (BAB) suggests she was a spy because the British wouldn't give her anything powerful because of her race, and she could die.

Find 3 different ways of *judging* her importance.

Video on YouTube: Princess Spy, her code name was Madeline from India. A British agent, she was awarded the George Cross.

Class learns she stayed in France but was caught by the Nazis, tortured and killed.

Students instructed read the sheet on Noor Inayat Khan and answer questions on her role in the resistance movement and influencing factors.

Plenary: Class to contribute to Qs on sheet

Task 2: Explain why Noor Inayat Khan deserves a statue in London

On first read through, it may appear that this example should have been placed under personal sacrifices. In some ways it should, but it is Dhana's instruction that students

should provide a justification for Khan's statue in London that makes this example more apt under the section of economic sacrifice. Whiteness is the lens through which Black value is judged, which is underpinned by White racial ideologies. This has resulted in the State deciding the value of Khan's life and the corresponding expense this would involve in commemorating her sacrifice. It was revealed that commemorating her sacrifice was only financially met by the State, after a two-year campaign by admirers to get her bust erected. She was then *posthumously* awarded the George Cross for her personal sacrifice for Britain (*BBC News*, 2012).

Example 3:

[Year 8] Cecil Rhodes and the expansion of Africa

A sheet from a textbook asking, "Should the British Empire be a source of national pride?"

Starter activity: Who is Cecil Rhodes? [To be found from the worksheet]

SS feedback: "Brains behind controlling Africa."

Dhana: "Position of power and influence…A big driving force behind control of as much of Africa as possible."

Video 'Rhodes to Perdition: Students celebrate removal of colonial state'

Clip doesn't work so teacher explains what it's about: SS in Africa pull down Cecil's statue in S. Africa.

1 SS gasps.

Dhana: "He had one of the 1st machine guns, a Gatlin gun' and shot down many S. Africans. Many didn't know what the gun was. Why were SS celebrating pulling down this statue?"

Maureen (BAG): "Because he mowed down a lot of people so students were looking back at history."

Maureen: "What did he represent for the British Empire?

Connor (White boy): Power and the founder of the British Empire in Africa."

Dhana: "See how history can be interpreted differently?

1. To be honoured [OR]
2. Took wealth and resources from Africa and a mass murderer"

Task: Look at the philosophy of Cecil Rhodes

On the board it reads:

"British/English/Caucasian race is the first race of the world and the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race".

Dhana: "What does he mean?"

SS: "It basically means we're the first intelligent species and he wants to make our lives easier."

Dhana: "Very good – as though they're a superior race/intelligent species."

SS: "Saying we should control all of the world."

Dhana: "Surely what they can bring to other countries is better than self-rule."

Task: Why do you think Cecil Rhodes believed this?

Dhana: “Is he justifying the things he did in Africa? Because of his upbringing? His class? Do you think he’s the only one with these ideas?”

Worksheet

A picture of Cecil Rhodes standing on top of a map of Africa. His feet are spread from the bottom to the top of Africa; he’s holding a telegraph wire; wears an adventurer’s hat and a rifle is attached to his side.

On Cecil’s influencers [all students contribute]: Parents, readings from other people, his class, playing mind games with other countries that Britain is better and wants to make the Caucasian race superior to other races.

Dhana: “The thinking of the moment/the school of thought was, “it’s alright, we’re doing everyone a favour”. From the picture, every single thing has a message, to explain something to you through images. “

Maureen: “Is it that Britain were on top of Africa?”

Dhana: “Why? To conquer half or all?”

SS: “All.”

Dhana: “Your next task is to explain the message of the source including all the factors for example, adventurer’s hat, telegraph, wire etc.”

Although students inaccurately attribute their contemporary and multicultural understanding of ‘British’ with the ‘Caucasian race’ - due to the information on the board subsuming these categories together - they learned that the loss of Black life and the economic subordination of African countries was insignificant when compared to the

development of the British economy. Colonialism was an economic and racialised pursuit in order to increase profits for Whites (Omi and Winant, 2015).

Example 4:

[Year 9] - Title: The Indian Mutiny

Starter: How did the East India Company help establish the British Empire?

Picture on the board of the symbol of the East India Company.

…[Some time later]

Task: What is a mutiny? Why is it different to a rebellion? Dhana explains there's a slight difference.

Class feedback: "They [Indians] look like they're against the British."

SS: "Something to do with soldiers."

[Lots of disruption, teaching is stopped and Dhana sends 3 Black boys out; the lesson tasks are now to be worked on in silence]

Causes of mutiny from the sheet

1. Areas under British control were heavily taxed; Indian families went into debt
2. 1848 British introduced a law giving them power to seize Indian land.
3. British took Indian land if they felt Indians were not doing a good enough job.
4. No promotion prospects; Indian soldiers after years of service not promoted, but younger English ones were frequently given command.
5. Christian missionaries in India increasing; Bibles were handed out.
6. 1856, the company ended Sepoys' pensions and cut rates of pay

7. Bonus pay for fighting abroad: new recruits had to fight wherever they were sent and bonuses were stopped.

8. Pre-1857 East India Company mixed with Sepoys, had Indian wives and children and learned the language. By 1857, junior officers and the company treated Indians as if they were inferior.

Plenary

Dhana: "There was a balance of power and difference in treatment of Indian people."

Mo (BAB): "[British] made bullets out of animal fats (pigs/cows) and many [Indian soldiers] were Muslim Indians and Hindu Indians."

Derek (White boy): "Raised taxes which made a lot of money to East India Company."

Henry (BAB): "The rumour was created that the Britain used animal fats."

Dhana: "The Indians put up with a lot, but when it came to religion and cultural insults, it was the final trigger. The East India Company running India for the British government, after the mutiny. What does the British decide is the best approach?"

Henry: "A British Parliament."

Dhana: "It meant the East India Company would be replaced by the British Raj in India. The next lesson will be source-based questions."

The students learned that there was a concerted effort by the British government to marginalise and secure the continued marginalisation of Indian lives and their economy through oppressive economic policies and structures such as the East India Company. The ultimate aim was to devalue Indians' capacity for economic self-determination and through the oppressive lens of Whiteness, exploit Indian workers to increase profits for White people back in Britain. Drawing on Bell's silent racial-sacrifice covenants, the findings

help to shed light on the unacknowledged *economic* sacrifices Black people made, for a greater White good. From this, I was able to further develop Bell's concept by deducing the second general principle guiding the lives of Black people based on their sacrificial role in wider, White society:

> *Principle 2: The pursuit of justice and recognition for Black people will not be achieved without struggle and in some cases, will never be achieved.*

1 c - Silent racial-sacrifice covenant: Cultural sacrifice

Encountering a White world, or being judged through the oppressive and exploitative lens of Whiteness results in a cultural sacrifice or cultural loss for Black people. This loss is characterised by an inability to self-determine, a devaluing of 'Black' cultures and an erasure by White society of the cultural value of BH to British society. What we are left with in public and political discourses is a landmark shift back to assimilation (Back et. al., 2002).

Example 1:

> *[Year 8] Title: Zulu Tribe and the British Empire*
>
> Starter activity: Could you describe the Zulu tribe as civilised?
>
> Definition: A large group of people with a high level of organisation and culture [from the dictionary].
>
> Video gives a historical account of Zulu traditions and beginnings

Dhana**: "**A lot about Zulu tradition is it isn't in written history, it's oral. Just because it's oral doesn't mean it's less valid or less important. It also doesn't mean you don't have a history. Britain had ideas about what was civilised but it's not *their right* and they're in no position to say what's civilised."

There's a picture of a group of Zulu men in traditional clothes standing in a row, smiling.

Dhana explains the main philosophy behind the British Empire going into other countries to take them over and exploit these people was the idea of civilisation; that only Britain was civilised. Dhana explains the dictionary has the definition used on the board (see above).

Dhana: Using the statement provided would you describe the Zulus as civilised, [but teacher stresses] bear in mind, the definition used is of civilisation and the approach to art, music, dress etc. may be different to the West, but it is still culture.

Dhana asks students to decide.

[Some time later]

Dhana: Explain the British definition of civilisation was seen as the only way to be civilised and any other culture couldn't possibly be civilised. When we continue this topic you'll see the themes are about civilisation and resources.

Lesson ends…

Dhana explains there's 5 weeks until the end of term so they won't get onto the slavery unit. Instead, they'll be using Empires of Africa and India as the BH unit.

Dhana explicitly demonstrates the lens of Whiteness, underpinned by White racial ideologies, is oppressive and exploitative when it judges the 'Other.' She asks her students to use the dictionary definition as a counter-narrative to the established understanding about primitive Black cultures and to consider that the Western/European taken-for-granted understandings about the East, needs to be revisited and restated in their own terms. The message this suggests is that a view of the East through the lens of Whiteness will invariably result in a superior-inferior, binary understanding of different cultures. One that involves Black people wanting to shake off these deficit understandings, in an attempt to define civility on their own terms.

Example 2

[Year 7 class for BHM]

Roshan (Asian boy): You have to accept there's not just White people living here, there's Blacks and Asians. [We're] treated like 'extremists' and [have been] whipped in a way no White person could imagine; BHM is for everyone**.** [He sits down sharply]

Roshan's anger should be taken seriously. He attempts to explain - to his majority Black class - that they have cultural stories to tell to the White world. As a result of White oppression, this gives non-White people a unique insight into the racial formation of wider society and therefore, must be listened to – a 'special voice' according to Matsuda (1995). The overriding conclusion from his class contribution is: the promotion of a British identity during the KS3 history curriculum should not be colourblind as it ignores and silences the realities of racist oppression from those who bear its brunt. Colourblindess *is*

racism (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Gotanda, 1991). Therefore, there is value to be gained from teaching BHM – for Blacks as well as Whites – by including non-White voices as this can better encourage antiracism and social cohesion (Delgado Bernal, 2002).

Example 3

[Year 8] Lesson: Why is BHM important to you?

A clip is shown on John Sentamu from BBC News Politics called 'John Sentamu on Zimbabwe, Syria, wages and gay marriage'.

Dhana hands out a sheet and they're focussing on 'forgiveness and hope'. Racist letters were sent to John Sentamu, but he says he prays for them and it won't stop him. One table claps!

Dhana: What has he proven by his response to racist hatred?

Kwami (BAB): He didn't care; he wanted a safer society that works together.

Dhana says the text says they were a small minority of people.

Students instructed to write a speech about why John Sentamu is important and the contributions he made.

Maryam (An Asian girl) reads a lovely speech about being Black/religious and ends with hope, forgiveness and looking to the future; she speaks of his contributions.

Ranbir (An Asian boy): it's important for Black Christians and [they] can continue believing in Christianity because he stands up for Black people. He set an example when racist people sent [racist] mail.

[A few minutes later]

Connor (White boy): 1st Black Archbishop shows they can understand religion. Black people can do whatever they want and contribute.

Amanda (White girl): He changed people's lives; people made comments and he carried on calmly. He was clever because he stayed calm.

The above example suggests a clear silent racial-sacrifice covenant: eliminating discomfort for Whites by not reacting with hostility, to White racism, and congratulating Sentamu for promoting harmony by remaining calm. I argue the message from the video is that Blacks may receive the pain of a White backlash, but still seek White approval by not reacting in a way that will upset them. John Sentamu is an important figure in the church as the 1st Black Archbishop - a subversive technique in itself to be the first Black anything - but also, he has inscribed on his body a set of gendered and racialised codes: a potential hypermasculine, hypersexualised Black threat to Whites. The students' contributions suggest that in order to maintain his credibility in 'White eyes' as a man of God, as a *Black* man of God he must certainly go against any stereotypes about his character – even in the face of injustice – by remaining calm. Drawing on Bell's silent racial-sacrifice covenants, the findings help to shed light on the unacknowledged *cultural* sacrifices, Black people made, for a greater White good. The aim was to eliminate discomfort for Whites, by aspiring to White cultural values, and, behaving in the acceptable image of Whiteness (Dyer, 1997). From this, I was able to further develop Bell's concept by deducing the third general principle guiding the lives of Black people based on their sacrificial role in wider, White society:

Principle 3: Black people should use subversive techniques to integrate themselves to the mainstream as BHM/BH is for everyone; however we must acknowledge and accept that where we cannot disrupt 'White' spaces (due to an explicit White backlash), Whiteness as normal will take precedence.

Summary of silent-racial covenants

In sum, the findings suggest that Dhana's attitudes towards BHM/BH could be reduced to a set of three general principles guiding the lives of Black people, as a result of their sacrificial role in wider, White society. Based on what they learned, these involuntary, silent racial-sacrifice covenants resulted in personal, economical and cultural sacrifices and serves to support Roediger's definition of Whiteness as "nothing but oppressive and false" (1994:13). The students' responses were largely based upon their own understanding of racial inequalities - as a result of their racialised and classed positioning - but also Dhana's approach to BH being different from the Whiteness-as-usual, history curriculum. Leonardo suggests

> Students (of all ages) benefit from an ideological critique of Whiteness so that they understand the total, global implication of Whiteness, a sensibility that links the local with the global processes of racial privilege. But as long as White perspectives on racial matters drive the public discourse, students receive fragmented understandings of our global racial formation (2002:36).

It is to these two considerations that I now turn: on the one hand, the Year 8s and Year 9s taught by Dhana approached BH based upon a critique of liberalism through restorative

justice, in order to promote social cohesion and antiracism. On the other hand, the wider school approach was still wedded to institutional Whiteness and as such, BHM/BH suffered from conflicted and fragmented tensions resulting in negative experiences for Black students.

What angered me the most about my time listening to their instances of racial awareness was how matter-of-fact they were about the inevitability of its effects and thus, their unwillingness to interrogate White power and privilege more thoroughly. Why is society structured in this way? What can we do to change it? Instead there was seemingly a pre-determined inevitability about racism and discrimination. The assertions from the examples provided above are that Black people have sacrificed themselves culturally, economically or personally, for a greater White good. What I characterise as the greater White good is the development and preservation of Great Britain as we know it today. Therefore, the role of Black people in the White imagination is one of: service, duty, loyalty, proving oneself and sacrifice. These acts must be unwavering and without expectation of White recognition. My analysis supports Bell by explaining that Black people throughout history have played a critically important *stabilizing* role for ensuring White privilege: from enslavement, to political scapegoating, to institutional segregation, the "racial bonding" by Whites means that Black rights and interests are always vulnerable to diminishment if not to outright destruction" (1992: 9). I turn now to Dhana's behavioural approach for recognising this and trying to repair the effects of 'White washing' history with her students.

Theme 2: Incongruous approaches between Dhana and wider school towards engaging with Black History

The approaches towards BH by the wider school and Dhana in Parsley High School were in tension. This I found to be particularly interesting as wider school approaches - in the case with Limehart Secondary School - normally informs what happens in the classroom. Dhana expressed on my first day at Parsley High School, that the Assistant Principal distributed a Black History Month booklet with different Black History 'characters' to subject teachers, for example English, Maths and History. This was designed to raise awareness of the positive contributions of Black people. Dhana said she had her own political motivations against 'shoehorning' BHM and maybe teachers were given too long (a whole month) to participate in these activities, as assessments got in the way. Therefore, the approaches towards BH by Dhana and the wider school were incongruous: in the former, Dhana focused on what I describe as restorative justice (repairing the 'White washing' of history) and in the latter, I contend that wider school focused on commodifying the Black experience in order to generate student interest. This section will provide examples of how Dhana's approach in the classroom was demonstrative of Restorative Justice (RJ) then outline the wider school's approach and the tension this created with teaching BH.

In the traditional UK legal process, the system in which justice is organised and distributed, is deserts-based: the harm suffered by victims is transferred over to the state, who then acts on behalf of the harmed and delivers retribution (Sullivan and Tifft 2005). The victim in this situation is detached and disempowered from the process who may or may not (in their view) get the justice they deserve. Justice is measured by the severity of

retribution as a result of being affected by the interpersonal violence - that which occurs person to person. The offender is also detached from exploring the full impact of their actions and ways they could make amends, by operating through legal representatives: lawyers and solicitors.

In a restorative justice (RJ) process, there is: 1) an acceptance by *all* parties involved that harm or violence has occurred and cannot be changed. Once there is "public and even legal acknowledgement of a wrong committed, everyone affected by the harm seems to be released or set free" (Sullivan and Tifft 2005: 4). Therefore, the role of the harmed and the one that caused the harm radically shifts from victim to empowered survivor in the former, and the perpetrator committed to acknowledging their wrongdoing, meaningfully apologising and working collaboratively with the empowered survivor to reconcile. In a restorative justice process there is also 2) the commitment to not meet harm or violence with counter-harm or counter-violence. Once a crime has been committed, there is a propensity to retaliate which is especially difficult to contain if those who cause the harm, refuse to acknowledge their misdeeds and with "wistful eyes, [victims] ask, 'won't you at least admit that you can see how your acts have affected our lives?'" (ibid, p. 3). It is the acknowledgement of harm that provides a psychological base with which to move on from the initial act of violence and harm, to a meaningful future.

Johnstone explains that RJ suffers a problem of a clear definition, shared by those engaged in the process of it (2003); however, it is loosely defined as a "process whereby parties with a stake in a specific offence resolve collectively how to deal with the aftermath of the offence and its implications for the future" (Marshall, 2003:28). Despite competing definitions and tensions around the specifics of RJ, those who are influenced by RJ should

share the following requirements: firstly, the personal dimension or "relational justice" (Burnside and Baker 1994) involves all in the process of harm acknowledgement and reconciliation or as Johnstone explains, "a shift in the ethical ideas about how we should relate to other humans and those that cause us trouble" (2003: 6). Secondly, the requirement of RJ to be effective is a "RJ community" (Young, 1995), placing value on the crucial role of community support, for reintegration and reconciliation. This leads onto the third requirement, transformation, which is the rejection of vindictiveness or power-based arrangements such as relying exclusively on the legal system of pursuing and delivering justice. Rather, there is a focus on needs-meeting (Braithwaite and Strang, 2001). Needs-meeting, the final requirement, is an acknowledgement that

> The present needs of all involved must be taken into account. Needs take precedence...such as a political-economy of relationship applies not simply to social situations in which someone has been harmed, but as well to the way we organize and relate to each other in our everyday relationships, in our families, our schools, and our workplaces (Sullivan and Tifft 2005:42).

By turning over the pursuit of justice solely to the traditional legal process that is deserts-based, "justice is done when available benefits and burdens are distributed in proportion to what someone has done to merit them" (ibid, p.104). The legal process in effect quantifies emotions and healing thus making the current structural social arrangements inclusive and 'just'. However, the law is not value-free, but designed to preserve the status quo, including the order of social arrangements *constituted* by the law: preserving the earned privileges of those who possess positions of legal institutional and distributive power (ibid, p.44). Harris (1993) suggests that this has historically been White, male property holders.

Gil (1999) refers to societies underpinned by power-based social arrangements as "structurally violent" where an interpersonal act of harm or violence is met by state-sanctioned counter-harm or counter-violence, termed justice. Gil explains this power-based system of domination was initiated by a long history of colonialism which eventually became entrenched and legitimated by "political, religious, and cultural processes, and by ideological socialization" (1999:80). Smith (2004) refers to this as White racial priming.

RJ differs because there are three stakeholders in a restorative justice relationship and they are: the offender, the affected community, and the victim. The State, or the criminal justice system who acts as an agent of the State, is the power-base that joins these stakeholders together underpinned by the following objectives,

> To attend fully to the victims' needs – material, financial, emotional and social (including those who are personally close to the victim and may be similarly affected); to prevent re-offending by reintegrating offenders into the community; to enable offenders to assume active responsibility for their actions; to recreate a working community that supports the rehabilitation of offenders and victims and is active in preventing crime; and to provide a means of avoiding escalation of legal justice and the associated costs and delays (Marshall 1998 in Johnstone 2003:29).

2 a - Dhana's approach towards Black History influenced by Restorative Justice (RJ)

As a South Asian woman whose attitudes indicated an awareness of the unacknowledged, silent racial-sacrifice covenants Black peoples have involuntarily participated in throughout history, Dhana attempted to bring an awareness to the systematic erasure of

marginalised experiences and histories of Black people within the narrative of Britishness. The ultimate aim was to discuss the established and unchallenged political narrative about the significance and contribution of Black peoples to Britain, inquire why that might be, and then through source material and discussions provide a counter-narrative to show the important contributions these people offered.

Example 1

[Year 9] Noor Inayat Khan

Dhana: "Why Noor Inayat Khan?"

Daniel (BCB): "Because she gave up her life for the country."

Dhana: "Another reason why."

Mo (BAB): "Because you like her, miss."

Dhana: "What's her nationality?"

Mercy (BAG): "Indian."

Dhana: "Yes, she's a rare example of an Indian Princess working as a spy."

Class activity (25 minutes)

Picture of Noor Inayat Khan on A4 sheet with a box underneath that's empty and Students instructed to write a tribute to her if a plaque were to be erected in her name. Daniel says he can't write anything because he doesn't know anything about her; only that she went to France. Dhana says he's been talking about her a lot. Dhana up out his seat a lot [says he didn't pick history]. Students instructed to write a 3-bullet point plan of how they'll structure their writing.

Example 2

[Year 9] Video: BBC news British Army honours Sikh soldiers in WWI

Video says very little mention of Sikhs i.e. Battle of Gallipoli and Dhana explains it's very important to know your roots; it's like a tree.

On the board, the question reappears: What important achievements were made during WWI?

The Battle of Gallipoli

The Battle of the Somme

Dhana: "[Sikhs] helped liberate France, now turbans are banned [in France] 100 years later. Sikhs helped free France and now 100 years later, the policy in France is no religious symbols, is that gratitude?"

Class: "No!"

Dhana: "No gratitude, so in some respects, the French have forgotten Sikh contributions."

There are two other Black African boys in this class, Emmanuel and Aman.

Class given a worksheet; the sheet has 4 boxes about Indian soldiers and they're asked to read boxes and describe how they helped. Then why this was important for Britain and what Indians gave to help.

They've been given different sheets.

I go to another table with mostly Asian boys; they have longer sheets detailing significant role played by Indians [significance is made bold and underlined on sheet]

Carter (dual heritage boy) playing up shouts he "hates history"

Dhana: "You don't have to like it, you only have to learn. You need to know your roots and where you're rooted from."

At the plenary session 15minutes before the end, he shows teacher a card in front of everyone; "a time out card?" He replies, "yeah" and walks out.

Dhana's approach here and during other lessons, mirrored the requirements of RJ by encouraging students, without fear of reprisal, to name the harm. However, Dhana skillfully avoided a White-Black binary of oppression by looking at different Black experiences so the focus was not reduced to dominated of "us" by "them." Instead she sought to encourage students to use their source material to consider:

1. What happened and what was the impact?
2. How can we make amends for the harm done using all students in the class - Black and non-Black - by having structured discussions about the violence caused by the people of study, for example writing a plaque dedicated to Noor Inayat Khan.

Dhana reminded students on more than one occasion, that contributions from Black communities have typically been erased or forgotten. Dhana wrote the schemes of work for Key Stage 3 akin to the principles of restorative justice; namely, "to heal and put right the wrongs…the justice process belongs to the community" (Zehr and Mika, 2003:42). By applying a restorative justice analysis to Dhana's approach to BH, I argue that the *affected community* represents the school and the majority Black children in the classroom; the *victim* represents the Black communities who have undergone historic cases of erasure of their contributions and histories; and the *offender* represents White policy-makers who

have ignored minority contributions to Britain. Dhana was instrumental in defining and handling the harm caused by state-sponsored omissions, by facilitating repair between the victims, affected community and offender in a *subversive* way: by tailoring the KS3 history curriculum to recognise marginalised voices. Overall, I contend that Dhana's approach supports a *critique of liberalism* from a critical race perspective.

Dhana suggested that colourblindness within the study of history excludes non-White students educated in English schools and this inhibits, rather than promotes, anti-racism and social cohesion. Dhana kept reiterating to students that she would be "returning to normal next time" and the inference was that the teaching of 'normal' history is the teaching of White history: illuminating the contradictions of 'our island story'. Therefore, Dhana may have been responsible for writing the schemes of work, but institutional (school) privileging of White interests inhibited her ability to fulfil this.

However, Dhana's approach was not without limitations. By using token cases of oppression, Dhana ignored structural harm and social-structural violence from the state's complicity in organising social arrangements based upon White supremacy. So far I have explored RJ in terms of inter-personal harm or violence and the structurally-violent, state's response of counter-harm and counter-violence (Morris 1995; Mika 1992; 1993). I argue Dhana's RJ approach to teaching elements of BH was not directed towards a White person per se, but the education system and wider political discourse influenced by White supremacy. A new reading of RJ then should include a reappraisal of the terms violence and harm, to include an analysis of structural violence and structural harm. We should ask: how does RJ work if the state and its actor, the Secretary of State for Education, is the offender? The offence: securing White domination and disseminating the socialisation of

White racial ideologies through revisions to the KS3 history curriculum. This constitutes what Sullivan and Tifft term, social-structural violence (2005).

This type of violence is evidenced by society's organisation of families, how cultures are transmitted, our primary social arrangements, and "these patterns are given currency in social arrangements in which the well-being of some is defined as less important than that of others, so that their needs are dismissed as unimportant or minimized while others who control the process receive far more than they need" (2005:120). However, in rehearsing the narrative of Black sacrifices and 'doing justice' to their stories, the findings suggest Dhana perpetuated the victim-narrative she sought to dismantle. Similarly, institutional privileging of White interests created the opportunity to measure the progress of racial inequality to gross, overt acts of individual racism faced by Black heroes *in the past*. This disregard for addressing the multifaceted nature of racism is similarly reflected at macro level. Providing no statutory obligation on schools to teach BH in the KS3 history curriculum is tantamount to a dismissal of the needs of Black students, but also the needs of all children to have an anti-racist and socially cohesive education. Thus the Whiteness-as-normal history curriculum remains overwhelmingly White and exclusive and could explain why students did not see the relevance of studying history. As the patterns of social arrangements and privileges were not explored: the inference was that the way things are developed *organically*. By going 'back to normal', Dhana missed opportunities fully to integrate BH into the curriculum and by stating that she was unable to complete the BH unit in the way she planned, Dhana revealed the privileged constraints that curtailed BH; namely trips to the Imperial War Museum and preparing for a Holocaust survivor visit.

For RJ to work, the empowered survivor and the offender have to be committed to acknowledging the harm and meeting the needs of all, working collaboratively towards reconciliation. The offender, in this instance, the structurally-violent Coalition and later, Conservative governments would have to demonstrate remorse for its role in systematic erasure of BH in English schools, and outside of schools, acknowledging the shameful legacy of colonialism, impacting on the 'Othered' groups today. Instead, during my research year, it was revealed that David Cameron ruled out slavery reparations during his trip to Jamaica, and urged Jamaica and reparations' supporters to 'move on' from the painful legacy of slavery by focusing on Britain's role in abolition. Cameron has supported the Jamaican economy by offering Jamaica £25m in British aid to build a new prison, and a £300m package for infrastructure (*BBC News*, 2015).

Avoiding and minimising the harm and continued legacy of enslavement is counterproductive to a RJ process in schools, which should provide a "safe space or recovery from trauma so people can tell their stories and build new ones" (Sullivan and Tifft 2005: 7). Refusing an apology or making amends demonstrates the state's commitment to social-structural violence and this is further entrenched within the construction of the KS3 history curriculum, which privileges White British history. At a closer, more immediate level, Dhana's RJ approach was inhibited by an equally unapologetic and structurally-violent wider school. Sullivan and Tifft (2003) explain that for the values of RJ to be effective, the curriculum should meet the needs of all students, rather than a drive towards ever-greater homogeneity, standardisation, separation and exclusion (2003:182).

Dhana's approach was an individual one as she was the person responsible for writing the lesson plans based upon the ethnic diversity of her student cohort, but this was mediated by the institutional and national policy structural privileging of Whiteness. Consequently, though she attempted to redress the anti-Black narrative, she perpetuated the same message unwittingly. It is to this wider school approach and the tension this created within teaching BH that I now turn.

2 b - Wider school's approach towards Black History: Commodifying the Black experience

The power of Whiteness in schools is strengthened by its invisibility in terms of not who is systematically excluded throughout the curriculum. Whiteness just *is.* Therefore, the approach by wider school towards BHM was characterised by promoting the values equality of opportunity, antiracism and meritocracy; all of which were unquestioned and ill-defined. Having token events such as BHM is regarded as evidence of equality of opportunity because Parsley High School is ostensibly recognising the importance of reflecting student diversity. However, equality of opportunity and meritocracy are liberal values and from a CRT perspective, they supported and reaffirmed White privilege. I draw upon Bell's concept of interest convergence (1980) to explain that the incorporation of BHM *in the first instance* is not to democratise knowledge or work towards challenging the established narrative about Blackness and Britishness. Rather, by institutionalising BHM (Omi and Winant, 2015), Whiteness through which Black value is judged could reduce BH to essentialism; a type of compensatory approach observed in schools in the 1970s (Stone, 1981).

The Assistant Principal distributed school-wide booklets on influential Black people for BHM in October 2014. Dhana's RJ approach revealed the limitations of colourblindness, but wider school sought to promote equally colourblind liberal values of equality of opportunity, antiracism and meritocracy, by commodifying the Black experience through the booklet. I argue the lack of interest and participation in this approach could be attributed to a cost-benefit analysis applied by students to BH, and the continuing presence of institutional racism being a *barrier* to anti-racism and social cohesion.

On the front of the booklet it reads:

"An opportunity to learn more about influential people who have shaped both history and life today."

Incentive: Students who manage to learn about every person will be entered into a prize draw.

Inside the front cover it explains:

"BHM is an exciting opportunity to learn more about some of these people. Throughout history people have had to overcome discrimination, prejudice and suppression to allow us to live the life we are able to enjoy. Throughout October you will have the opportunity to learn about influential and even world-changing people from a variety of Black communities and cultures".

Students then have a significant person's name with some instructions, for example

1. Maya Angelou → "Attend English to learn about this person and get their sticker"

2. Kofi Annan → Attend technology and art to learn about this person and get their sticker

3. Usain Bolt → Attend an after-school sports club to learn about this person and get their sticker

In total, the booklet comprises of 46 people, but in addition to attending various lessons, it also includes the promotion of school-rules in order to learn about key individuals, for example, 'arrive to school before 08:45 AM to learn about this person and get their sticker,' or 'arrive to P.E. with a full kit.' Dhana and the Key Stage 3 pupils that I spoke to told me that the participation in this activity was low.

This approach to teaching BH is *compensatory*: the type of deserts-based justice Sullivan and Tifft outline as characteristic of the justice system within Western legal traditions (2005). The message is that you learn about a Black person and receive a sticker for doing so; in essence, gaining something tangible for the effort expended learning about BH. This goes against the RJ principle of reconciliation and mutual commitment to moving forward as this example indicates the inherent problem with allowing the harmed - those marginalised from mainstream discourse - to turn their emotions and the pursuit of justice, over to a higher authority (the school) to 'deal' with. The school took a compensatory approach through the distribution of a BHM booklet, supporting Stone's analysis that state multiculturalism is a 'misguided liberal strategy to compensate Black children for not being White" (1981:101). This is an unrealistic view of community healing according to Sullivan and Tifft (2005) and silences, and trivialises, Black students' experiences of bring Black and British.

Commodifying the Black experience in this way raises many additional concerns relating to the value placed on BH. Firstly, the project reduces and trivialises the contributions and experiences of Black peoples when you have to incentivise students in order to generate interest. It implies that students will not be interested in learning about Black cultures if there is not a reward for doing so. Indeed, the introduction of the reward creates a *transactional* relationship between knowledge about Black peoples and students wanting a prize, rather than – as in the case of history as a subject – the acquisition of knowledge for knowledge's sake. Therefore, the focus for the student is on the potential acquisition of the *prize* rather than a fundamental appraisal of the scope of Black achievement and contribution to British society.

Secondly, there is also something to be said for the linking of knowledge to a monetary commodity: in this prize draw, the student is acutely aware that there will be winners and as such, there will be *losers*. For the students who were unsuccessful in winning the prizes on offer, to what extent will their motivation to gamble again be sparked if they know they could lose again? Relatedly, the booklet forces children to make a choice whether or not to engage with BH and this is based largely upon a cost-benefit analysis of the risks and rewards involved in participating. I use the term cost-benefit analysis to refer to an action that is taken "if the benefits exceed those of the next best alternative course of action " (Layard and Glaister, 1994: 1).

The linking of school rules to the teaching of BH creates disincentives to those children who are not explicitly able or willing to be *seen*, following school rules for a prize that they may not win. Meritocracy fractures the value placed on forging reconciliatory interpersonal and community relationships in a RJ process. Indeed, failures are the fault of

the individual and at Parsley High School, it was up to the students to demonstrate *their* commitment to learning BH as the school has ostensibly created an equal opportunities' environment for all to learn. In the theoretical framework chapter, I used Gillborn (2014) to explain that meritocracy in education – the focus on individual effort and commitment – has racialised consequences for Blacks. Thus any opportunities missed cannot then be attributed to structural misgivings and the booklet silences critical dialogue about the "life we are able to enjoy" today. The focus on interpersonal racism also ignores the power of oppression structurally, and thus sends the inaccurate message that the development of society as they know it occurs organically. Whiteness just *is*.

Lastly, BHM and other multicultural events in schools buys into the taken-for-granted and unquestioned power of White privilege: the conclusion reached on the front of the booklet was that in history (read: in the past) people have had to overcome trials and tribulations so that *we* (read: Black people) can enjoy freedoms today. I suggest that this statement inhibits criticality as "discrimination, prejudice and suppression" are retrospectively looked at. Moreover, the individuals named in the booklet faced overt racist or discriminatory acts; therefore the booklet portrays an inaccurate depiction of the way racism operates, ostensibly as purely individual rather than institutional and ideological. Such acts committed towards Black communities are portrayed as ostensibly overt and conscious, and can be simply 'worked out' of ignorant people, so long as we learn about each other's cultures. CRT recognises racism encompasses many areas – visible and hidden – which makes its effects particularly perilous.

The school-wide approach helps to shed light on the continuing presence of institutional racism because these processes and the structural *non-commitment* to embedding BH

throughout the history curriculum, disadvantages minority people. What appears as a "good deal" for Black students by having BHM, are "benefits that are more symbolic than substantive" (Bell, 2004:56). Buying into the principles of equal opportunities as the booklet does, Blacks who then name their experience as racist are then accused of relying too much on playing the race card, or 'victimology' because racism is ostensibly overt and a thing of the past (McWhorter 2000).

Parsley High School supports the liberal values of equality of opportunity, antiracism, and meritocracy rather than converging with Dhana's classroom approach to illuminate its inconsistencies. As such, BHM/BH suffered from a fragmented and inconsistent set of approaches, which ultimately converged to entrench the marginalisation of African and Caribbean students. Both Dhana and wider school failed to acknowledge the enduring feature of contemporary racisms in Britain by jumping from various cases of Indian and African oppression in the former, and using a booklet to assert that the contemporary social arrangements we live in, are free from the 'old' racism of the past, experienced by those within the booklet's pages. This supports a CRT explanation of racism as normal and endemic, as structural and ideological racisms remained ignored. This also supports my third principle guiding the lives of Black people, based on the role of Black people in the White imagination:

> *Principle 3: Black people should use subversive techniques to integrate themselves to the mainstream as BHM/BH is for everyone; however we must acknowledge and accept that where we cannot disrupt 'White' spaces (due to an explicit White backlash), Whiteness as normal will take precedence.*

I argue the explicit backlash is wider school's lack of embedding BHM within the mainstream history curriculum. The KS3 history curriculum represents a socially-structural violent exercise of power by the state, against Black communities. Seemingly harmless to provide a colourblind chronology of the development of Britain as we know it today, harm is caused when the state refuses to acknowledge, or make statutory, 'Other' histories that Britain is inextricably bound up with due to a long history of colonialism, forced and voluntary migration from Commonwealth countries. The consequences of such erasure means Black communities, no matter how long their generations have been in Britain, constantly feel like an intruder – an unwelcome one at that – in which the benevolent White State, has been gracious enough to provide a 'Motherland.' The non-statutory status of BH means schools can choose whether or not to engage with elements of it BH and the consequences of schools only engaging with BH if they deem it appropriate for their cohort, means we could see the end of BH. Where BH has been engaged with Traille (2006; 2007) has shown that the focus too heavily relies upon the study of slavery. I extended this argument in Chapter Two by suggesting that where BH is engaged with, it falls in one of two camps, in opposition to Whiteness; or celebratory and congratulatory (Doharty 2015).

It may appear contradictory to mourn the impending loss of BH and then to critique the concept of it, but BH as a concept and pedagogical set of approaches has been shown to be problematic. Black communities have a long history of fighting for recognition and many communities, such as South Asians, have aligned themselves to the concept of political Blackness in order to combat racism and have collective voice in naming their experiences of discrimination. However, racialising history as 'Black' and *not* making the same racial demarcation for 'White', sustains the invisible power and exercise of White supremacy.

Black History is annexed on to the invisible norm of Whiteness, the business as usual (White) curriculum: something that is ostensibly cultureless. The hegemony of Whiteness means being 'White', and the culture of Whiteness, is so entrenched in the cultural fabric of the school it is invisible. So Whiteness just 'is'.

According to Rosaldo (1989) influenced by Critical White Studies, White culture as cultureless therefore contributes to understandings in public discourse of Whiteness as rational and privileged when compared to those still 'held back' by past notions of culture. For White culture, in order to maintain power and privilege cultural invisibility through a denial of possessing culture, is what Rosaldo (ibid) terms "postcultural" because "at one time Western Europeans had to define themselves as cultural to set themselves apart and superior to "savages", today, with much of the world "civilized" under Western domination, Whites must claim a new and higher rung – the postcultural – to maintain their privileged status" (Perry 2001:61). For students learning 'Black History,' whole communities are racialised and *homogenised*, with their experiences named for them.

Summary

I have drawn upon the concept of RJ to analyse Dhana's approach to BH. Although there are benefits to healing the harm caused by structural exercises of power, I would argue she engaged in rehabilitating Black children by repairing White harm. In my view, Dhana was the wrong person to be performing this duty as the KS3 history curriculum could be interpreted very differently in another classroom, or with another teacher. The duty of repairing harm is at state-level. However in a restorative justice relationship the focus is on repairing harm to the victim: in this situation, approaching BH in this way creates a victim

who happens to be Black. Consequently, the impact on the Black child could be to place them in a subservient position in which they spend their school years learning about themselves as victims who have been wronged, rather than critically engaging with, and seeking to fundamentally reconfigure of the taken-for-granted British narrative. This is particularly pertinent as research shows that in 2015, 43 % of British people are proud of colonialism and 44% of the British Empire (*The Independent*, 2016).

Theme 3: Pedagogical techniques for teaching Black History Month/Black History

3 a – Silencing students' critical discussions about race/racism through a lack of continuity

In this section, I analyse the specific ways in which pedagogical tools in the classroom at Parsley High School silenced critical dialogue about race, racism through a lack of continuity (please also refer to appendix 2). Ultimately, I suggest what was missing, was an exploration of the development of multicultural *Britain* today, based upon minority ethnic contributions. Students were unable to draw the links between Black experiences in Britain here today and, 'our' island story to understand our nation's present. This was because of support from wider school that racism is defined by the overt, gross acts of ignorant individuals rather than legitimised and perpetuated at institutional and ideological levels.

In a similar pattern to Limehart Secondary School, a reliance on worksheets and making amends to historical injustices obscures critical discussions about *domination* and the

permanence of White supremacy at structural and ideological levels in the present. This could explain why particular Black students expressed boredom with studying history and disengaged during BH lessons.

Summary of ethnographic data

In my analysis of ethnographic data at Parsley High School, I drew upon the CRT concepts: racism as normal and a critique of liberalism. The findings suggest racism is a normal and endemic feature of the KS3 history at micro, meso and macro levels. At micro level, Dhana attempted to focus on the positive contributions of Black communities to Britain; however, she reaffirmed White privilege by reiterating the various sacrifices Blacks are assumed to make for Whites. At meso level, the liberal values of equal opportunities and meritocracy were promoted by the wider school, but this resulted in commodifying the Black experience to a competition and provided an inaccurate depiction of racism being overt, gross acts that have long since passed. At macro level, the lack of resources for teaching BH within the narrative of Britishness, and no national policy or institutional framework for embedding antiracism meant that Dhana had to write schemes of work alone. This type of vulnerability means that BH can be constructed based upon teachers' interpretations.

The next part of this chapter will involve presenting and analysing the findings from Dhana's interview to understand her conceptualisations of BHM/BH, her rationale for keeping BH at Parsley despite its non-statutory status in wider school and within national

policy and, her rationale for approaching BH by focusing on critiquing the established British narrative of 'our island story.'

I then move onto presenting and analysing the findings from Key Stage 3 students' interviews to understand what they perceived to be the purpose of BH. I end by presenting and analysing findings from interviews with African and Caribbean students, whose behavioural approaches conveyed frustration with BH because of its marginalised and tokenistic place within school. For Black students, BH reaffirmed White privilege because of the lack of time, care and sensitivity afforded to it and consequently, they pointed to an increase in racism.

Part 2: Interview Data

The second part of this chapter is split into two parts. Firstly, I will thematically outline interview data with KS3 history teacher, Dhana. Later, I will thematically outline interview data with KS3 students, including boys and girls of African and Caribbean descent. The interview data with Dhana was obtained in July 2015, the interviews with KS3 students in Years 8 and 9 were obtained in November 2014 after BHM and in July 2015 after BH topics. The CRT concepts that I draw upon in the second part of this chapter are: a critique of liberalism, racism as normal, and centring the experiences Black students who face various acts of racism. I contend that a critique of liberalism could be applied to both sets of interviews with Dhana and KS3 students, illuminating the inconsistencies in the seemingly colourblind values of equality of opportunity and antiracism during BH.

All history classes were tiered and I only discovered this during the interview their teacher, Dhana. For the Year 8s I was in a mid-tier class and for the Year 9s I was in a low-tier class. There two other history teachers in the department but Dhana was the only history specialist, and due to the arrangement, I never met them. Dhana is a self-defined Black British woman of South Asian descent. My interview questions with Dhana centred on the following points: how she conceptualised BHM/BH which would support my inference based on her attitudes and approaches to teaching BH; why she based the teaching of BHM/BH on critiquing the established political narrative about Blackness; her tensions with wider school; her reflections on revisions to the KS3 history curriculum and what she felt the impact of the revisions might be on anti-racism and social cohesion in English schools. The emerging themes from her responses indicated a critique of the liberal values of equality of opportunity and antiracism, for being too narrow and insular *at the expense of minoritised people*. Specifically, BH suffers from a lack of embeddedness and so is vulnerable to structural challenges including a lack of time and knowledge about different Black histories; there are *protected* histories that will take precedence to BH, creating a hierarchical and racialised understanding of history; and, the revisions to the KS3 history curriculum sow the seeds of greater *separatedness* rather than greater social cohesion.

KS3 history Teacher: Dhana

1. Conceptualisations of Black History Month/Black History

> Dhana: "It's just because, just because Black History Month actually exists, it kind of gives it that… that position within the whole kind of area of history that it's something you have to specially take time out to look at and to be aware that you need to include it and maybe this is a way of ticking that box."

2. Dhana's approach to Black History and the tension with wider school

Dhana: "It's my decision, ultimately it's my decision to keep Black History and I know that the management were not pleased."

"I kept it [BH] just because it's part of history, just the way I look at history [it's] just part of it, where it's relevant included it, but Management were concerned that *we weren't celebrating Black History Month across the whole school and involving everybody*, so there was a real push to do that last year."

"I think maybe some parents also said, "well, why don't you do Black History Month?" So off the back of that they felt that there was a real need to make sure the whole school was on board with that. Again, I don't think it's necessarily… it has to be Black History month. It maybe could be a focus on celebrating Black contributions or African contributions instead of saying it's Black History month. Like a different slant on it would be better, because where it's relevant, we do tend to include it."

Researcher: "Okay. So, you chose to keep it in your unit as well for the Empire unit?"

Dhana: "I keep it in whichever unit it's most accurate way of teaching history…You can't go round calling something a *World* War and then just focus on the European contributions."

Researcher: "Yes, because you stressed during most of the lessons, *significance* and *contributions*."

Dhana: "Yes, yes, otherwise it would just be ticking the box and going, oh, here are some Indian soldiers. What's the *point*? There's *no point unless you're going to look at it properly* and we looked at the discrimination, as well the poor treatment and, you know, how many of them actually got to be heroes and how many of them were actually just doing the dirty, dangerous jobs."

I then turned my question to the actual teaching of BH during her lessons and why it seemed to be beset with time constraints, school trips, holidays and lots of missed topics that could not be explored in any depth because she was running into a period of assessments. I also wanted to understand further, the tension she faced with wider school and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Why was her approach so different to wider school and what were her reflections on the BHM booklet?

Dhana: "Don't think it's necessary, but I think it's the running order, so when we get to this last half term, there's a lot of disruption, there's a lot of kids involved in different things, there's lots of kids not in lesson or a business project or on trips. So a lot of time is lost through that."

"Mainly, I think that's been the main struggle. Sports day, various things taking lesson time away to the point in which we have only really spend that five or six lessons on the Holocaust because of that. So we haven't even fully done the Holocaust. So World War I and II get more of a look-in because they're in September and then the following term, where it's just solid in class learning, this last term gets a bit like everybody's doing something or somebody's going somewhere and there's a lot of disruption."

Researcher: “Okay, so, Black History month, the event that took part that I came to interview, how do you feel that that went?”

Dhana: “It was okay. I think some of the people that were chosen were quite modern so John Sentamu, is he the Archbishop, so there’s kind of a modern. I think the approach was to make it, to inspire the students, the Black students.”

Researcher: “Yes, it was quite a big booklet.”

Dhana: “There were some *nice stickers* to go around. Haile Selassie was one. So they try and link them to different subject areas, so are we Maths would have had somebody who was significant in Maths, so yes, I liked it, it was fun doing that thing, but I wouldn’t call it… I don’t know whether it should be called Black History month.”

“The thing should just be called a celebration of Black History so you’re taking time out to celebrate Black History and contributions in a positive way because it doesn’t always fit in with the way we teach it in history, we were trying to teach it in realistic ways, but it’s not always about celebrating positive contributions. So I think it counterbalances, counteracts that.”

“But again, even when we do teach slavery, we don’t… I don’t try and put them in like all constantly in a passive position. It’s good to look at those that did oppose and run away and fight back and organise so again, I rather take that approach as to the what they call whipped and… yes, because it’s just not, it’s nothing new and I think there’s a

lot, I think it's again a lot more exposure to history, whether it be through films so I'm always looking for something new or a new angle or a new approach to it."

"But I think there's a lot of parental pressure, because that was my argument, and for some years I haven't done Black History month. I *refused* to participate or make any effort and then, like I said, it was the Assistant Principal that took it on board this year. I guess she didn't share my communal opinion of the students or she felt, *as she'd not spoken to the students* that this is aimed at, to gauge whether they think it's something that's worth doing or not."

"I think, you know what, I think they should, if SLT leadership feel that they're doing something that is required or what, desired by these students, maybe should check with them first because if that is their overall opinion that why is it a need in the first place."

Discussion

Dhana clearly perceived the SLT's attempts to encourage BHM across school as a disingenuous and ineffective attempt at fostering social cohesion and antiracism. Disingenuous because as she explains, they did not consult their students about the scope and direction this would take, but rather, a culmination of parental pressure and a perception that the whole school needed to participate, meant that BHM manifested in this way. She said on more than one occasion it was like 'ticking a box' which implies that the institution is more concerned with not looking racist, than interrogating its attempts to celebrate rather than embed diversity. Dhana's concerns about institutional attempts at diversity lends support to Ahmed, who argues "declarations of commitment" such as wider

school disseminating the BHM booklet across school, is that it "can block recognition of racism" (2006:110). As Ahmed elaborates

> The failure, or the non-performativity of anti-racist speech acts is a mechanism for the reproduction of institutional authority, which conceals the ongoing reality of racism…Being committed to anti-racism can function as a perverse performance of racism: "you" are wrong to describe us as caring and racist because "we" are commited to being antiracist. Antiracism functions here as a discourse of organizational pride (pp.110-111)

The consequence of this approach to the non-performativity of antiracism – the institution concerning itself to doing the booklet rather than 'doing the doing' (ibid) involved in antiracist action, supports a critical race analysis that racism is a normal, deeply embedded in the English education system. Dhana has indicated the presence of Whiteness at institutional level through protected time offered within the history curriculum. She explains that time runs out for BH in a way that the ostensibly European-centred focus on the World Wars does not, and so BH is vulnerable to structural privileging of White interests, including assessments and school trips.

Dhana perceived her racialised positionality and own school experience of racialised exclusion, to be fundamental factors in changing the narrative of the topics of the World Wars, (focussing on significance and contributions) so that Black students could understand their 'fit' in Britain is not solely attributable to enslavement. The focus for her is 'doing history properly' rather than token opportunities to annex diversity on the mainstream (White) curriculum. This is supported by Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995)

who critique liberal multiculturalism for precisely the same reasons: it is ineffective in providing a radical change to the current order, but rather, institutionalising BH so that the experiences of Black peoples can be homogenised, viewed simplistically and unproblematically, and free from tension with other groups (or the majority). They argue that the 'multicultural paradigm' that comprises the education systems in the USA and I would argue, the UK, is underpinned by a logic that diverse children should have a diverse curricula that would provide a basis for equality of opportunity. However, this has led to multicultural education being reduced to "trivial examples and artefacts of cultures such as eating ethnic or cultural foods, singing songs or dancing, reading folktales, and other less than scholarly pursuits of the fundamentally different conceptions of knowledge or quests for social justice" (1995:61).

At Parsley High School, Dhana explains that students had "nice stickers" to collect, as an accompaniment to BH's person of interest. Both Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995), and Omi and Winant (2015) share that this is a consequence of institutionalising BH: White supremacy is the hegemonic ideology saturating all institutions guiding and securing White privilege through the protected space of White-centred curricula. This led me to asking Dhana about her reflections on the KS3 history curriculum, particularly as she stated at our initial meeting in November 2015 that students would be "turned off by all that White history."

3. Revisions to the KS3 history curriculum

Dhana: "It's not… but it's not *that* type of an island. *It's too inward looking*, so the island story, the way I look at it, is going outwards, and the impact of the island on

different countries and different peoples and *their interaction* makes the history of the island story."

"*I don't think history should be compartmentalised, boxed off*. I think it should be an interaction so in terms of the island history, and the other thing they want to do is teach British values, but they have to be very careful about that one, because some of British behaviour and values, especially when it came to Empire, is *nothing to be proud of*. So if they want us to teach British values, then I'm quite happy and will do but in some areas it will be *highly critical* of British values."

"They want us to promote British values through history so it would have to be really kind of *a selective history and selective interpretation in order to just promote positive British values*. But they don't necessarily say promote positive British values. So they say promote British values, which leaves it quite open, and there's a journey of British values, but they do change, they do improve, so that would be one way but on the whole, I would struggle to do it in a positive light based on the topics that we cover."

Researcher: "Is there a pressure to or the expectation that when you talk about British values, it's supposed to be positive?"

Dhana: "Yes."

Researcher: "Yes?"

Dhana: "I don't know why I'd say that. I think it should be. I think values should be something that you should be proud of. But I think there's a lot in British historical past that we should be ashamed of."

4. Ways the KS3 history curriculum could be more socially cohesive and anti-racist

Dhana: "I think it's do-able, again, depending on what topics you study. I think it's… I quite like that approach, because to come up with like a Britishness you have to bring in so many different aspects from internationally to come up to a realistic idea of what Britishness means today. And maybe the starting point of that would be to understand that Britishness can mean many different things and it does not have to be one."

"There can't be one definition of Britishness and I think it has to be, again because it's history's interpretation, isn't it, so students should be allowed to come up with their *own* interpretation of what they see as Britishness."

"I don't really… can't finish that sentence, because I think just the whole idea's ridiculous. This idea that we're all going to share a sense of Britishness."

"I really think that we… I think everybody comes up with their own, individual sense of Britishness so history lessons, if I was to finish that sentence, would need to allow all students to find something within British society that they can relate to based on which they can form their identity of Britishness that they're happy with so again, history lessons need to be open, need to be inclusive and they need to have more of a global… a global approach to it, even looking at British history can't… look at it in isolation. You can't look at anything, any bit of history *in isolation*; otherwise you're not going to get a *balanced*, proper view of it."

Discussion

Dhana suggests that the changes to the KS3 history curriculum provide an unbalanced, overly positive view of White British history, without considering their intersections with other peoples through Western conquests of foreign lands. The assumption is that Britain is ethnically homogenous and 'pure' rather than *necessarily* diverse and outward facing. This could explain why the established narrative of Britishness within the KS3 history curriculum (implicitly assumed to refer to White British people) has Black students forever feeling their immigrant status, as Dhana explained. Collective memory and collective forgetting (Feagin, 2010) are integral to 'establishment amnesia' (Bunce and Field, 2014), but I draw on Gilroy's concept of 'postcolonial melancholia' to characterise Dhana's concerns about the KS3 history revisions. Again, I have to draw upon concepts *outside* of CRT to analyse the interview data; however, overall, Dhana revealed that institutional and ideological anti-Blackness cultivated opportunities to structurally privilege White interests.

Postcolonial melancholia is described by Gilroy as

> An obsessive repetition of key themes – invasion, war, contamination, loss of identity – and the resulting mixture suggests that an anxious, melancholic mood has become part of the cultural infrastructure of the place, an immovable ontological counterpart to the nation-defining ramparts of the White cliffs of Dover" (2004:15).

Setting out to demonstrate Britain's melancholic reactions, Gilroy suggests the factors in the British context that have contributed to this feeling within the public and political imagination. Notably, the loss of her Empire and the dissolution into "self-governing" (in a

political sense), Commonwealth states meant that the prestige of Britain's imperial fantasies were no longer economically sustainable and the constant reminder of this loss was the large 'waves' of immigrants of colour during the 1940s onwards.

Dhana explained that it was “easy” within the history curriculum to “run away with…World War I and II” and this informed one of the repetitive key themes of the British narrative, along with only choosing to interact with more diverse histories where immigration post-1945 is concerned. Melancholic reactions to the perceived loss of identity as a result of mass immigration could explain the focus on promoting seemingly neutral British values, and a universal British identity. Dhana explains this cannot be done. Her concerns lends support to Hall’s contestation of a fixed notion of identity; he explains that

> Cultural identity is a matter of ‘becoming’ as well of ‘being’. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous ‘play’ of history, culture and power. Far from being grounded in a mere ‘recovery’ of the past, which is waiting to be found, and which, when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past (1990:225).

Summary of Dhana's interview

The excerpts I have provided from Dhana suggest that she believes BH has an antiracist purpose in schools to provide a historically accurate view of British history. That is, to teach students about the positive contributions of Black communities rather than reducing it to tokenistic events. The interview with Dhana suggested that racism is a normal and embedded feature of the Parsley High School. The liberal values of equality of opportunity and social cohesion mask structural inequalities that privilege White students at the expense of Black students who are made to feel their immigrant status by ignoring contributions to British history, and providing token compensatory displays of multiculturalism once a year through BHM. Dhana suggests that it is illogical to assume a British identity could be universally shared amongst all students in her class, because identity is not something that can be imposed. This is particularly problematic if the focus of a British identity within the KS3 history curriculum is to assimilate Black people into White dominant culture.

KS3 Students

I interviewed a mixture of students across KS3, Years 7-9, after BHM in November 2014. I then observed one Year 8 class and one Year 9 class during their BH topics – British rule in Africa and Asia in the former, and World War II in the latter. The classes were mostly comprised of boys of African descent – as representative of the whole school – but during BHM, I attempted to recruit as many participants across gender and ethnic lines. After the BH units, I interviewed Black boys and girls separately where possible, owing largely to a lot of Dhana's attention in class being directed towards the Black boys. I interviewed

children in separate classrooms away from Dhana to give them the opportunity to speak as freely as they wished without fear of offence or reprisal. A total of 22 KS3 students participated and I asked them all to self-define their ethnicities on the recording.

For interviews with students across KS3, my interview questions centred on the purpose of BH in schools, including the BHM booklet; their reflections on the revised KS3 history curriculum and the impact these revisions might have on social cohesion and antiracism. I argue that their responses indicate their conceptualisations of BH were *automatically* synonymous with slavery and oppression, that BH in schools should have an embedded rather than tokenistic purpose in education because a consequence of its erasure is an increased tolerance for racism.

With African and Caribbean students, my interview questions centred on Dhana's approach to BH and wider school's approach during BHM; their reflections on the revised KS3 history curriculum and its impact on antiracism and social cohesion; and, ways the history curriculum could be antiracist. The emerging themes from their responses indicated a critique of Dhana's approach for being too focused on rehearsing the Black victim-hood narrative, but an unwillingness to request a change in this narrative. They disengaged with wider school's attempts to commodify Black experiences and pointed to an increase in the tolerance for racism both inside and outside school as a result of entrenched anti-Blackness. The KS3 history revisions were simply a manifestation of the prevalence of racism. Lastly, they called for greater embeddedness of BH in order to work towards an antiracist and socially cohesive future. It is to the findings with KS3 students after BHM that I now turn.

The purpose of Black History at Parsley High School

The BHM booklet at Parsley High School revealed that BH has an ‘important stabilising role’ within the established Whiteness-as-usual curriculum (Bell, 1992). Its functionalist purpose is to counterbalance Whiteness: to be the inferior counterweight to Whiteness’s superior status and this is illustrated through my game of word association with the KS3 students. I started every interview with teachers and students in the same way: asking them to play a game of word association. For example, if I said the word 'tree' they might say 'leaf' or 'branch' so, when I said the words 'Black History' and 'Black History Month,' some of their responses from the KS3 students (including African and Caribbean students) were as follows:

Class	Black History	White History
Years 7-9 – Mixed ethnicity and gender, interview group after Black History Month (Shabana and Rheema, two Asian girls; Fola, Munira and Ebony, three African girls; Emmanual, one African boy; Richard and Derek, two White boys; Chloe, one White girl)	"Slavery" "Racism" "Abuse" "The KKKs" "Rosa Parks" "Nelson Mandela" "Protest" "Not really focused [only a month]"	"Royals" "Fairly treated" "Slave masters" "Soldiers" "Oppression" "Rich" "White people" "The Queen"
Year 9 – Black children (Nengi and Mercy, two African girls; Eddie, one African and Caribbean boy; Daniel, one Caribbean boy)	"Slavery" "The harshness they went through" "Malcolm X" "Nelson Mandela" "Cruelty" "Pain"	"Power" "Harshness" "Jewish history" "Unfair"
Year 8 (Class 1) Black boys – (Ismail, Abdul, Mohammed, Ade, Zane, five African boys)	"Slavery" "Nigger" "The sad times" "Whips" "Segregation" "Torture"	"Rich" "Superior" "Unfair" "On top of everyone else" "Whites" "Henry VIII" "Richard III"
Year 8 (Class 1) Black girls – (Iman, Asha and Nailah, three African girls)	"Nelson Mandela" "Martin Luther King" "Rosa Parks" "Slavery" "Obama"	"Kings" "Posh" "Rich" "Wealth"

I then asked students to reflect on why they conceptualised Black and White history differently, and later, their reflections on the BHM booklet. I indicate their responses below.

Word association

Years 7-9 – Mixed ethnicity and gender, interview group after Black History Month

> "Because like the… they've [White people] been shown as the people that haven't had to go through anything hard to get to the position that they are in now and that they pretty much had an easy life, they had everything as they wanted it."

Year 9 – Black children

> "When we're in school now and you learn about like what like about like White history so like you have people and they're always talking about the war and how people did in the war but like there's no really positive things about Black people. It's always just about slavery or things like that."

Year 8 (Class 1) Black boys

> "Because Black people didn't…Didn't get a choice."
>
> "They didn't basically discriminate the White people and the White people were like acting like they were more superior than the Black people, when, like, they were the same."
>
> "We're worthless. We're still slaves."

Year 8 (Class 1) Black girls

"Because that's what we learn about."

"As Whites are viewed like that; as more superior than Blacks."

Researcher: That's what you've learned or that's what you think?

All: That's what we think.

Researcher: That you think Whites are more superior?

All: Yes.

Black History Month booklet

As I had arrived at Parsley High School at the very end of BHM, I wanted to understand their reflections and experiences of it. During the interview, one student handed me their BHM booklet and I asked all students to explain the process and their experiences.

"It [BHM] wasn't really a month, it was more than like a week and not all the teachers actually participated."

"And some people hardly did it even use the books. They threw them in the bin or something."

"We were supposed to do one, one at least every day, but we ended doing about four in the last week of Black History month and nobody actually focused on… focused on the booklet."

"Yes. And the teachers were like…[interrupted] The teachers… They didn't really… they didn't care about it. They were just like, "I'll get in trouble if I don't let you do this Black History Month". They didn't like just actually want to do it."

"I believe the prize isn't like worth the effort it took. It was like… it's probably trivial [the prize]."

Researcher: Okay. So I've just been handed a booklet and it's mostly empty.

Student: "Yes. It's mostly empty."

"I feel there's not point really bringing something up if they're not going to bother to actually finish it and do it if they don't actually want to. So they should've just left it if they didn't feel the need to actually complete the booklet in just the last week of the month is not putting of starting something that they don't want to complete or finish."

"I think that it was sort of like, forcefully pushed into lessons, like it was rushed, the PowerPoint stuff that they made in under five minutes and it's just sort of messed up a lot of lessons fairly in the lessons it did occur and it was just like sort of pushing it into lessons, and losing say, because it was all the generic Black History people what we already knew about, like Rosa Parks and such. We weren't really learning much where we could have been using the time for like valuable learning time."

"When you think about it, they told us about the booklet before they even told the teachers."

"In my opinion, I don't think they shine enough light on it as well because they gave us when… one assembly where they gave us the books and they just said well, complete it. Complete it for a month. They didn't give us any follow-ups or anything. They didn't give us any good instructions. So we ended up kind of leaving it."

Discussion

Their responses suggest 'race consciousness' (Omi and Winant, 2015) as a result of White supremacy saturating all aspects of society, including their view of history. I draw on Bell's analysis (1992) of the role of Black people throughout history, as characteristic of KS3 students' responses about the role of BH, to explain that White History depends upon BH to provide an important counterweight to White superiority. For White History to maintain its superior status, it has to *master* BH (Swartz, 1992) by continually rehearsing the same victim-centred narrative for BH. This is why students express their frustration with the repetitive nature of topics such as slavery. With the booklet used for BH, KS3 students are clear that the institution had the same non-commitment to BH as they experienced during history lessons. There was a lack of commitment to coordinating the process and implementation of the booklet, and overall lack of care with the ways in which the booklet could be thoroughly embedded across school, supporting Ladson-Billings and Tate's assertions about the problems with liberal multiculturalism being a barrier to radical change (1995).

Counter-narratives with students of African and Caribbean descent

In the ethnographic section, I drew upon the principles of Restorative Justice (RJ) for Dhana's approach to BH, and commodifying the Black experience for the wider school's approach during BHM. The findings suggest that that whilst their approaches were in tension, they unwittingly converged in perpetuating the same deficit understandings of Blackness. I wanted to understand further, how Black students experienced these differing

approaches and their reflections on the changes to the KS3 history curriculum. It is to their responses that I now turn.

1. Dhana's approach to Black History and the tensions with wider school: Black students' experiences of Black History Month/Black History

The established narrative from Dhana is that she revised the revisions to the KS3 history curriculum, to incorporate more diverse histories and narratives, owing to the demographics of the school students would be, "turned off by all that White history." The Senior Leadership Team, according to Dhana, pushed for greater recognition of antiracism across school during BHM, in order to encourage participation from students and teachers. Although she identified several reservations with this approach, including tokenism, she did say that she liked the contents of the booklet and, was a good idea for Black students' involvement. I wanted to understand Black students' experiences of these approaches and the extent to which they agreed, or countered, the established narratives at Parsley High School.

<u>Year 9 – Black children on Dhana's approach in class</u>

Researcher: "So tell me about the topics that you're learned that are Black History topics. What are the things that you've done? Did you learn about slavery?"

Eddie: "Yes, we did."

Researcher: What did you have to do for that?

Daniel: "I think we had to look like how they were treated and how they were taken out of their houses and then they were taken… they were bought, they were brought here [England] or something, like there was a triangle, I forgot, like they transport them and then they do those slave traders. They… [interrupted]."

Nengi: "And then the auctions."

Mercy: "We watched Roots."

Researcher: "You watched Roots? Okay."

Mercy: "Yes, last year."

Nengi: "They torched them and they whipped them."

Researcher: "…What other topics? Or what else did you have to do?"

Eddie: "We had to look into it, even though they will say like imagine yourselves in her shoes or his shoes."

Researcher: "Oh. You had to perform?"

Eddie: "You had to write down."

Daniel: "And we learned a bit about a bit about… learned a bit about Martin Luther King. And Martin Luther King."

Eddie: "And then that woman, about that bus thing."

Researcher: "Rosa Parks."

On wider school's approach – the BHM booklet

Eddie: "I don't… I don't think we should have a separate history but I think we should just all learn about the, you know, instead of just going out, yes, we just learn about

Black History for this just month, let's do it for when it comes up, have it just there, like, the plan of the lessons, just there, just."

Researcher: "Rather than a spotlight, now this is your history."

All: "Yes."

Researcher: "Okay. Do you think you can even break away history like this? So easily pull it apart?"

All: "No."

Researcher: "Because I think you had a booklet or something for Black History, didn't you?"

All: "Yes."

Researcher: "That no one really took seriously."

All: "No."

Individual or collective agency to contribute to, or change the focus of BHM/BH

I then asked students if they felt they could ask teachers for a change in focus for BH, to something that was more relevant to their experiences of being Black in Britain, or different Black histories and was told the following:

Daniel: "I never asked."

Mercy: "They'll probably be like that's what we've been taught as well."

Eddie: "No, they'll probably say that's what you should be learning."

Mercy: "They'll probably say it isn't scheduled, like teachers have a schedule what to learn, when to learn like, you know, what topic that's their priority."

Researcher: “Do you feel you could have a say?”

Nengi: “I think we’re too afraid. I don’t know why.”

Eddie: “I just don’t pay attention. Like I do, but I don’t… I didn’t… I don’t really look deep into it. I know like the way… I only know how they were treated.”

Year 8 (Class 1) Black boys on Dhana’s approach in class

Ismail: “Good effort but she’s bad at it.”

Researcher: “Okay, in what way?”

Ismail: “It’s the effort that counts.”

Mohammed: “She can’t teach.”

Researcher: “Okay. Why is that then?”

Mohammed: “She changes topics too fast.”

Ade: “Yes, we do one subject and then next lesson, we’re doing something different.”

Researcher: “Okay, so tell me what topics. What topics have you learned from Black History in this [interrupted]. . .”

All students: “Martin Luther King.”

Abdul: “Malcolm X.”

Zane: “Rosa Parks.”

Ismail: “Yes, um, what was his name? What was he called?”

Abdul: “We learned very different people.”

Zane: “We barely learned a lot of Black History; the people that is and I feel that’s racist.”

Ismail: “We learned more about Native Indians; we learned that, like, five times.”

Zane: “*Their* stuff.”

Ismail: “But when it was Black History, we done one lesson and we kept changing different people [interrupted].”

Abdul: “We didn’t do it in history.”

Researcher: Oh. So what have you done for Black History, in history?

Abdul: “Nothing.”

Ismail: “Rosa Parks.”

Zane: “We didn’t do it in history. We did it in Maths.”

Abdul: “We did it in Geography about Rosa Parks. Geography. About how… about the bus, was it about the bus?”

Zane: “Yes, but in history I don’t remember what have we learned about a proper Black person. We just learned about….”

Researcher: See, what has been happening in your lessons now, and you’ve been looking at Empire in Africa.

Ismail: “Yes, but that’s not Black History at all.”

Researcher: Why?

Ismail: “It was the empire. It doesn’t tell you how the people were, nothing about the people, it’s the countries.”

Abdul: “We haven’t learned about specific people. We just learn about places and stuff, where it was.”

On wider school's approach – the BHM booklet

Researcher: "You had a booklet or something?"

All: "Yes."

Abdul: "But then it wasn't serious learning. It was like leading to a game where you have to go around and find like information."

Researcher: "And most of it was empty."

All: "Yes."

Ismail: "I think that we should just forget about it because if you bring it up all the time, then the White people will still think they're even more superior."

Ade: "I like being the same as everyone else."

Individual or collective agency to contribute to, or change the focus of BHM/BH

Ade: "I don't want to, like, change Miss's learning schedule"

Abdul: "I don't want to make her feel like what she is teaching is not important, 'cos it still is."

Mohammed: "I don't like hurting feelings, Miss."

Researcher: "Okay, but…it just means then that the same thing happens year on year then, doesn't it? Nothing changes."

Ismail: "So are you saying we should step up?"

Researcher: "No, I'm asking do you feel you can? For all of you here, do you feel you can? Not that I'm saying you should, but I'm just asking you, do you feel you can say something?"

All: “Yes.”

Ismail: “I can. I don’t have a problem. I’ll say anything.”

Year 8 (Class 1) Black girls on Dhana’s approach in class

Iman: “Rosa Parks.”

Asha: “Yes, that’s about it. “

Nailah: “I suppose we didn’t learn about Rosa Parks, have we?”

Researcher: “I think the boys said that in the last group when I asked them. Although the first thing they said, Rosa Parks, that’s it. Anyone else?”

Iman: “I learned that in primary but I don’t remember learning it here.”

Asha: “A little bit we did, about the bus.”

Researcher: So where are all the women in… Black women in history books?

Asha: “*Hidden*.”

Researcher: Yes? Why?

Nailah: “I’m not sure if the teachers care at all about what we learn. They might say that they do but they actually don’t.”

Researcher: “Okay. What message does it send to have no women or even any Black women?”

Nailah: “That there were *no women heroes*.”

Iman: “It shows Black women are *limited* to do… just a *small* amount of things.”

On wider school's approach – the BHM booklet

Nailah: "In every lesson they would give us a sticker about and then teach us a bit about a different person."

Researcher: "Yes. It wasn't taken seriously."

Nailah: "The teachers obviously didn't care."

Researcher: "Yes. So what message does it send, having only a month for Black History or just a slavery unit or something? What message does it send to…[interrupted]"

Asha: "It's not really important."

Iman: "A lot of people don't know about it."

Individual or collective agency to contribute to, or change the focus of BHM/BH

Iman: "No, because when we do, they're like oh, we learn that in next, next lesson."

Asha: "And they already have some form of plan for next lesson and we don't do anything."

Researcher: "Oh, so it's like just keep you quiet for that and then it never comes."

All: "Yes."

Iman: "There must be some type of history of how we came in the first place. We didn't just somehow come here."

Researcher: So why don't we learn? Why… why haven't you said anything more about wanting to learn it?

Nailah: "Because if we are, the teachers will ignore the question and they'll change the subject."

Asha: “We felt rushed. Like, she didn’t…[interrupted]”

Nailah: “She didn’t pace it so if she’d paced it then maybe we could understand it better and when you ask her like a certain question, then she wouldn’t answer because she probably doesn’t know the answer herself.”

Asha: “But instead of saying “oh, let me try and search it for you”, she’ll just change the subject.”

Discussion

The established narrative by Dhana was that she revised the KS3 history curriculum as students would be put off by the incessant focus on White British history; rather, she wanted accurately to reflect the diverse nature of Britishness and contributions to Britain. The established narrative by wider school was that BHM is an example of equality of opportunity and antiracism because it provided an opportunity to showcase the positive contributions of Black people. The use of the booklet during BHM would ostensibly increase student and teacher participation and involvement across school, and the prize would incentivise that participation. Focus group data from Black students countered the narratives of *both* approaches because of their false representation of Black cultures and experiences.

Rather than both their approaches being evidence of equality of opportunity, antiracism and social cohesion, interviews revealed that they found the processes to be further evidence of tokenism and a lack of care and sensitivity towards BH. Ultimately, White students were the beneficiaries of BH. With Dhana’s approach, Year 9 students explained

that the focus was on empathy, watching the film Roots, and writing down how they would feel being a slave. Year 8 students explained to me that they did not learn what they perceived to be BH during history lessons, as the focus was on the British Empire and the colonisers' scramble for Africa rather than African peoples. The topics also changed much too quickly week after week – as I also observed – and for the Year 8 girls, Black women in history were a notable absence. In all examples, notions of White superiority and Black inferiority were reproduced.

Although Dhana is a self-identified Black woman of South Asian descent, Ahmed (2007) argues non-White bodies can embody patterns of social power and so she reflected the Whiteness of the institution by focusing on Black victimhood. Institutional privileging of Whiteness further supported Dhana's approach. How could students possibly be able to empathise with slavery? With the approach of wider school, all students converged to explain that the booklet highlighted the marginal space afforded to Black students. This is because BH suffers from a lack of embeddedness within the established curriculum, and so token figures they studied were only observed because of the creation of the booklet. To Black students, the booklet was perceived to be a game rather than something to be taken seriously and this sent a denigrating message to Black students that their histories do not matter; as a Year 8 student said, '[it] reminds White people of their superiority.'

Ultimately, the beneficiaries of both approaches were White students as they have a history curriculum centred around securing their privileged status. There is a marginal place for Black History that only focuses on Black inferiority, token rather than embedded attempts at demonstrating equality of opportunity, optional engagement across school, and, reducing the experiences of Black people to the trivial in ways that other (privileged) groups do not

face. All students were hesitant to challenge Dhana or wider school's approach and one must consider whether at 13, anyone would. In historically White spaces such as English schools, structural privileging of Whiteness and greater "acts of disregard stemming from unconscious attitudes about White inferiority and Black inferiority" (Davis, 1989:1576), creates a hostile climate for the Black child and a sense of powerlessness. Therefore, from a critical race perspective, liberal values of equality of opportunity and antiracism, masks negative racialised consequences for Black students.

2. Revisions to the KS3 history curriculum

Year 9 – Black children

Eddie: "They still don't… don't accept the fact that you're a different colour than them."

Daniel: "I don't know. It's just that like some people don't really know how like how painful it was for the Black people and some don't even care."

Eddie: "It's like… like even though… even though people accept gay people, they don't some people still don't accept them. So it's the same as that. Right now, some people just… there are people that sees you, just hate you. Just because you are Black and it's the same . . . [interrupted]."

Nengi: "They've never seen anything different, other than what they've seen around them."

Mercy: "Like seeing something different makes you scared sometimes and you just want to get rid of it."

On Black erasure resulting in racist consequences in school

Eddie: "They act scared, Miss [of us]."

Researcher: "Scared. Okay. Why? Because they think you're aggressive?"

Eddie: "Probably."

Daniel: "I'm not that aggressive."

Eddie: "Yes, when you're outside of school and they're like will just be… will just be like stood there and then sometimes the police will just stroll past {smiling)."

Daniel: "If they're in school now, the teachers won't say anything like when they do something, so, so maybe they throw a chair at someone, the teachers will help accept… will know that they were… they were going to do that, they'll accept it and think "oh, this Black boy."

I asked all students if teachers treated them differently on account of being Black boys, or Black girls

Daniel: "No, I think we're just seen as Black."

Eddie: "They think we're naughty and cheeky [Black boys]"

Mercy: "Yes, they should all be… they should all… everybody should know about it because if every… because if everyone learns about only… [Interrupted]…Just the White culture, they'll all turn out exactly like White culture."

Daniel: "They just… it's not really fair because everyone should know about everyone, really."

Nengi to Eddie: "Are they trying to take the Black… the Black out then? The Black British people?"

Eddie responds: "I think they're trying to… they're trying… the events that happened, even though it was so big, they're trying to take it away like…They want to wipe it out completely. They want everyone to forget about it and… and it's going to be really hard for people to grow up like because they… they don't know, they're uneducated."

Year 8 (Class 1) Black boys

The conversation between the boys after the word association game turns to how Black people are viewed in school and one boy explains that they are viewed negatively in school. I ask him to explain, but immediately another boy glares at him and whispers, "It won't set a good example." I wanted the first boy to speak freely and reminded the whole group that what they said to me during the interviews would remain confidential and not find its way back to their teachers. They then explained to me the racist incidents they face in school based upon wider anti-Black attitudes.

Ismail: "Yes, there are some racist teachers here."

Researcher: "Do you feel that you are stereotyped as a Black boy?"

All: "Yes."

Researcher: :Okay, in what way though, because that's why I'm asking?"

All: "Racism."

Abdul: "If a White person in the class asks for something, the teacher would do it but if a Black… if a Black person like, I've come across this, not like friendly like can I say name?" [He then explains about differing levels of treatment compared to his White counterparts and that this racism is shared by all Black students irrespective of gender]

I then explained the history revisions to students and asked them to reflect on the possibilities of a British identity through 'our island story'.

On revisions to the KS3 history curriculum

Abdul: "That's bad."

Researcher: "Why?"

Abdul: "Because you can't make someone feel the same as you."

Mohammed: "It's kind of a bit racist."

Abdul: "People are different, with different opinions."

Mohammed: "You can't make someone into what you want."

Ismail: "No, you can't. You can't make them feel what you want [them] to be. Doesn't matter how many cup of teas!"

Ade: "But then you always come from somewhere else if you're Black."

Zane: "They all… the whole… all… all us Black people come from somewhere."

On Black erasure resulting in racist consequences in school

They explained to me that two or three months prior to my arrival, they conducted a "social experiment" amongst each other to show the differing levels of treatment experienced by Black and White pupils. I asked them to explain exactly what the experiment involved and what it showed

Ismail: "I remember our old tutor we did the experiment in form. We told this White girl to take her phone out and she's on her phone and he went up to her and said, "Please can you put your phone away?" And we told this other guy to take, he's Black,

we told him to take his phone out. The guy started shouting at him and then he sent him out."

Year 8 (Class 1) Black girls

On revisions to the KS3 history curriculum

Iman: "But why have they chosen just White history? Why did we have to get rid of a certain one? Just to feel more British?"

Researcher: "Yes, which is what?"

Iman: "Well, British is made up of like different cultures."

On Black erasure resulting in racist consequences in school

Asha: "Inside of school, you do hear people being racist."

Nailah: "Oh yes, you do hear."

Researcher: You do?

Nailah: "Yes, but it's more they think it's a jokey way, but it's not funny.

People use the word… the N word a lot in school."

Asha: "*Very* often."

Iman: "Because like they hear it from songs."

Asha: "But then they try and use the word as in, oh that's my "mmm", as in that's my friend."

Researcher: "But are you saying that *White* students are using this word?"

All: "Yes."

A large portion of the end of BH topics with Year 8 and 9, in the spring-summer terms were overtaken by school trips, sports days, assessments and school holidays. As such BH topics were fragmented and incomplete as Dhana had to rush through to the end. As the

students expressed a similar feeling of being rushed through elements of BH, I wanted them to reflect on whether their experiences of this was similar for other histories. I chose the topic similar to African enslavement in terms of gravity and asked them to reflect upon the teaching of it. Their responses suggested there are protected histories based upon race.

3. Protected histories

Protected histories were another significant finding during interviews African and Caribbean students. All students indicated that the Holocaust is taught more sensitively and with respect in ways Black History is not. I indicate one example below from Year 9 students that encapsulates the sentiments shared across the participants.

<u>Year 9 – Black children</u>

Daniel: "No, it's shocking how like when we have a Jewish like a lesson, it's like they tell us about the bad things that happened, they did things, the heroes, the saviours, they tell us all about that but when it comes to Black History month, *it's just slavery, pain, but no heroes, no one stood up, even though people stood up, they will say they sat back down*. *Like they gave up*. They wouldn't really mention [interrupted]."

Nengi: "Or like they died."

Daniel: "They wouldn't really mention like the big things they took, the opportunities they had. They wouldn't like… it's like they're hiding it away from us. It's a secret you want to know but you can't."

Nengi: "I think… I think it's just the same, the way they try, they tell us, they show us the…. They show us how many people died. And like Black people died, right, and so

many people and Jews died too. And they, I think it's the same thing. They… yes. I don't think there's a difference."

Eddie: "Like you hear about yes, what's happened to… to Jewish people and then they talk about the numbers that died, do you know what I mean, but like, a lot more people, more Black people died than Jewish people died."

Daniel: "They don't number them, yes."

Eddie: "And even in that time, when Jewish people died, a lot of Black people died at the same time as well. Because of the same thing, by the same people, but they don't mention that."

Daniel: "They don't mention it because the Jews were White. Like most of them were White and it's because they were part of the White people so they can't like remove that, the colour, like if they were a different colour, they would have not mentioned it."

Discussion

From a CRT perspective, racism occupies many areas, both visible and hidden, which makes its effects even more difficult for those who bear its brunt. However, racism is also *gendered* and the data from Black boys in particular, revealed the prevalence of gendered racism at Parsley High School. In the theoretical chapter, I explained that Whites interpret their world through a White racial frame (Feagin, 2010) that dominates their ontological and epistemological understanding of society, based on race.

Black boys indicated that they are stereotyped in school as aggressive. Year 8 students even conducted what they termed "a social experiment" to reveal to each other, the

gendered racialised disciplinary measures directed towards them. This type of behaviour directed towards Black boys or men in particular, is called Black misandry. Black misandry "refers to an exaggerated pathological aversion toward Black men created and reinforced in societal, institutional, and individual ideologies, practices and behaviours" (Smith et al., 2007:563). For Black girls, they explained that they are perceived in school as 'ghetto' and incapable of achieving anything. A Year 8 boy also confirmed this by saying that Black students irrespective of gender face racism in school. This type of behaviour directed towards Black girls in particular is called Black misogyny: aversion towards Black women (ibid). Black misandry and Black misogyny, "exists to justify and reproduce the subordination and oppression" of Black men and women (ibid). The examples of gendered racism provided by Black boys and girls at Parsley High School, support previous ethnographic work in this area (Gillborn, 1990; Blair, 2001; Fuller, 1984; Mirza, 1992; Sewell, 1997; Wright, 1986).

Students explained that the acceptability and prevalence of racism at Parsley was in part, due to wider acceptance of anti-Blackness – the KS3 history curriculum being one such reflection. In an attempt to quell White melancholic anxieties about Blackness contaminating Britishness (read: Whiteness), a Year 9 student explains that the revisions to the KS3 history curriculum is an attempt to 'wipe out' all presence of BH and make everyone the same: other rather, make everyone White. The consequences are dangerous for Black children and as all students explained, there is an acceptability and tolerance for racism within school walls, such as common use of the 'N' word. The erasure of BH from the established KS3 history curriculum, contributes to anti-Blackness and the prevalence of racism in school. Smith et al., explains

> As a result of societal racial stereotypes and the racial priming socialization process, Black men and Black women tend to be marginalized, hated, rendered invisible, put under increased surveillance, or assigned into one or more socially acceptable stereotypical categories (e.g., lazy, unintelligent, violent, hypersexual, preference for welfare, uninterested in working for a living) (2007:563).

Where BH was engaged with, students explained that it reaffirmed the binary of White superiority and Black inferiority as privileged histories, such as the Holocaust, focused on the specificity of the Jewish experience; whereas BH only focused on a seemingly passive acceptance of racist domination, with no historical context. Therefore, the KS3 history curriculum fails to encompass a cohesive British identity, which all students share. As Ismail explained, "no matter how many cups of teas," identity is not fixed and ahistorical and Gove's attempt at fostering an inclusive island story suffers structural and personal limitations because of its focus on White British culture. Through my analyses, the findings help to shed light on the continuing presence of everyday racism at micro, meso and macro levels (Essed, 1991).

4. Ways the KS3 history curriculum could be more socially cohesive and anti-racist

Once Black students had indicated that there are White beneficiaries to revisions to the KS3 history curriculum, I asked them to reflect on ways these instances of racism – structurally and interpersonally – could be minimised and I indicate some of their responses below.

Year 9 – Black children

Eddie: "Even though... even though we were learning it, I think we shouldn't just be learning about the bad things like what about… what about the good things the Black people did? What about how Nelson…[interrupted]."

Nengi: "If they could teach both of the histories together, Black History and White history together, with the negative and the positive things together."

Daniel: "If they could not separate it, like how we've seen like we have history like in like school starts in September till July. Like, there's no separation and White is always around. Like White history, White history, White, history. There's not ever a White month or something so if you just break apart that Black month history and let it free, like in one day in history we learn this, and then the next day this, then there wouldn't be no problems."

Nengi: "Yes and make it casual. Don't point out and leaving it as if it's something big because we know it's big and it should be treated as the same as other lessons and don't exaggerate it or…"

Mercy: "Yes, just have it just, like, a normal…Just normal."

Year 8 (Class 1) Black boys

Ismail: "[BH] As a normal lesson."

Ade: "I will never feel British."

Zane: "Include Black."

Mohammed: "Put it more in the curriculum, the actual learning program."

Ismail: "Those topics should be taught equally."

Year 8 (Class 1) Black girls

Asha: "Teach us something other than World War I and World War II and the queens and…"

Iman: "They just see us as one Black group."

Nailah: "Because we already know about like slavery so we could go like further into it."

Discussion

Black students' responses suggest a growing frustration with the separatedness of BH with "normal" history and a request for a greater embeddedness in the established history curriculum so that Black is viewed as *integral* rather than exceptional to the narrative of Britishness. Modood highlighted the problems with applying the category 'Black' to South Asians as it ignored cultural racisms and the different experiences of Asians that are not shared by African diasporic communities (1994); however, I draw upon his contention of this category to students' responses about BH. It suffers from crippling homogeneity: a singular, uncomplicated story that subsumes all Black peoples. Students indicated that more variety is needed and a move towards heterogeneity of Black histor*ies*. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) echo a similar concern with liberal multiculturalism only showing the positives of different groups, masking the tensions with the category Black, and different experiences of so-called Black peoples. Lastly, students explained that the focus for history should not be forcing an identity upon students, but rather allow the Black child to never lose sight of his or her Africanness, whilst still being *integral* to the narrative of Britishness.

Summary of interview data

Focus group data with KS3 students provided counter-narratives to the established national and institutional discourses about the English education system being equal opportunity and antiracist spaces for all students. Black students revealed that racism is also gendered. Black misandry and Black misogyny guided the experiences of Black students and this was in part, reflective of anti-Blackness. Nowhere is this more keenly witnessed, and experienced, in the KS3 history curriculum that has in effect, 'White washed' history in accordance with White conscious and unconscious 'acts of disregard' towards Black people (Davis, 1989).

Rampton (1981) and Swann (1985) shared concerns about a curriculum that ignores the needs of Black children ultimately treating him/her as though they were White, and students at Parsley High School also echoed these sentiments suggesting that identity is not something that can be imposed, especially if that identity only privileges White students. However, Black students lacked the agency, individually or collectively to contribute to BHM/BH owing perhaps, to the misandry and misogyny they faced. Therefore, the intended anti-racist and socially cohesive purpose of integrating BH was not realised.

Conclusion

The empirical data and analysis presented in this chapter, suggested that racism operates at a micro-level, supported by institutional and national policy anti-Blackness. BH at Parsley High School suffered from a tension between Dhana and wider school. The subsequent message to Black students of both their approaches was that BH is only engaged with when it comes into contact with White History and re-told in a singular unproblematic way subsuming all Black experiences and peoples. The purpose of BH for KS3 students was to reaffirm White superiority and Black students expressed further issues with the annexing of BH.

The separatedness rather than embeddedness of BH sent a denigrating message to Black students that their histories do not matter, and is vulnerable to institutional constraints (lack of time) and a lack of care and sensitivity (shown through the booklet). Structural non-commitment to BH mirrors a similar approach at national policy level, and the limitations shown through liberal multiculturalism is evidence of White supremacy permeating BH at Parsley High School. Consequently, Black students experience the KS3 history curriculum negatively and expressed several concerns with racism manifesting within the school's walls due to Black marginalisation.

CHAPTER 7 – Conclusion

Introduction

This thesis explored KS3 students' experiences of BHM and BH with a particular focus on African and Caribbean students in two English secondary schools. The rationale for this is because Black children are still a 'problem' demographic within the British education system in terms of their achievement (DfE, 2013a; DfE, 2014a; DfE, 2015) and experience of schooling. As Maylor explained, there is still a 'poverty of knowledge' about teaching Black children (2014). In order to answer the overall aim of this study, my research was guided by four research questions. Within the research schools:

1. What are the current institutional pedagogies for teaching BHM and BH?
2. What do KS3 students and their history teachers understand the *purpose* of BHM and BH to be?
3. How do students of African and Caribbean descent in secondary schools experience BHM and BH?
4. To what extent do Black students have individual or collective agency to determine the approach to BHM and BH?

This chapter is divided into three parts. Firstly, I will explain the similarities and differences across both research sites, Limehart Secondary School and Parsley High School. Then I lead into answering the research questions and end by providing the originality of the thesis and reflections on the implications for future policy-making.

Similarities and differences across both research sites

There are several key similarities across both research sites. At both schools racism was a normal and embedded feature of the history curriculum, including within BH. For BH, topics centred on victimhood and the fight for justice and equality. For example, at Limehart Secondary School, they studied Life on the Middle Passage, and the White women pioneers behind abolition of the slave trade. At Parsley High School, students studied the Empires in Africa and Asia, and contributions to British society from Black people. BH was never fully integrated at both schools and mirrored wider non-commitment to BH at institutional and national policy level. This reduced BH to the liberal multiculturalism of exotic lifestyles and othering, always outside the mainstream British narrative observed during the 1970s. Although the empirical research is small, it reveals that since then, not much has changed in terms of approaching BH in a compensatory, deficit-informed way, ultimately privileging White interests.

There were protected histories such as the Holocaust, which was widely legitimated and taught in its entirety without structural limitations such as a lack of time, school trips, assessments or lack of knowledge and resources. All students suggested to me they understood history as a racialised manifestation in which White History was more superior than 'Other' histories. At both schools, pedagogical tools were used that silenced critical dialogue and students found ways to disengage with BH topics where the content conflicted with their personal understandings of Blackness. The implications of which was the BHM booklet at Parsley High School, and ending on abolition at Limehart Secondary School, provided a lack of context to the racism they knew and faced in more contemporary times and parallels what Carby argued about the audience of BHM/BH *not*

being Black students (1979). Lastly, attempts to promote the liberal values of equal opportunities and antiracism promoted in both schools was largely a guise for assimilation into White dominant culture as Black students pointed to the increase in racism and racist incidents inside school.

There are areas of divergence across both research sites. Teachers at both schools had a different rationale for keeping BH at their schools. For Kevin, Joanna and Anne at Limehart Secondary School, it was part of their obligation and was almost diversity overload; however, for Dhana at Parsley High School, it was a necessary component to teaching history because the focus on White British history only was unbalanced and inaccurate. Teachers at both schools highlighted the structural limitations resulting in the curtailing of BH, but at Limehart Secondary School, racial microaggressions dominated Black children's experiences of studying BH. This could be the result of teachers' own mono-cultural experience of schooling; however, this is further compounded by a lack of definition relating to BH in terms of how it could be taught and to what end at national policy level. A similar absence is observed at teacher training level in terms of embedding a clear antiracist framework for teaching diversity. Consequently, this suggests that the institutionalisation of BH will always be vulnerable to poor practice.

Dhana attempted actively to resist the wider school's approach of commodifying the Black experience through a BHM booklet, but inadvertently used a restorative justice approach to reaffirm White privilege by repairing White harm with Black students. Again, a lack of support at institutional and national policy levels meant Dhana had to write schemes of work alone. Lastly, as a consequence of Black misandry and Black misogyny, students at Parsley High School felt incapable of individually or collectively attempting to determine

the focus for BHM/BH. At Limehart, this was different for a few students who took matters into their own hands, but it was severely limited and curtailed by their institutions.

Research questions

- **What are the current institutional pedagogies for teaching BHM and BH?**

This study was small scale and based upon two schools, so the findings do not attempt to generalise to all schools. However, the findings do indicate that no matter the topics chosen for BHM/BH, Black children can still expect to face separate and distinct lessons. Special provision is afforded to BH to cater for the 'needs' of seemingly homogenous Black children through BHM and topics within the KS3 history curriculum that focus on elements of BH fall into one of two camps: *in opposition to Whiteness*, either to be compared to 'White' advancement, such as the superior weaponry available in the West against the primitiveness of Africans who wanted to trade goods during the slave trade (taught at Limehart Secondary School); or in conflict with 'White' history, for example, colonial soldiers being treated terribly during World Wars I and II and not getting the recognition they deserved (taught at Parsley High school). BH also appears where it is *celebratory and congratulatory* as an addendum to the broader Whiteness-as-usual history curriculum, such as the BHM booklet given to students at Parsley High indicating the freedoms 'we' can all enjoy because of the end of racism; or the successes of multiculturalism, such as the White women pioneers and resisters fighting for abolition presented at Limehart Secondary School. These schools have highlighted the problems with continuing to assume liberal multiculturalism is antiracist and socially cohesive. For BH there is still too much focus on essentialising Blackness.

- **What do KS3 students and their history teachers understand the *purpose* of BHM and BH to be?**

Interviews with teachers at both schools and interviews with KS3 students revealed that BH has a functionalist purpose within the history curriculum and wider schools. It has a function that the wider history curriculum does not. BH at both schools bore the burden of encouraging anti-racism (i.e. making non-Black students appreciate Black humanity) and fostering social cohesion, seemingly through empathy. Positioning BH in this way removes the opportunity to teach it for educational purposes – because of its historical significance – but choosing to incorporate BH only where it has an active, or interest convergent function of "doing something." Even where it "does something," the empirical data suggests BH merely provides a stabilizing counterweight to Whiteness (Bell, 1992) because it is centred on reaffirming everything that Whiteness is not: primitive, barbaric and cultural.

The implications of this on the Black students are a greater awareness of the prevalence of racism – within and outside the school walls – and greater feelings of alienation and disconnection with history. In essence, the lack of a clear antiracist framework underpinning BH created the opportunity for Whiteness to dominate its scope and direction. This domination is secured institutionally and at national policy level because the requirements of equal opportunities and social cohesion mask racialised inequalities by not observing how BH is conceptualised and engaged with nor how Black students experience it.

- **How do students of African and Caribbean descent in secondary schools experience BHM and BH?**

In both secondary schools, the findings lend support to previous academic research in the area of Black students' experience of the history curriculum (Harris and Reynolds, 2014; Hawkey and Prior, 2011; Traille, 2006). However, I argued that their negative experiences could largely be attributed to the wider disease permeating all institutions (White supremacy) which impacts on the way BH is conceptualised, positioned and engaged with by teachers and students. All teachers, irrespective of ethnicity, could perpetuate the same patterns of social power as there is a wider non-commitment to recognising and acknowledging Black people in Britain. This legitimates the reproduction of 'everyday racism' observed at institutional and classroom levels (Essed, 1991). As BH has a functionalist role of promoting anti-racism in a way the broader history curriculum does not, the Black child is positioned to carry the whole weight of his Blackness by encountering BH (Fanon, [1952] 1986). He/she must do this by learning about Black people through the lens of White racism that conceptualises BH in highly restrictive ways, but *always contrary* to Whiteness. Consequently, the Black child can expect to encounter a hostile environment during BH that is dominated by mundane, extreme and environmental stress (Pierce, 1995). Black boys face elements of 'Black misandry' and Black girls, 'Black misogyny,' all with the ultimate consequence of subordinating Black students (Smith et al., 2007). Black students revealed the direct and indirect racism they face through BH and history curriculum and the benefits obtained by recognising them as valid holders of knowledge in terms of illuminating such practices.

Black erasure at national policy and institutional level filtered down to classroom level through a lack of integration, which has resulted in the tolerance for racist attitudes and continues to support Macpherson's findings of institutional racism (1999). Racism mediates the experiences of Black children at both schools and I observed Black children 'signing out' during lessons, for example, through misbehaviours and overt expressions of boredom. I would argue the constant burden Black children are expected to carry ultimately led to some displaying patters of Racial Battle Fatigue,

> Frustration; anger; exhaustion; physical avoidance; psychological or emotional withdrawal; escapism; acceptance of racist attitudes; resistance; verbally, nonverbally, or physically fighting back; and coping strategies (Smith et al., 2007:552).

The reason for this was to combat the harmful effects of everyday racism that continues to guide their experiences of school. Some students, however, were able to use the margins as a source of strength and it is to the final question that I now turn.

- **To what extent do Black students have individual or collective agency to determine the approach to BHM and BH?**

Black students have expressed that they perceive themselves to be a socially devalued group in schools and this is compounded and reaffirmed because of the systematic erasure of Blackness. Where it appears, it offers an important stabilising counterweight to Whiteness; therefore, the findings of this research indicate that Black students had very little individual or collective agency overtly to determine the approach to BHM/BH. I would argue that based on my interviews with Black students, this is the result of Racial

Battle Fatigue owing to the repetition of the victim-focused narrative for BH. Black students in the main 'learn helplessness' and lost interest in what they learnt from BH, feeling powerless in conveying to their teachers their dissatisfaction with topics chosen for BH (White and Cones, 1999). This could be why a Year 9 student at Parsley High School said, "I think we're too afraid. I don't know why." For a socially devalued group, shown to experience oversurveillance, racialised disciplinary practices evidenced clearly by the Year 8 boys' "social experiment" at Parsley High School, it is no surprise that Black students feel this way (Gosai, 2009). Instead, the majority of Black students disengaged at the behavioural level by talking in class, playing on their tablets or mobile phones, or generally "messing about."

Encouragingly, there was an example at Limehart Secondary School of Black students using the margins as a source of strength. It is important to stress that these students did not organise their own classes for history, but it was taught as part of an E-Baccalaureate. A few Black students planned their own classes on the Black Panther Party and taught a lesson to their peers, but warned me that they were unable to fully implement their lessons as their teachers cut their plans down to one lesson. Again, this is a consequence of institutionalising BH: peaks of progress followed by wider exercises of power that ensure White dominance. The power of a white racial reaction (Omi and Winant, 2015) was never too far from these students, curtailing their efforts to reconcile their Blackness with humanity, recognising it as valuable and important.

Originality of thesis

The originality of this thesis lies in its provision of an in-depth account of Black students' negative classroom experiences studying BHM/BH and contextualising it within wider institutional and ideological racisms that reproduce and entrench anti-Blackness. Colourblindness is the established political discourse in England that saturates and guides institutional decision-making; however, this approach has racialised outcomes. That is, race and racism is everywhere, including in education. As Maylor suggests, "race habitually informs students' experience of the curriculum" (2014:39) and as this thesis reveals impacted upon conceptualisations of 'our island story' within the KS3 history curriculum because of the renewed political narrative about Britishness.

Colourblindness, as I have explained in the theoretical framework chapter, is deeply racialised rather than absent of race, the consequence of which is to mask the ideology underpinning this discourse. Whiteness, the hegemonic ideology, is the lens through which society, people and resources are judged and allocated; therefore, it dominates the construction of the history curriculum, inferred to provide the history of Britain, but deeply inscribed with White privilege through the processes of collective memory and collective forgetting (Feagin, 2010). Black contributions to Britain, their different racialised, gendered, and classed experiences are forgotten and, instead, Black people are made to feel permanent outsiders.

The findings of this thesis concur with Ladson-Billings (1998) that a 'race neutral' curriculum, a seemingly colour-blind (read: White centred) curriculum, has the consequence of homogenising Black people, "They just see us as one Black group" as a

Year 8 student at Parsley High School explained. Homogenising Blacks creates the perception that they are an "alien" presence (Year 8 student, Limehart School) that the government is trying to "wipe out" (Year 9 student, Parsley High School). This wiping out or 'establishment amnesia' (Bunce and Field, 2014) occurs because Whites are also homogenised, uncomplicatedly, and positioned as sharing a common set of values, history and identity that Blacks do not. Therefore, this thesis also highlights the problems of racialising history as a product of White supremacy.

Although Maylor (2014) suggests that the integration of diversity is difficult for teachers when the established discourse is one of uniformity and encouraging the promotion of shared (read: White) British values, the findings of this thesis reveal that teaching BH is done precisely to accentuate a seemingly homogenous Black identity. Their version of a multicultural curriculum, achieved by integrating elements of BH into the KS3 history curriculum, revealed the inherent problems with 'liberal multiculturalism' (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). This is because it trivialised BH as a cultural endeavour, rather than a historically significant one, and was left vulnerable to unconscious and conscious teacher racism at Limehart Secondary School and a commodification of the Black experience at Parsley High School. This is further compounded during teacher training as there is no statutory obligation for teaching minoritised children. How is it possible for largely White teachers to teach topics they do not know about, particularly if this lack of knowledge is supported and encouraged by institutional and national-policy 'establishment amnesia'? (Bunce and Field, 2014). Anti-Blackness is ingrained at multiple levels of the English education system and so it should be no surprise that teachers avoided difficult conversations about race.

Race consciousness (Omi and Winant, 2015) is a key feature of the KS3 history curriculum where Whiteness-as-normal history is afforded the entire school year, assessed, revisited and widely legitimated through external events and funding. Protected history, such as the Holocaust, is one such example. However, Black History provides the counter-weight to the Whiteness-as-normal history, where "White is everything that Black is not" (Maylor, 2014:53) and, subsequently, can be used to project White anxieties about Blackness, forever relegating Black people to a victim, savage, or primitive status. BH in this study has been shown to have a functionalist role in a way that 'normal' (White) History does not. In the latter, White History can be told because of its historical significance, to "help pupils gains a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past" (DfE, 2013b). Contrastingly, BH is racialised and annexed onto history for one month or a separate unit rather than being integrated and inflicted with the problems of allowing Whiteness to dominate the scope and direction of the history of Black peoples.

I concur with Bell (2004) that this is why the hopes of racial reform will always be "unfulfilled." As I explained in the theoretical framework chapter, demands of Black people during the 1980s especially, led to demands for greater representation of Black people in school textbooks. The Rampton (1981) and Swann (1985) reports supported this demand. It was accommodated not because the State realised the consequences of Black erasure but because the State wanted to preserve and protect the proliferation of White supremacy and so the limited introduction of BH was the 'lesser of two evils.' Today, elements of BH can be incorporated into schools in line with their statutory obligation to promote SMSC (Ofsted, 2004) and Fundamental British Values (2014b), but there is no *statutory* commitment within the subject of history. Schools can avoid the charge of racism if they incorporate aspects of diversity, such as BH, but I strongly concur with Ahmed

(2006) that by not exploring how it is conceptualised or neither engaged with, nor experienced by those it seeks to include is tantamount to a nonperformativity of antiracism. Institutional racism is not inaction as both schools have sought to include BH; instead it is the repetition of racist actions and outcomes guiding the norms of the institution. These norms are deeply unchallenged, such as the structural privileging of Whiteness-as-normal history at the expense of a peripheral place for BH.

CRT has been very useful for illuminating racist practises in the classroom during BHM/BH that marginalise Black students and contribute to their negative experiences of studying history. I concur with Maylor that part of the challenge for English teachers is that of low teacher "attitudes and assumptions about Black people and Black children's behaviour" (2014:85); however, a critical race analysis allowed this thesis to extend Maylor's argument.

In the classroom, the ethnographic data at both schools revealed that various types of conscious and unconscious racism dominate the Black child's experience of history. Black people are conceptualised as victims of circumstance. However, this is not the result of a few 'bad apples' but, rather, reflective of wider structural and ideological influences, namely that of White supremacy. And it subsumes us all, not just White teachers. Even Dhana, a British South Asian teacher, attempted to subvert the history curriculum to include marginalised voices and experiences, but perpetuated the same deficit narrative about Black people. This is because the prevailing ideology of White supremacy has saturated all aspects of British society, informing our view of the world and its inhabitants through the lens of a 'White racial frame' (Feagin, 2010). So long as powerful Whites can pick and choose when colourblindness (the promotion of liberal values) and colour-

consciousness (BHM) suits them, they are complicit in investing in Whiteness's privileges and the permanence of non-White races being positioned as inferior. Therefore, I would agree with Maylor that for teaching to be transformative and positively impact on Black children, teachers must "unlearn negative perceptions about Black children and actually believe that Black students, like their White peers, can achieve highly" (2014:183). However, as the findings suggest, anti-Blackness is integral to Whiteness and will always be "nothing but false and oppressive" (Roediger, 1994:13). Teachers are not without influence from wider society and their institutions, an important consideration that a critical race analysis offers. Therefore, I would question the extent to which they can be agents of change whilst Whiteness-as-normal continues of manifest uninhibited, within and outside the school walls.

Implications for future policy-making

It could be inferred that I am suggesting BH will not be able to meet the demands of Black children once it has been institutionalised. I concur with Bell who argues

> Black people will never gain full equality in this country. Even those herculean [sic] efforts we hail as successful will produce no more than temporary "peaks of progress," short-lived victories that slide into irrelevance as racial patterns adapt that maintain White dominance. This is a hard-to-accept face that all history verifies. We must acknowledge it, not as a sign of submission, but as an act of ultimate defiance (1992:12).

We must accept that so long as Whiteness is the prevailing ideology that guides our political, economic and social spheres, BH will always be left wanting because Black students are not the intended audience. All students irrespective of ethnicity, expressed wanting BH to be integrated into the 'normal' history curriculum. This is supported by the academic work of Traille (2006) and Whitburn and Yemoh (2012). The findings of this research support Traille's findings that negative portrayals of Black people in history textbooks are supported by peers and teachers; Black children feel a mixture of alienation and apathy towards the topics of study; that emotive topics should be taught sensitively; and there should be greater integration into the mainstream History curriculum (2006). However, this is where our similarities end.

Traille suggests that Black students

> were tired of having their noses firmly pressed on the windows of history and only getting a distorted reflection if, any back. They were not asking for special favours, just fairness and equality in representation within the established curriculum . . . We can, if we are daring enough, teach history in ways that will give them tools of the past, the present and future, through a variety of windows that will empower them (2006:pp.199-200).

The processes of white racial priming (Smith, 2004), collective memory and forgetting (Feagin, 2010) and the saturation of racism, have shown that this is not possible. The historical overview that a CRT analyses offers shows that integration leads to power being taken from the hands of insurgency movements (Black communities) who push for radical change and, *institutionalised*. Issues of power and its implications cannot be ignored.

Institutionalisation involves successes but it also involves defeats (Omi and Winant, 2015). Equal opportunities and antiracism are ill-defined liberal myths that protect White interests. So too is the notion that there are a set of British values that all can share as identities are not fixed and particularly problematic if those values are assimilationist (DfCLG, 2016).

Racism has and continues to dominate the school experience of Black students. CRT has allowed this thesis to broaden the lens through which racism manifests, from the micro (interpersonal) interactions at classroom level via the unchallenged, taken-for-granted non-commitment to BH at institutional level, to the White racial ideology permeating the same deficit understandings about Black people at national policy level. What happens in the classroom is not solely the fault of individual teachers. Even well-intentioned teachers have been shown in this thesis to embody the same unequal patterns of social power; rather, they reflect and are reflected by wider racial inequalities. Before we can begin to explore racial inequalities and strategies for overcoming them, the first step is to understand the various manifestations of racism at all levels and the invisible guiding hand of Whiteness that structures our society. Using the valuable knowledge from those whose 'faces are at the bottom of the well' (Bell, 1992), can we understand the permanence of racism, its various iterations and how it impacts upon particular groups. The ultimate goal is not to achieve fairness and equality in representation within the established racist curriculum; rather, it is to dismantle Whiteness in all its forms.

Final remarks

The implications for future policy-making on the history curriculum must consider that it is important, historically valid, and significant to teach diverse British histories in all schools. Britain cannot be disentangled from its interactions, oppression and colonial legacies of the wider world, so these are, in part, British History. However, such diversity should not only appear where there have been oppressive interactions with Whites, reducing the histories of non-Whites solely to that of (interpersonal) racism and oppression.

That said, so long as there is an inaccurate understanding about racism, perceived to be the ignorance of a few, Black children will continue to suffer as the result of institutional and ideological racism. Relatedly, so long as BH is positioned to "do something," Whiteness-as-usual will continue to go unmarked and uncomplicated. Social cohesion cannot be achieved in this way as choosing not to engage with race consciousness and the legacies of racism today means that all teachers need to interrogate the liberal values of equal opportunities, social cohesion, which involves the distribution of power and meritocracy by asking, "who benefits?" In this way, this thesis concurs with Maylor who suggests that educators must "interrogate the category 'Whiteness' to . . . fully appreciate its power and influence as a racial category" (2014:181). With the collaboration of socially devalued groups, only then can the antiracist imperatives in schools develop meaningfully and the experiences of Black children begin to change.

Appendices

1. Appendix 1 – Pedagogical tools for teaching Black History

YOUTUBE VIDEOS	WEBSITES USED
-'Human Trafficking modern day slavery in America' -The Middle Passage documentary by Steven Spielberg for Year 8s -Amistad film -Kevin chose a random video with stormy seas whilst students were placed under tables -Negro Prison Blues and Songs -Leadbelly - pick a bale of cotton -Destiny's Child's version of Amazing Grace -The Atlantic Slave Trade -Roots film -Slavery and Plantation -African music -African soldiers in the First World War	-Anti-Slavery International definition of slavery -BBC -Bristol & Slavery -Port cities Bristol -Liverpoolmuseums.org -Abolition.e2bn.org -Wikipedia -American abolitionists -Google image of a slave ship, slave branding/branding equipment, shackles; how slaves were 'packed'; slaves huddled together -Realhistories.org -BBC Bitesize Triangular Trade reading -Understanding slavery.com -Bristol and slavery

WORKBOOKS/SHEETS	OTHER
-Books for groups, 'Minds and Machines' asking: "why did ships smell so much?" -Keywords sheet and use of iPad i.e. cargo, trade and students use Wikipedia for words they do not understand -Gap-filling exercise worksheet on 'trade' of slaves -Writing task after role-play: 'How would you feel in a ship on the Middle Passage?' -Assessment task: to plan and construct an extended essay answer on what like was really like on the Middle Passage. Students given A3 coloured paper to plan and the use of websites from their iPads. -Encouraged to use 'wow' words that are descriptive -Group work on how being captured made slaves 'feel' (Imran, Asian boy points out problems with Wikipedia use) -To investigate arguments for and against the abolition of slavery -To examine why so many people in Britain were involved in the slave trade -Kevin created a worksheet on Black soldiers' contribution to the war effort	-iPad use for research (slavery in the modern world and the New World) -Role-playing about the Middle Passage -Role-playing about slave auctions (small, descriptive cards made by Kevin) -Role-playing about Life on a Plantation -Homework: write a written account of a slave auction in the West Indies c.1750 OR design a poster advertising one. -Silent working during written work -Multicultural event at lunchtime -The Butler film -Home Office statistics on modern day slavery in the UK -PowerPoint on Adam Smith -To create a group presentation about one key person or event concerning the campaign for the abolition of slavery: gives students information sheet on Elizabeth Heyrick and told to read silently -Anne's BHM contribution with Y10s: students created a poster around one of the following areas: 1. Civil Rights 2. Music 3. Media 4. Life as a slave 5. Racism in the USA 6. Civil Rights -Jack's BHM contribution with Year 9s - Contemporary Slavery Teachers' Resources: 'What do you see?' (Image of White women with banner 'abolish slavery'). Looking a contemporary slavery and choose one person they are interested in. Group work with instruction: "come up with a sentence about what it means to be a slave" and they are given examples from American Samoa, Malia, Sudan, and China.

2. Appendix 2 – Pedagogical tools for teaching Black History

YOUTUBE VIDEOS (Year 9)	**WEBSITES USED (Year 8 and Year 9)**
-BBC News Politics called 'John Sentamu on Zimbabwe, Syria, wages and gay marriage' -WWI West Indian soldiers buried at Seaford -BBC news British Army honours Sikh soldiers in WWI -Princess Spy (Noor Inayat Khan's code name was Madeline) -BBC Four Kingdoms of Africa – The Zulu Kingdom by Dr Casely-Hayford -Rhodes to Perdition: students celebrate the removal of the colonial state	-Picture of John Sentamu to accompany YouTube clip (students are asked what they already know about him) -Picture of the Suez Canal with questions: why was this a reason for the British to control Africa? -Picture of the 'mad scramble for Africa' with European men tugging at the African continent [labels them Spain; Portugal; France; Belgium; Holland; Germany; Britain; and Italy] -Picture of Prince Philip paying tribute to a statue of Noor Inayat Khan -Picture of a group of Zulu men in traditional clothing, standing in a row smiling. Students asked to use the English dictionary placed on their tables to decide whether these men could be described as civilised -Picture of Cecil Rhodes standing on top of a map of Africa; his feet are spread from the bottom of Africa, to the top; he is holding a telegraph wire and wears an explorer's hat and has a rifle attached to his side. Students asked to explain the message of the picture including the significance of his attire and stance. -East India Company picture with question, 'how did the EIC help establish the British Empire?' -Worksheet: 'How far do lard-coated cartridges explain the Indian Mutiny of 1857?' Instructed to read through sheet and answer the questions. Painting shown of Indians with guns, shields and swords (Indian mutiny reference)

WORKBOOKS/SHEETS (Year 8 and Year 9)	**OTHER (Year 8 and Year 9)**
-Source material from various articles on minority contributions to the war effort -Differentiated sheets depending on student academic ability about the significance of Indian soldiers to Britain during WWI -Texts on the board explaining why the British wanted to control Africa -Students to read the sheet on Noor Inayat Khan and answer questions about her role in the resistance movement, and then explain why she deserves a statue in London -Students to write a tribute to Noor Inayat Khan -VE celebrations: Dhana told the class she wants to "change the slant" on the traditional celebrations and so she distributed a sheet entitled, '*Who else was Freeing France and Paris?*' -Textbook asking, "should the British Empire be a source of national pride?" -Cecil Rhodes worksheet (his philosophy) with the classroom activity, 'Why Cecil Rhodes wanted to expand the British rule of Africa'; a worksheet was distributed showing a storyboard with accompanying pictures of Rhodes' journey towards colonising Africa. -Students to define what a mutiny is and how it is different from a rebellion. They are then instructed to read through the causes of the Indian mutiny from a worksheet and feedback during the plenary.	-iPad use for research into European coloniser's scramble for Africa -BHM booklet -Interruptions for Holocaust survivor visit and visits to a war museum for two weeks

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