A CONFERENCE REPORT

A BLACK PERSPECTIVE IN COMMUNITY AND YOUTH WORK

Saturday 17th November 2001

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# A Black Perspective in Community and Youth Work

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source is included.
Introduction

The Community Work Unit has a long tradition of encouraging community and youth work practitioners to critically examine their roles and responsibilities in developing effective anti-oppressive practice. Whilst it is assumed that this is a key feature in the design and practice of all community work, rooted as it is in community education and action, the testimony of practitioners describes profound challenges in locating and challenging individual, institutional and societal oppression. This conference on a black perspective is part of a range of strategies that the Community Work Unit deploys to enable practitioners to reflect upon their own practice, meet with other practitioners and discuss the challenges of developing anti-oppressive practice in their work settings.

Community and youth work by definition is about action; theory is often seen as unhelpful, unconnected to the "real world" or "real" problems and solutions that need to be described and then actioned. However, in challenging oppression and developing effective practice for marginalised groups, it has to be recognised that as practitioners we are creating theory out of real experiences and reflections. It is important that our theory is then placed within the wider political and social context for examination, respect and mainstreaming.

In order for practitioners to "locate" themselves and their practice it is essential that they examine their knowledge, their attitudes, their values and their experiences. This enables them to reflect upon different ways of working, appropriate needs-led interventions and the definitions of "good practice". Furthermore, this exploration promotes action. We all have the capacity to act. We can act to challenge or to preserve the status quo. Locating our act within this spectrum is critical and prepares workers for the consequences of their actions. If a black perspective is one which demands a specific view of society and a specific methodology to analyse society then it is essential that practitioners are equipped with the strategies to “unpack” their current practice and to move towards more informed and effective practice.

The report includes the process of organising the conference, summaries of the material discussed in the workshops and some evaluation. We hope that you find the Appendices with their suggestions for materials to use in training useful – and that you will come back again to share your experience, learn and gain support from each other.

Sakinna Dickinson

The aims of the conference

- To provide an opportunity for black and other community and youth workers to share experiences of a black perspective
- To provide material for a conference report as a basis for future training and development.

We planned the conference in response to enquiries from individuals from around the country who expressed an interest in looking at a black perspective and what it means for community and youth workers. We hoped to build on the experience of practitioners participating in the conference and to contribute our own experience of facilitating related sessions and courses on our Diploma in Community and Youth Work Studies programme. The day was designed to stimulate discussion and ideas, which would
encourage practitioners to share and develop their understanding of a black perspective and how to promote this in their practice.

The starting point for the conference was a definition from John Best, a Community Work Unit tutor who initiated the black perspective module on the Diploma programme:

**A black perspective is:**
the collective capacity of black people to define, develop and advance their own political, economic, social, cultural and educational interests. “Black” provides a historical and cultural context, whilst “perspective” supplies the unique analysis and consciousness-raising tool for action. A black perspective equips black people to continue the fight for self-emancipation and create a body of knowledge and develop strategies that contribute to their intellectual freedom and political liberation.

John Best

**The process**
A working group of interested practitioners, chaired by Daniel Nkrumah, were invited to design the conference. From the outset, they recognised that this conference had the potential to be an exciting, stimulating event, which if rooted in reality could strengthen or start action in the field. The logistics of the programme and details of the conference papers took shape after the first meeting. The working group then sent out a call for workshop proposals, which had definitions and principles of a black perspective. Seven workshops were accepted by the working group, the selection reflected the current themes within community and youth work and how these relate to the development of a black perspective.

The logistics of the programme and details of the conference papers began to take shape after the first meeting. There would be four morning workshops and three in the afternoon with a repeat of the most popular morning one. The conference would be for black and white workers and managers. As the date coincided with the start of Ramadān, the times of the sessions were built around prayer times. It was also decided that any food served should be acceptable to Muslims due to the “special-ness” of the day. Some may not be fasting. Inclusion can only be brought about by thinking inclusively about food when food is offered – as you would do in your own home with guests. We discovered that halal food was no longer available through the university, which became the first action for change by the working group. The Community Work Unit was able to bring pressure for halal kebabs to be served and following the conference raised the issue with the Widening Participation Project Steering Group, where a debate about appropriate welcome and take-up still continues.

The working group also discussed the themes of the conference, such as the use of “a” black perspective or “black perspectives”. Comparisons were drawn with the range of women and men who profess to have a feminist perspective. Agreement was reached on the use of “black” as a political term to include all people “of colour” facing oppression through white societal structures. We discussed how community and youth work values included a black perspective - yet how little value a black perspective or black people’s contributions were given in many community and youth work organisations. We looked at the relevance of anti-racism to a black perspective and the need to include all people in addressing the issues. It appeared that the conference had a lot to discuss!
Publicity was sent out to Young People Now, Shabaab, North West youth work training officers, a range of voluntary community organisations, other Community Work Unit contacts and individuals who had made previous requests for events related to a black perspective. Ten free places were offered to local black voluntary organisations who had been involved in discussions with our Widening Participation Officer, Addy Lazz-Onyenobi. Fees were set to cover costs only. It was clear from the many frantic telephone calls received prior to the conference that many workers experienced difficulties in securing funding from their organisations to come to the conference leading to delays in enrolment and a number of people being unable to attend. It was also apparent that a number of people received the information very late due to inadequate communication structures within organisations.

Participants were asked to consider some questions\(^1\) prior to attendance at the conference to stimulate consideration of these issues and their practice implications. Respondents recognised that a black perspective or anti-racism was a high priority, but that it was not often prioritised in their organisations. One respondent commented that equal priority should be given to other “isms”. The value of black people’s contributions to work on anti-racism and to a black perspective was perceived as potentially having the highest value, but frequently, limited value was given to their contribution within their organisations. One comment was that: A lot of black people are either not motivated or feel unsupported.

Another respondent commented that equal value should be given to black and white people’s contribution to anti-racist work.

About half of the responses indicated that the support available from a work setting was key to effective practice. While others felt that they would be able to engage in work based on a black perspective wherever they worked.

> If there were a specific identified role and a support structure from management, I would be able to engage in work based on a black perspective. Lack of resources, including human resources, hinders effective delivery of the work.

One respondent pointed out that: It depends on how much freedom you have to allow experience to affect practice.

On the day of the conference, ninety-five delegates from across the country and Ireland, from a variety of communities and a range of professional contexts were welcomed and invited to talk openly about their practice, explore the issues which enabled and the issues which blocked the development of a black perspective. Kate Sapin\(^2\) outlined how the roots of the conference lay in the inspiration of John Best\(^3\) and his years of work with the Community Work Unit.

Daniel Nkrumah, who facilitated the conference, encouraged delegates to “stay real, stay focused, stay positive and most importantly recognise their responsibility to challenge oppressive practices”. Delegates selected workshops based on their own interest, although unfortunately many had not received information about the workshops prior to arrival due to late enrolments. All participants were able to access the workshops of their choice, with some participants moving between a couple of workshops before “settling” into one.

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\(^1\) Included as Appendix A: Prioritising a black perspective? to use in training.

\(^2\) Head of the Community Work Unit

\(^3\) John had recently moved to Barbados, so was unable to attend!
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Summary of the workshops

1. **The Myth of Training** facilitated by Baljeet Singh Gill. The workshop explored how training is often used as “the answer” when the real issues are white organisations that limit black workers and suffer from a lack of a clear philosophy for development.

2. **Black and White Women Developing Work Together** facilitated by Sakinna Dickinson and Mary Kenny. The workshop looked at developing work with girls and young women and supportive frameworks for challenging oppressive structures together.

3. **Widening Participation: a Black Perspective** facilitated by Addy Lazz-Onyenobi, and Misbah Khan assisted in the planning of this workshop. The workshop explored the issues which needed to be addressed for communities to be able to participate in education and learning. This workshop was run twice in response to demand.

4. **Developing Practice Based Upon a Black Perspective: for Black and White Workers and Managers** facilitated by Kaleem Anwar, and Pravin Patel assisted in the planning of this workshop. The workshop explored the dynamics of developing anti-oppressive practice within a managerial model of equal opportunities.

5. **Human Relations** facilitated by Daniel Nkrumah looked at the concepts of race, identity and social justice.

6. **Understanding Euro-centrism and Therefore the Need for a Black Perspective** facilitated by Lance Lewis and Abby Prince examined a framework for Euro-centrism and how it works and what is a black perspective.

7. **Domestic Violence Issues** facilitated by Shabnam Sheikh and Alison Healicon looked at identifying barriers for black women in relation to domestic violence and overcoming the barriers and developing networks.

Each workshop lasted for one and a half hours, the discussion and debate that took place was wide-ranging. About 10 to 25 people attended each workshop. Some of the language and heritage links established in one workshop, which reflect the diversity of experience within the conference, included: Arabic, Persian, Nigeria, England, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Scots, Punjabi, Indian, Irish, Egyptian (from only half of the participants). In order to summarise this discussion and debate each workshop was asked to report back three key principles to underpin a black perspective which have been summarised in Appendix B: Principles of a black perspective.

Evaluation forms were circulated on the day and comments were invited in the plenary session. The working group met to discuss their own observations and discussions with participants, the responses on the forms and the implications for future work. A section on evaluation appears near the end of this report.

**Workshops**

**1: The Myth of Training**
Baljeet Singh Gill
A Black Perspective in Community and Youth Work

Starting point
A black perspective is one that is defined by people who are politically aware. The principles of a black perspective on training should look at all training in an objective manner that acknowledges how institutionalised racism has infiltrated policies, practices and freedoms, and perhaps more importantly, limited our own perspective. Community and youth workers are recommended not to limit our thinking, to acknowledge that our feelings are important and need to be addressed, and to look to people with radical black consciousness-raising awareness and practice for guidance.

Issues explored
- Training is not always used for learning.
- Black workers are limited in their thinking by white agencies
- Youth work suffers from a clear philosophy.

No one can deny that some training is essential for the development of informed, aware and principled workers. From time to time, the so-called “issue-based work” areas like racism and sexism have been allocated considerable training resources. Does this mean that everyone who undertook the training has become completely aware of the issues and related good practice? If so, the trainers and training are magic! Or does it mean that for some organisations, the provision of training is more important than whether it leads to lasting change?

Some people do not like to have training polarised in this way and argue that “change can be a slow process, but change will eventually occur”. If this is so, then why is a similar approach not taken in all areas? Individuals are not awarded credits for group work practices, because eventually they will change; they are expected to demonstrate evidence of having reached particular standards or learning outcomes.

So, are racism, sexism and the like less important? With the resources devoted to training on these issues, one would think that they are perceived as highly important. So why are they not treated importantly with all the criteria that are applied to other areas - with accurate monitoring and assessment of students and with an evaluation of the analysis and presentation of the subject matter?

Is it because people in power - that is, white, middle-class men - be they overtly or covertly oppressive or liberal do-gooders, do not want to set up the criteria on areas which they are going to fail? Or are we saying that we do not have the intellectual capacity to set up the systems and criteria for evaluating, monitoring and assessing whether someone is racist or not?

Key principles
- Training should lead to change and action.
- We need to change our knowledge base, which should be built upon a culture which reflects a black perspective.
- ”Black” should be affirmed as a political term through which we can unite to share the fight against oppression.
- Training should unite people sharing oppression.

2. Black and White Women Developing Work Together
Sakinna Dickinson and Mary Kenny
A Black Perspective in Community and Youth Work

Starting point
A black perspective gives an historical and political context to black experience to enable and encourage analysis, which informs action. A black perspective is based on a commitment to anti-racist awareness and practice and a belief in the capacity for self-determination of black people. Community and youth workers are recommended to develop their understanding of personal and institutional racism and to support black workers in their stated aims.

The aim of this workshop was to offer a forum for discussion between black and white women working with women and girls, specifically around the issues of:
- Developing work with women and girls
- Identifying appropriate mechanisms for supporting colleagues to overcome oppressive barriers to work and
- Challenging oppressive mechanisms together

The workshop invited discussions on the following issues:
- Provision for women and girls
- Provision for black only groups
- Whether groups not specifically aimed at black women and girls have many black members
- Resources for groups, e.g. staffing, premises, short or long-term funding, status within the service/organisation
- Significant differences between mainstream provision and black only groups
- Commonalities and differences
- Attitudes of other staff/service users to black only provision
- Work to address the issues arising.

The workshop was an opportunity to share information, experiences and perspectives. Everyone made a valuable contribution to the discussion.

A wide range of provision was identified during the workshop. The provision included groups that were mixed in terms of race and gender and groups that were female and/or black only. Provision was based in a wide range of settings: within schools and colleges, in Further Education, within community and youth centres, as part of the work of existing projects or as independent projects. Groups and projects addressed a range of needs, for example support for Asian women experiencing domestic violence, a mental health project targeting self-harm among young Asian women and a support network for black women and the white parents of black children.

Problems were also identified. A centre that was once women only is now mixed, creating barriers for Asian women. There was concern about barriers between Asian and white women.

A number of issues were highlighted during discussion which included:

- Resources

4 See Appendix D: Identifying resources for a worksheet that can be used to address these questions in training.
Projects with resources to address particular issues e.g. youth homelessness, may be looking at issues from a white only perspective. One project, which works with homeless young people, recognised the need to carry out research into the needs of black young people rather than assume black young people were not using the project because they did not need it.

Black groups need access to resources in order to be self-determining. This means access to long term secure funding and not just short-term and one-off funding. This is particularly important in regard to work with women and girls, which has often been poorly funded and resourced, is constantly asked to justify itself and is vulnerable to cuts and reorganisation. However there was concern about the implications of certain types of funding for the autonomy of the group/project.

There is also a need for the recognition of community networks, particularly when black populations may be widespread and therefore ‘invisible’ to politicians and policy makers, who do not consider themselves to be racist, but whose lack of awareness has a direct impact on black groups and individuals.

- **Employment**
  Recruitment and retention of black staff needs to go beyond where you advertise posts and how the advertisement is worded. Racism in the workplace will affect recruitment and retention of black staff. Individuals may not be aware that they have the skills and experience for particular posts and therefore do not apply. Commitment is therefore needed more careful targeting of potential black applicants and to capacity building in the community.

- **Role models**
  Black history is overshadowed by slavery and white colonialism. It therefore needs to be taught and discussed from a positive and empowering point of view. We still need positive black role models, not just a few celebrities, but community and youth workers, community leaders, teachers and others in the community.

  “Speaking out is not a simple gesture of freedom in a culture of domination. We are often deceived (yes, even those of us who have experienced domination) by the illusion of free speech, falsely believing that we can say whatever we wish in an atmosphere of openness. There would be no need to even speak of the oppressed and exploited coming to voice, articulating and redefining reality, if there were not oppressive mechanisms of silencing, suppressing and censoring.”

  *bell hooks*

**Key principles**
- A commitment to supporting the self-determination of black groups and individuals
- Recognition of the diversity of the needs of black women and girls
- Access to a range of funding opportunities for black groups and organisations in order to take the lead in meeting these needs
- A commitment to positive action to improve the recruitment and retention of black workers
- A commitment to promoting positive role models for black women and girls.

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3. Widening Participation: A Black Perspective

Addy Lazz-Onyenobi

Starting Point
A black perspective values wider contribution to active citizenship whilst recognising the importance of critical reflection to promoting individual and community development. It actively engages with diversity as a cultural strength to encourage participation of the whole community. Widening participation has become a significant theme in the planning and delivery of the services in higher education. This has taken the form of number of activities which act as catalysts to long term changes and thus will encourage the involvement of traditionally under represented groups to actively utilise and benefit from the services of universities. There has been a concentration on what ‘widening’ means and the distinction between it and ‘increasing’. Since the two are often conflated in quantitative and qualitative terms, much less consideration has been given to ‘participation’.

Are we talking about extending access to the same old excluding curricula and systems? Are we opening up parts of the institution to different kinds of students? Do we mean participation in relevant, inclusive, challenging, transformative learning experiences? Whilst the emphasis in Widening Participation Projects has been placed in encouraging more ‘non-traditional’ students, it has to be recognised that this is only one facet of the developments needed if widening participation is to be real, meaningful and sustainable. Before we go any further, we need to ascertain what we mean by ‘participation’, ‘widening participation’ and ‘a black perspective’.

Participation is defined as the process during which individuals, groups and organisations are consulted about or have the opportunity to become actively involved in a project or programme of activity. Relating to higher education, Widening Participation can then be defined as: encouraging the maximum access to the full range of courses and other support across the institution for people of all social backgrounds and cultures and also taking on board the communities’ interests and concerns, making the whole exercise relevant. A black perspective is defined as using diversity as cultural strength to encourage participation of the wider community. With these definitions, it was felt that the higher institutions are not doing enough to encourage the members of the black and ethnic minority to participate, particularly, those of them that are classed as non-traditional’ students, as these groups are very much under-represented in the institutions.

Issues explored
• Who participates in what and how?
• Recognising barriers that organisations and communities erect.
• Using widening participation as a method of challenge.

A case study from Mary Stuart was used to explore some of these issues. The following issues were discussed:

• Relates to elements of outreach which smacks of “do-good-ing” and a remedial approach to learners which, ultimately, maintains the status quo of higher education.
• It is assumed that ‘individuals from non-participating groups are often unaware of their learning needs’.

See Appendix E: Labelling? (in Thompson, 2000:23)
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• There is a normative assumption ‘that participation is a good thing’ (Field 1999:11). Perhaps before claiming that participation itself is very valuable, we need to be clear what the terms of participation are in our higher education system and how it relates to black and ethnic minority groups.

• It appears that the role of education is to support individuals to move out of their communities. This does require the learning of different culture and language which does not sit easily with previous knowledge.

Recommendations for community and youth workers

• Know your community.
• Critical reflection on own practice: Does it include or exclude?
• Use the dynamics between ‘participation’ and ‘widening’ as a tool for good practice.
• Listen to black people and act in response. Don’t become tokens, don’t use tokens
• Adults need to listen to young people without selective hearing or selective memory.
• Consider whether core issues are addressed. Who makes the decisions? Where do we address this?

The general feeling within the workshops was that the majority of those who are not in a position to participate fully in higher education are from the lower social economic group within which the majority is black in the wider sense. On the other hand, the handful of those who do participate, do so at lower levels. Even those who are qualified are not given the opportunity to participate fully in higher education.

To be able to recognise barriers, we have to know the community in which we operate. In relation to youth and community workers, we must critically appraise our work in order to apply the ethos of community and youth work. In terms of “Widening Participation” being used as a method of challenge, this means there will be institutional change with reference to curricula, methods of teaching, subjects that are relevant to the community’s interest and needs in general, including those that would enhance the development of the community from an individual or a group’s perspective. This would contribute towards an upward progression. This will also be in line with a black perspective principle, which acknowledges and celebrates the contributions of men and women of all backgrounds, ages, cultures, religions to human progress in all fields.

Key principles

• All should participate, for those not allowed to - we should listen and act.
• There needs to be involvement of people in decision making from the start to the end of the process. This requires realistic time-scales for communities with genuine consultation – not where decisions are made prior to the questions being asked. We need to start in our communities.
• Widening participation is part of the solution. Black people can effect change if we are there from the beginning.

Stereotypical language must not be used to describe target groups and should not be reinforced in bid submissions as this creates a system of layering wide nets where agencies fish for their target group and some groups continually fall through the net.

Recommended Reading

4. Developing practice based upon a black perspective

Facilitated by Kaleem Anwar

Starting Point
The starting point for the workshop was a definition of a black perspective from A. Sivanandan (included in Appendix F: Sivanandan’s definition of a black perspective). So the principles of a black perspective are holistic, anti-racist and inclusive. Community and youth workers are recommended to intervene in the lives of others once you have checked your abilities, knowledge and skills are relevant and appropriate, to know that accountability is personal, communal and organisational, to work to sustain self-reliance.

Issues explored
- The relevance of a black perspective for all workers and managers
- Why relevance and appropriateness are necessary for good practice
- Accountability within communities and organisations

In terms of the dynamics of the job and the discharge of their professional duties, fundamental principles of trust, relationship building, appreciation of the circumstances of young people, it is also critical for black young people and the black workers working with them to know how the oppression works. Therefore it is the case that all workers need to know how the oppression works, that it is integral to their work and to be able to demonstrate where they sit as workers or managers.

Part of this process includes the workers or managers not detaching themselves from the communities and young people and ensuring that as managers or JNC Level 3 workers they do not become isolated or detached from the young people. The obvious dangers of becoming aloof include:
- Representative or advocacy work on behalf of young people becomes undermining
- Decision-making becomes more orientated towards the interests of the worker/manager
- Protective attitudes become a necessary approach regarding the work and professional responsibilities.
- Service planning and delivery will not include the true experiences of young people.

Workers and managers need to engage holistically, have direct contact with the young people and their communities. A black perspective acknowledges that services engaging black and white young people need to be carried out through a range of means and this requires workers and managers to be adept, perceptive and forward thinking and anticipatory in how they work.

Sivanandan's definition enables us to appreciate the experiences of black workers in organisations that lack of such a perspective. Namely, in the majority of instances, black workers and their work are being supervised by white people. Black workers are expected to have the expertise to carry out work with black young people from many or specific communities and make measurable progress while the white supervisor or manager, who has had little or no such experience, expects to be able to determine the worth and value of that work. Inevitably, black workers found themselves in positions equivalent to JNC Level 1.
status. However, the complexities being anticipated and dealt with in the context of limited resources and staffing, brings a realisation: Level 1 does little justice to the reality of the work being carried out by black workers. The black workers were the prime source of knowledge and practices for the 'supervisor/manager.'

This prompts the following questions:
- Who is educating whom?
- Who is supervising whom?
- Who is managing whom?
- What are the basis of judgements and assessments made?
- Where is the accountability of the 'supervisor' to black communities and their young people?

These pertinent questions lead us to include that there needs to be a major initiative which ensures the implications of conferring status and responsibilities in relation to work with black communities and their young people. These need to be understood, spelt out and appropriate training and support provided. Having a clear understanding of the value of managers developing practice and thinking in relation to a black perspective will enable managers and workers to have mutual self-respect and accountability.

Good practice is based upon knowing why you are working, how you choose to work, where you choose to deliver services and resources, when you choose to be accountable to communities and what your priorities are. Relevance and appropriateness informed by a black perspective will enable the recognition that black young people and their communities:
- Have a right to access to youth and community provision
- Have a right to demand and expect provision and services that are relevant and appropriate to their needs
- The diverse and multi-faceted nature of the black community has to be recognised by service providers
- Youth and community services have a responsibility to re-shape their services to better align with the realities of multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-cultural Britain
- Youth and community workers need to be clear about their role as oppressors/liberators.
- Youth and community work responses to black young people need to be delivered in the context of and with the expressed consent of the wider black community
- Youth and community work with young people needs to be “needs led” not “jobs led”
- Youth and community work with black young people should be “policy and strategy led” not “funding led”
- Youth and community work with black young people should be funded from core budgets not “funny money”.

**Key principles**
- Has someone else decided what our black perspective should be? It is often difficult to find as we are so immersed in Euro-centrism.
- We need to respond to the needs of young people and the community
- A black perspective is not just jargon. We need to take an anti-oppressive standpoint with a holistic view in our work with all people.

**5. Human relations**
Daniel Nkrumah
A Black Perspective in Community and Youth Work

Starting point
A black perspective acknowledges the existence of oppression and actively seeks to challenge and remove it. The principles are: who feels it knows it (oppression), equal rights for all (the target) and life experiences shape perspective (blackness - consciousness). Community and youth workers are recommended to fight the power! (the oppressors); Keep it real! (black perspective principles); and make necessary changes! (to policy and practice).

The workshop discussed and agreed the following approach to a black perspective:

You do not have to be black to work from a black perspective. A black perspective is one which challenges perceived knowledge about human equality issues, in particular the roles and contributions of black people in world history. A black perspective asserts black peoples’ rights to self-determination and political autonomy. Wherever there is oppression, there will always be resistance. A black perspective relates to a liberation struggle, which includes spiritual, economic, ethical, moral and ideological battles.

A black perspective challenges racism in all its forms.

Key principles
- Challenge the status quo. Actions speak louder than words.
- Think how to train and educate - is race a social construct? We are one race with different experiences of culture and nationality.
- Use education and make a visible statement in the workforce.
- Look at history - we can have different experiences and cultures and live together.
6. Understanding Euro-centrism and therefore the need for a black perspective
Lance Lewis and Abby Prince

Starting point
We need to understand the historical, economic and political relationship between Europe and the black world, the framework for Euro-centrism. We need to demonstrate how this impacts upon society today. We need to develop a black perspective to counteract the effects of this Euro-centrism.

Issues explored
• Inclusion
• Our experience of community and youth work: what works and what doesn't work
• What youth services can and can't do.

The following Appendices provide tools that were presented during the workshop and could be used in training exercises.
Appendix F: Sivanandon’s definition of a black perspective
Appendix H: Macpherson’s definition of institutional racism
Appendix I: Whiteness

Recommendations
• Challenge the status quo and terrorism.
• Develop an anthology and history that is different with particular needs identified.
  Provide an explanation and epistemology that is different to the Euro-centric, e.g. of slavery, pre-European African history.

Key principles
• Use a black perspective as a collective term for common oppression, a political term to challenge the status quo.
• Construct an anthology on where we are, with a different experience from Europe and therefore a different world view.
• Confirm that the methodology of a black perspective is different and must come from the way we construct the world.

Useful sources
The Education Network: Promoting Achievement Through Local Authorities, 22 Upper Woburn Place, London WC1H 0TB

7: Domestic Violence: Issues from a Black Perspective
Shabnam Sheikh and Alison Healicon

Starting point
A black perspective registers the power dynamic between black and white peoples and seeks to challenge this by recognising and naming the oppression, working collectively to challenge this and developing networks and support systems to maintain this. Community
and youth workers are recommended to develop their own awareness, to give appropriate support and information and to deal with issues in a sensitive way.

*Domestic Violence is the emotional, physical, sexual, psychological, verbal or social abuse of a person by their partner, a family member, or someone with whom there has been a relationship. It can include punches, slaps, rape, pulling hair, burning, kicking, spitting, using weapons, threats, deprivation of money, deprivation of sleep, controlling of movements (e.g. visits to friends), constant criticising and the undermining of self-confidence. Children and other family members can be used (and abused) in various ways to frighten the woman and ensure compliance.*

This statement, issued as part of a briefing pack for the Zero Tolerance of violence against women and children campaign, is a generic definition, which attempts to describe the range of experience for women in violent or abusive relationships. However, in order to understand: the social situation of black women in Britain….our analyses (needs to) incorporate both the history of black people and current international relations between Britain and the capitalist periphery. These international relations manifest at the source, so to speak, in racist immigration laws, popular culture and in the political discourses of contemporary Britain. Imperial social relations are particularly important in considering what happens at the interface between black women and British statutory and voluntary organisations.

The purpose of the workshop was to focus on a black perspective of domestic violence, to look at the various ways in which the statutory and voluntary agency responses influence the choices and options made by black women experiencing violence and abuse as well as to identify strategies to overcome these barriers.

This report is a summary of the discussions and comments from the workshop, which was facilitated by workers with experience of supporting women living in or leaving violent and abusive relationships. The report aims to evaluate the different exercises and ‘tools’ we used to encourage discussion and challenge thinking around the issue of domestic violence for other practitioners who may be interested in providing training on a black perspective of domestic violence. This report will also identify from the discussions, some of the barriers facing black women living in violent and abusive relationships and to highlight good practice in overcoming these barriers for workers in the field. The report will conclude by suggesting some principles of a black perspective which came out of the workshop and which may be useful in relation to our work with women.

**Identifying methods of good practice in facilitating discussion on a black perspective of domestic violence:**

From the outset, in the preparation and planning of the workshop, it was considered important that the facilitators should have a sound understanding of the issues facing black women experiencing domestic violence and of some of the assumptions and myths around violence against women. Facilitators should also have access to the different agencies and organisations that support women experiencing domestic violence.

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There were over twenty participants from a variety of backgrounds, experience and areas of work in the workshop, which was fairly informal but structured with an emphasis on developing good practice through small group work and then general discussion. To get an idea of the level of understanding in the group we started with a “quick think” exercise: “What is domestic violence?” and flip-charting the comments made. Facilitators should ask participants questions to identify specific behaviour in relation to physical, emotional, psychological and sexual abuse. In this way, the group can develop an understanding of the range of experience from withholding money to murder. The group can also begin to consider the effects of abuse and the experience of being black within this society. For example, controlling behaviour over a period of time influences a woman’s thought processes and her ability to access support, which is further compounded by her experience of racism and other’s perception of her culture.

We followed this up with discussions on how participants’ understanding of domestic violence related to definitions from Women’s Aid and others (as in the definition above). This is useful because it highlights the limitations of definitions in that they exclude certain experience. In the workshop, participants were able to identify experience and relationships which would not ‘fit’ into the definitions, for example, abuse from son to mother. This led to the group vocalising and agreeing on their own definition and understanding - that it is the experience of power and control which lies at the heart of domestic violence and which is condoned and reinforced in (this context, British) society.

A scenario designed by Shabnam Sheikh was used to generate discussion and identify barriers facing women experiencing domestic violence. The situation involved a community worker approached by a Pakistani woman who says that her husband does not give her any money or allow her out and that he beats her up without reason. She has two children aged 4 and 6 and would like advice on her rights. Groups of participants in the workshop discussed how they would deal with this situation, the issues they would have to take into consideration and who they would refer her onto. The group was also asked to consider whether the fact that she did not have “indefinite leave to remain in Britain” would change the situation.

We chose to use a case study so participants could relate the issues to their own organisations and work practice in order to begin to identify the barriers that might be in place and to begin to consider further action which they could take to address and challenge these barriers. To support this discussion we had a handout from research carried out by Shabnam, which was concerned with identifying barriers faced by Asian women experiencing domestic violence in approaching agencies (part of this report is contained in the appendices). Shabnam was also able to explain the “One Year Rule:”

_Under the one year rule, an application to remain here permanently depends on the support of the settled spouse. Domestic violence is an abuse of power, usually from men towards women, in such situations these rules provide men with a further weapon of control. Women suffer most as they are more likely to experience violence and other forms of abuse and are less likely to have power._

9 See Appendix J: Barriers for black women facing domestic violence.

10 See Appendix K: Good practice with black women facing domestic violence

In such situations women experiencing violence and abuse within the first year of settling in Britain, can be deported if she leaves the violence and attempts to apply for public benefits to which she has no recourse. Practically, all statutory agencies are required to inform the Home Office thus, women will not approach state agencies for support and are forced to stay in abusive, life threatening relationships.

**Other barriers for black women facing domestic violence identified within the workshop:**

- Language can cause barriers on many levels, e.g. lack of welcome, lack of access, misunderstandings, lack of respect, inaccuracies, use of inappropriate interpreters.
- Resources: people, skills, knowledge and understanding, training, times of opening, etc. can be lacking or insufficient and prevent access. Workers often feel that they don’t have the skills or knowledge to support women escaping domestic violence. However, the community and youth work skills of listening, empowerment, networking, challenging oppression and bringing people together are valuable and useful in supporting women escaping domestic violence.
- Having to put yourself on the line: workers are not always ready to take risks or supported in doing so.
- A lack of knowledge of legal and cultural implications, financial situation can lead to inappropriate “solutions” being planned leading to further problems. The way forward needs to take into account a number of individual and community factors.
- Some of the aspects of culture and community: an individual’s (the worker or the woman) perception of her/his position within a community can affect readiness to take certain steps.
- The safety of children and the woman: some ways forward may bring those concerned into (more?) dangerous situations – and some workers may not understand this.
- Others’ understanding of the culture: individual workers may have a lack of or misunderstanding of each others’ cultural norms, mores, views.
- The need to travel to a different area, isolation
- Family loyalty may prevent or slow certain decisions or actions.

**Good practice for work in this area identified within the workshop**

- Keep in contact with her. Be the one familiar face in a changing environment. Many women experiencing violence and abuse have sought advice and support from many different agencies before they feel their needs are being met. Given that she may be referred and passed onto many different agencies, your role as someone who is available to her regularly is important.
- Work at the woman’s pace, identify what she wants. Domestic violence takes away a woman’s right to determine her own life. She needs to regain control over her life and make decisions according to her own needs.
- Emergency planning: make sure you have a relevant list of agencies, be informed, identify support mechanisms available to her. Not all women want to leave the relationship there and then. It is important that she can plan her own escape. For example, a crisis plan could include:
  1. Find somewhere you can quickly and easily use a phone
  2. Always carry a list of emergency numbers
  3. Try and save some money for a taxi, or a bus or train fares if necessary
  4. Have an extra set of keys for the house or car

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12 See also Appendix K: Good practice with black women facing domestic violence, a scenario for promoting discussion.
5. Keep the keys, the crisis fund money and a set of clothes for yourself and the children packed in a bag that you can quickly get and take with you.
6. Talk to your children, they are probably aware of the abuse anyway.
7. If she is ready to leave, does she have somewhere to go? Give her contacts for housing and refuge, check she has personal support, cash etc.\textsuperscript{13}

- Listen to her, use appropriate interpreters, identify positive support from the community, offer safe space to talk and explore options,
- Ensure that the woman is in control of the decisions
- Check that your own value base is not interfering when offering advice – you may feel she should be doing something such as informing the police or taking her children with her, but she needs options not judgements.
- Inform her of her rights, refer to appropriate agencies e.g. Women’s Aid, multi-cultural forums, social services, networking
- Be proactive, be aware of professional boundaries and commitment to challenging oppression.

The workshop participants felt that a worker’s role is to provide information and options so that women can make their own decisions and regain control over their own and their children’s lives. Participants also felt strongly that domestic violence cannot be tolerated and must be challenged. The barriers faced by women because of racism must also be identified and challenged as part of our commitment to the professional values of community and youth work.

**Principles of a black perspective**

As facilitators of the workshop, we felt that it was important for Shabnam, as a black woman working with women experiencing domestic violence, to lead the discussions supported by a white woman, Alison, who also has experience of working with Women’s Aid. Shabnam’s perspective, experience and research were vital to the facilitation of the discussions to challenge stereotypes and to provide useful information for participants.

The facilitators were able to encourage the group to identify various principles in working with women living with abuse and violence from a black perspective as described above. In summary these principles are:

- To recognise, identify and challenge oppression
- To work with others to challenge
- To develop networks and support systems
- To keep ourselves informed and stay aware of our own value base and what influences us.

\textsuperscript{13} From Hammersmith and Fulham Women’s Aid Training pack
Evaluation of the conference

The workshops illustrate that the journey towards a black perspective is complex and has to encompass the struggle of diverse black communities for resources, for representation, for influence and for justice. As community and youth workers we are an inherent part of this struggle. This is clearly a time of rapid change in the way that services are funded, designed and organised. This change provides the backdrop for community and youth workers to continue to press for and deliver services that meet the needs of black communities. In applying the principles of a black perspective, the major areas for examination are:

- The professionalisation of community activism and the ways in which this impacts upon grassroots activity within communities.
- The rapid movement towards a community and youth service which is driven by short-term targets.
- Regeneration schemes and Best Value systems of management which potentially limit opportunities for meaningful and sustainable development, learning and the formulation of good practice.
- The narrowing scope of training and development of community and youth workers, which is increasingly “competency led” and “output driven”. This type of work entices workers to “deliver” a “package of services” to meet the needs and experience of the organisation rather than to listen to and address the self-defined needs of black communities.

It was clear that most participants felt that they were in a process of learning and developing and that they still have a lot to learn about a black perspective and how to put it into practice. The working group agreed that the conference had been a very worthwhile and positive experience and that we had all heard very positive feedback.

Leigh Cook, one of the working group members, recorded some interesting participant observations and comments during the day which provoked further reflection:

Northeast: Involved with Trades Unions, local forum Christian churches, school governor and a community and youth worker. He was worried at first whether he could attend the conference as a white worker and was very glad to be included. He did not know of the work of the Community Work Unit at the University of Manchester.

Northwest: Use diversity to create diversity …. “Maybe I haven’t written the word black because I am black and it’s in what I write anyway.”

Midlands: “Being disabled means living with greater oppression than does being black.” (from a black man using a wheelchair)

Northwest: “I don’t want the female perspective to be marginalised in a new project I’m setting up. I want to get practical experience for developing an inclusive project.”

Northwest: “I didn’t interact with black people where I grew up as a child. Now we are starting to monitor the percentage of black workers at work. I heard about the conference and wanted to come along to learn.”

The following areas were reviewed for future events:

Overall evaluation comments

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From the feedback collected through evaluation forms and discussions, it was clear that for most participants, the most positive aspect of the conference had been meeting with other workers and networking. There was such a wide variety of people that meeting others with different values and experiences, new ways of seeing things and thinking about mutual progress was a positive experience – and for many – something quite new. The fact that the day “had a buzz” lead many participants to say that “We need more events like this!” Many found that thinking about the type of approach and the levels of theory and practice that would be relevant to a black perspective in open discussions with black and white professionals with an interest in a black perspective was very worthwhile. Several participants sought out workshop facilitators to facilitate learning at up-coming training and other events in their own places of work.

**Overall, some would have preferred:**
- A different day - not the first day of Ramadān.
- A contact list and name badges.
- A pack of information to take away.
- Wider publicity – I only found out about the conference by accident.
- A conference every three months.

**Evaluation of the workshops**

**What some participants particularly liked about the workshops:**
- Good discussions in the Women & Girls workshop.
- Training and its effectiveness workshop
- Euro-centrism and thinking about developing a black perspective, but perhaps it could have been more concise.
- Euro-centrism was unbelievably excellent. (Other comments included: brilliant!, really good, great, etc.)
- Thinking about what is a black perspective and what others are doing about it.
- Thinking about how I can make a difference in my work.
- Excellent hand-outs.
- Domestic Violence and thinking about ways to pass on information to victims
- Thinking about my own experience of domestic violence and family history within the workshop
- Thinking about personal relations and the concept of race – which is a fallacy.
- Thinking about the inclusion of black people in community work
- Thinking about what race means
- Thinking about black history, political correctness, making changes.

The most positive workshop feedback was about the Human Relations, Widening Participation, Domestic Violence, Black & White Women & Girls and Euro-centrism.

**What some would have preferred in relation to the workshops:**
- Slightly shorter workshops – or incorporation of a quick loo break.
- More time in the workshops.
- A two day conference with more time in the workshops
- More basis to the workshops.
- More workshops.
- More clarity re. the benefits and drawbacks of training – as the workshop was very negative. The advantages of training need to be highlighted as well as the drawbacks.
- The aims of the workshops needed to be clearer.
- A lot of time was wasted at the beginning of workshops.
- Some people have different starting points, but some of the workshops were very basic.
A Black Perspective in Community and Youth Work

- The facilitators should have stayed until the end of the conference.
- More interactive workshops.
- More critical discussion of the information presented.
- Don’t assume that Afro-centrism is the basis of all civilisations as this denies other peoples of the world their reality and therefore is no different to Euro-centrism.
- More hand-outs.
- Role-plays.

Comments from the working group about the workshops:
- We need scribes, particularly when only one facilitator.
- Smaller numbers in the workshops would enable greater participation – or else more time.
- Facilitators need to keep to the agreement for feedback points and outcomes.
- The workshops need to be described in initial publicity leaflet.
- Each workshop should have an individual evaluation.
- We should consider having a sharper focus or theme for the day, rather than such diverse workshops, e.g. one on work with schools and/or education.

Evaluation of the venue
- Overall, the working group agreed that the venue was not suitable (due to access issues, heating problems, terrible coffee, it was difficult to find). Some participants liked the food; some thought the venue was okay, but overall, we were not satisfied.
- The food was mostly vegetarian and only halal meat was used, but it was not labelled as such. We need a wider range of food, more hot food and more cold drinks.
- A smoking room was needed and bigger rooms for the workshops.

Evaluation of learning from the conference
What participants will take away that will affect practice:
- The perspectives of other participants.
- From this positive experience, I have learned that I need to be much more selective about training that’s being offered. I need to find out about more courses, which address issues of real interest to me.
- Actions for our management teams.
- Thinking about barriers behind participation.
- A better understanding of the vulnerability of new arrivals to Britain.
- A greater understanding of issues affecting my work
- Understanding of need to work with young women and community work with women.
- The core principles of a black perspective as discussed in the human rights workshop.
- I have arranged to meet with individuals to discuss how I can develop better working practices.
- I need to deepen my search for a black perspective and decide if it is necessary for the execution of good practice.
- Personal development and awareness around cultural diversity.
- You cannot be rigid and narrow minded, no matter what perspective you come from.
- Feeling very happy that I had been able to attend.
- An awareness that I have not even examined the grass roots of racism and its insular view of “them and us” – even within agencies whose ethos is based on equality.
- Confidence and knowledge.
- Knowledge and experience and more understanding of a black perspective.
- Ways forward for development work on domestic violence
- The need to be deliberately inclusive in my own practice.

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• The need to educate others about “real” history instead of lies. An understanding that I need to find out what I can do to encourage the participation of black people in my support people.
• Hopefully, more confidence to continue to challenge oppression.
• Visiting other areas with young people to share practice.
• To focus on a much more holistic approach and developing staffing issues in the sense of a black perspective.
• The understanding and knowledge to challenge community and youth services to prioritise work with a black perspective.
• The Euro-centrism workshop will change my practice; I will now question the knowledge base for “facts”
• Risk-taking. I need to put a black perspective on the agenda within my organisation.

What some participants felt they still needed after the conference:
• A contact list for participants (Unfortunately, we have not had permission to release these.)
• Principles of a black perspective.
• To think about how a black perspective is similar or different to other perspectives.

Planning
Overall comments from the working group about planning:
• We need to establish a core (working) group earlier.
• The core group needs to attend all of the planning meetings – or at least the key meetings, i.e. for selection of workshops and the last meeting to establish common procedures for workshops.
• The publicity should go out to the local black press.
• The delegate list should be in the conference packs – although this will require early enrolment.
• Enrolment should include a “waiver” option for distribution on a contact list.
• Evaluation forms should have a section for each workshop for more specific feedback.

Future
• We agreed to hold a conference next year (and perhaps annually?) in October.
• To involve current group of facilitators, plus others from the network, rather than a public call for facilitators and to gain agreement for full commitment.
• The following time-frame:
  April: focus on workshops – meetings to decide which workshops
  June: get publicity leaflet ready with brief workshop descriptions; publicity to go out to black press as well as Young People Now, Shabaab
  September: schedule enrolment in sufficient time for further information to go out to participants
  October: Conference to coincide with black history events.

The way forward
The development of the theory and practice of a black perspective within community and youth work at the Community Work Unit was driven by the work of John Best, it is fitting that we go back to his words, dwell upon them a while... then continue with the work:

  Racism is immoral. In community work terms, present day practitioners will tell you that racism is immoral, that they are opposed to it and that something...
ought to be done to redress the balance. But most of these practitioners are themselves always looking for justification before they take action and the question is always the same: "Does the end justify the means?". This question is meaningless as it stands. The real and only question regarding the ethics of “means and ends” is and always has been, "Does this particular end justify this particular means?"

John Best

NOTICE: A CONFERENCE HAS BEEN BOOKED for SATURDAY the 26th of October, 2002
At the University of Manchester’s Chancellors Conference Centre
A Black Perspective in Community and Youth Work

Appendices

The Appendices include worksheets to be photocopied to stimulate discussions and raise awareness in relation to a black perspective.

**Appendix A: Prioritising a black perspective?** a questionnaire for respondents to assess their own and their organisation’s support for community and youth work with a black or anti-racist perspective. A good tool to use in “before” and “after” training to diagnose change in perceptions.

**Appendix B: Principles of a black perspective**: some of the ideas discussed at the conference that could be used as a starting point for a group to begin to define their principles of a black perspective.
Appendix C: Community and youth work practice: some of the ideas discussed at the conference about good practice in relation to a black perspective that could be used as a starting point for a group/organisation to define their way forward.

Appendix D: Identifying resources: an exercise to identify and highlight the gaps in the resources available for work with black women and girls which could be adapted to use to identify those available for other groups of black people.

Appendix E: Labelling? A case study that can be used to discuss the issues raised by certain projects or schemes purporting to target specific groups but that may end up perpetuating certain myths.

Appendix F: Sivanandan’s definition of a black perspective: a definition that could be used as a resource for discussions.


Appendix H: Macpherson’s definition of institutional racism: a useful resource for an analysis of organisational culture and institutional racism.

Appendix I: Whiteness: a definition to prompt questioning of the “norm” and reflections on societal racism.

Appendix J: Barriers for black women facing domestic violence: a scenario to raise awareness. The issues raised as well as good practice responses are discussed within the workshop report.

Appendix K: Good practice with black women facing domestic violence: recommendations from previous research by Shabnam Sheikh.

Appendix L: Some recommended further reading
Appendix A: Prioritising a black perspective?

1. How high a priority is a black perspective or anti-racism in community and youth work?
   
   *(Please indicate on the scale below:  1 – low    10 – high)*
   
   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

2. How high a priority is it in your organisation’s practice?

   *(Please indicate on the scale below:  1 – low    10 – high)*

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

3. What is the value that you would give to black people’s contributions to this work?

   *(Please indicate on the scale below:  1 – low    10 – high)*

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

4. What value does your organisation give to black people’s contributions?

   *(Please indicate on the scale below:  1 – low    10 – high)*

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

5. How much does your current work setting affect your practice?

   *(Please indicate on the scale below:  1 – low    10 – high)*

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

4. What are the implications of your answers?
Appendix B: Principles of a black perspective

A starting point for discussions on the principles of a black perspective

1. “Black” is a political term that challenges the status quo through which we can unite to share the fight against oppression. We use “a black perspective” as a collective term for an understanding of oppression by white societal structures.

2. We acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of women and men of all backgrounds, ages, colours, cultures and religions to human progress in all fields.

3. We assert black people’s rights to self-determination and political autonomy.

4. We confirm that the epistemology of a black perspective is different and a black world view is different from a white world view. The methodology of a black perspective is different and must come from the way that black people construct the world.

5. Race as a social construct. We are only one race.

6. It is the responsibility of ALL workers to work with a black perspective.

7. We need to inform ourselves, challenge oppression and stay aware of our own value base and what influences us.

8. We take an anti-oppressive standpoint with a holistic view and have a multi-oppression perspective.

14 Epistemology = theory of knowledge
Appendix C: Community and youth work practice

A starting point for discussions on a black perspective on practice

1. Listen to black people and act on stated identified needs.
2. Use widening participation as a method of challenge.
3. Reflect on our own practice in order to be informed and supported to challenge.
4. Identify, support and promote role models of good practice.
5. Be accountable to black communities and organisations.
6. Focus on the details for genuine access, participation and involvement, e.g. information, welcome, respect, time to build confidence, funding.
7. Build networks to overcome barriers such as language, culture and institutional racism.
8. Respond to the needs of young people and strive for early education on a black perspective.
9. Do not use and therefore reinforce stereotypical language to describe “target groups”, e.g. in funding bids.
10. Take positive action to improve the employment, support and retention of black workers.
11. Challenge racism in all its forms.
12. Organise training that leads to change and action.
Appendix D: Identifying resources

1. Discuss the following in your group and list issues arising on a flipchart.
   - Identify provision for women and girls in your area.
   - Highlight any black only groups.
   - Do groups not specifically aimed at black women and girls have many black members?
   - Identify how these groups are resourced in terms of staffing, premises, short- or long-term funding, status within the service/organisation.
   - Highlight any differences that you find significant.
   - What are the commonalties and differences in the groups identified?
   - What is the attitude of other staff/service users to the group?

2. Feedback from small groups on issues arising.

3. Discuss:
   - How can we work together to address these issues?
Appendix E: Labelling?

The following case study can be used to discuss some of the issues raised by certain projects or schemes purporting to target specific groups:

I was a 23 year old woman, “who felt pregnant”, I developed high blood pressure and had to give up work. I was made homeless and spent the first six weeks after my twins were born in a hostel for homeless people. I was then offered a council house on an estate in South London. I have even experienced the classic line from a social worker who asked me if I had got pregnant so I could get a council house. While living in the estate I signed up for an Open University degree and became what would be today a useful statistic for postcode analysis. I suppose that I was also the type of student that could be discussed at conferences and in articles as a ‘widening participation success’. In thinking about my work in education since then I have to admit that this life history has shaped my beliefs and actions. It is why I worry at some of the rhetoric used in education over the years. Was I a remedial learner, a women returner, a socially excluded non-participant who had been encouraged into the world of education or simply a women who wanted to find language for all that she had experienced since being born into a challenging social milieu? It was not that I wanted to understand the world better as many educationalists, at times I have been guilty of thinking of what learners want. Rather I wanted to articulate my understanding, to argue my case better and to challenge oppression more.

I did not think I was socially excluded, although I suppose I demonstrated many of the signs of social exclusion having been homeless, poor with no say in the allocation of resources and yes, living with a particular economy that people who live on the outside of this sort of environment regard as suspect. I did not feel helpless or isolated and I did not see education as a golden chalice.

I left the estate, got a job……, increased my earning enormously and became what I guess would be called ‘socially included’. Looking back on these changes now I do not feel that any of the inclusion/exclusion or widening participation language applies to me, and if it does not apply to me I suspect most of the so-called socially excluded groups who are being encouraged to participate in education do not think it applies to them either”.

A black perspective is not just an ethnic or a cultural perspective, but an anti-racist perspective. And it derives not from some abstract academic definition, but from the living struggles of African-Caribbean and Asian working people in this country, in the 1960’s and 1970’s, against an undifferentiated and brutal racism. And it denotes common unity against a common oppression, forged in a culture of resistance and producing a sense of community.

What, then are the lessons that we can learn from history? Firstly, we learn that a black perspective is a holistic perspective which takes in the whole of society. Secondly, that a black perspective is an anti-racist perspective and not a cultural or ethnic perspective. A black perspective challenges a racist system; a cultural perspective finds accommodation within it. Finally, a black perspective is a community perspective and not an individualistic one. Black unites. Ethnicity divides.

### Appendix G: Combating Racism: An individual checklist

Ask yourself these questions and tick the appropriate column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do I actively seek out more information in an effort to improve my own awareness and understanding of racism? (e.g. talking with others, reading, listening)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Have I spent some time recently looking at my own racist attitudes and behaviour as they contribute to or combat racism?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Have I examined my own use of terms or phrases that may be seen by others as degrading or hurtful?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Have I openly disagreed with a racist comment, joke or action among those around me?</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Have I made a personal contract with myself to take a positive stance against racism, even at some possible risk, when the chance occurs?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Have I become increasingly aware of racist T.V. programmes, advertising, news broadcasts or press coverage? Have I complained to those in charge?</td>
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<td>7. Do I accept that white British are trapped by their own culture and institutions, such as schools, homes, media, government, etc. even when they choose not to be openly racist?</td>
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<td>8. Do I take steps to implement discussions about racism with friends, colleagues, social clubs or church groups?</td>
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<td>9. Have I been investigating political candidates at all levels in terms of their stance and activity against or in favour of racist government practices and their will to secure fully effective implementation of equal opportunities policies?</td>
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## Combating Racism: An individual checklist (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ask yourself these questions and tick the appropriate column.</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. Have I investigated the curricula of local schools in terms of their treatment of the issue of racism (e.g. topics, materials, textbooks, assemblies, staffing)</td>
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<td>11. Do I contribute time and/or funds to an agency, fund or programme that actively confronts the problems of racism?</td>
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<td>12. Do my buying habits support non-racist shops, companies or persons?</td>
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<td>13. Is my place of employment a target for my educational efforts in responding to racism?</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Have I sought to check whether decisions I’m involved in at work are sensitive enough to the rights and needs of all communities in our area?</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Have I learned to listen well, when and if black people raise questions of racial oppression in our society?</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Am I seriously dissatisfied with my own level of activity in combating racism?</td>
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</table>

Adapted from an unknown source by Lance Lewis
Appendix H: Macpherson’s definition of institutional racism

The collective failure of an organisation 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.

Sir William Macpherson’s Inquiry into the death of Stephen Lawrence, February 1999

1. Is your organisation’s service appropriate to people of different colours, cultures or ethnic origins?

2. What additional processes in your organisation could ensure that the service continues to be appropriate?

3. What attitudes could ensure this?

4. What behaviour could ensure this?

5. What can you do to improve the situation?
Appendix I: Whiteness

Whiteness, as a set of normative cultural practices, is visible most clearly to those it definitely excludes and to those to whom it does violence. Those who are securely housed within its borders usually do not examine it.

Ruth Frankenburg (1993)
White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construct of Whiteness,
London, Routledge
Appendix J: Barriers for black women facing domestic violence

Discuss the following scenario and the issues raised in relation to your work:

You are a community worker and a Pakistani woman approaches you. She has limited English but she tells you her husband does not give her any money or allow her out. He beats her up without reason. She has two children aged four and six. She wants advice on her rights.

- How do you deal with this situation?
- What issues do you have to take into consideration?
- Who would you refer her onto?

Later on you find out that she does not have “indefinite leave to remain in Britain”. Does this change the situation? Why? How?

Shabnam Sheikh
Appendix K: Good practice with black women facing domestic violence

from research carried out by Shabnam Sheikh, April 2001, into Asian women, children and domestic violence in Oldham.

The following recommendations focus on practical ways in which organisations can work effectively to address some of the needs of black women facing domestic violence:

- Organisations need to consider ways to improve their services to meet the needs of Asian women.
- Workers need to be trained in front-line advice on domestic violence and how the referral systems work.
- Organisations should have a network of contacts for speakers of other languages who can be called upon or who work in relevant agencies.
- Children should not be used as interpreters for domestic violence situations.
- Community based support is needed.
- There is an urgent need for community based education on the issues of domestic violence.
- Positive role models of Asian women in different roles need to be promoted.
- Asian women workers need to be supported in taking on domestic violence work as part of their remit.
- The Domestic Violence Unit needs to have more trained Asian women as interpreters on the list to call for home visits.
- Asian women’s awareness of the agencies that can help women experiencing domestic violence needs to be raised.
- Counselling needs to be available in different languages.
- Professionals that work with women and children need to have a knowledge of domestic violence issues and agencies for referral, e.g. teachers.
- Workers working with children need to communicate that the violence is not their fault.
- Information material about domestic violence issues and relevant contacts needs to be produced in different languages. Audio tapes need to be produced for women who cannot read. Videotapes (in different languages) need to be produced to raise awareness of what constitutes domestic violence.
- Asian communities need to be represented on Domestic Violence Forums.
- Children should be made aware of where they can seek help.
- Schools should included issues on domestic violence in the curriculum.
Appendix L: Some recommended further reading

Adams, Bell & Griffin. (1997) Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice, Routledge
Braham, Rattansi & Skellington (1993) Racism and Anti-Racism Sage
Connolly, Paul (1998) Racism, Gender Identities and Young Children Routledge
hooks, bell (1995) Killing Rage End Racism Henry Holts
Hughes, Douglas (1970) From a Black Perspective Holt Rinehart