University of Brighton

DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM

TEACHING AND LEARNING ABOUT RACE EQUALITY

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Marlon Moncrieffe, Yaa Asare, Robin Dunford and Heba Youssef

EDITORIAL

It is our pleasure, as the editorial committee, to present the first edition of the University of Brighton's journal bringing together reflections on the pressing task decolonising the curriculum across the University.

In these times of political and economic uncertainty and rising populism, it is vital that universities directly challenge the thought that underlies xenophobia, division, discrimination, and assumptions of superiority. We cannot assume that the underlying processes that enabled the violence of imperialism and continue in propagating privilege, structural injustice and exclusion will dissipate without a concerted effort from universities as repositories of critical thinking.

It is our contention that in majority-white institutions such as ours, the tendency to leave racial injustice unnoticed or unchallenged is great. It is considered more acceptable in places such as ours to suggest that racism is not an issue here and that less efforts need to be made to forefront issues and systems of injustice and ignorance, however 'unwitting' these may be. Through this publication we wish to give voice to all in our university community who in the course of their daily practice seek to highlight and mitigate against these injustices, using the tool that we all hold in common as a way of making the changes that we wish to see, namely, the educational curriculum. Through this publication we wish to present some of the work in our university community that seeks to highlight and mitigate injustices through the curriculum. In doing so we hope to encourage all colleagues to undertake similar processes of decolonisation and inclusion.

This publication offers staff and students the opportunity to reflect on practice and experience and to showcase initiatives that are making a concerted contribution to Decolonising the Curriculum. The journal is also an educational tool that can be used as an exemplar and a reference in curriculum development as well as in the classroom for students and academics to reflect upon and discuss. The thoughtful and thought-provoking articles in this first edition would suggest that the process of decolonising the curriculum at the University of Brighton is already underway.

Yaa Asare reflects on her experience of teaching about race and ethnicity and the situating of Black people as 'disadvantaged' in classroom-based discussions in a predominantly white university. She draws attention to the need to interrogate our interrelated histories, acknowledging systemic racism to develop strategies to counter this at institutional level.

Daniel Burdsey's commentary encourages us as educators, through reflections of his own teaching practice, to introduce key racialised concepts and support students with the task of understanding these. In offering a unique assessment process he points to ways of enabling student critiques of racism to be presented for assessment through the suggested use of critical and creative tasks.

Fiona Handley, from the Centre for Learning and Teaching, introduces the Curriculum Advisors Scheme followed by two students discussing their involvement. Lawrance Odulawa discusses how student-led research into the experiences of BAME students is seeking to identify the causes of and the solutions for their attainment gap. Holly Raber discusses her Skype communications with Professor Canagarajah to explore the concept of 'code-meshing' as a way of highlighting the strengths and contribution that students from diverse backgrounds bring to the university.

Anita Rupprecht discusses the re-formulation of the BA Humanities Program Core Module. Her article illustrates how a module on "Critical Traditions in Western Thought" can be re-conceptualised to contest the white, middle-class, male-centric approach that is taken for granted as the basis of the construction of knowledge.

Dorcas Mapondera interrogates the teaching of nursing in HE and clinical concerns that the decolonising the curriculum movement has highlighted. Her critique is of the 'lack of pedagogic alignment' in Nurse Education and the need for qualifying bodies, as named key stakeholders, to collaborate to institute much needed specific changes.

Marlon Moncrieffe challenges the Euro-centric narrative of the Key Stage 2 history in the National Curriculum. His discussion outlines how the mass migrations of people of colour need to be discussed in terms of their/our contribution to the national story. Moncrieffe explores how and why the notion of British identity needs to be made more inclusive as educators are encouraged to develop the curriculum.

Tim Stephens' powerful and personal article begins with a reflection of the impact of racism on his own family. He uses concept of speech and language to invoke his own acculturation process to 'university speak' and draws on Freire to critique the concept of illiteracy as indicating a refusal to value an authentic response to social injustice. Stephens poses challenging questions to us all as educators about what we may be able to learn from our students about the cultural authority imposed by the academy.

Jonathon Watson usefully explores key principles of decolonising the curriculum in discussing the rationale of the option pathway "Race and Resistance". In detailing the structure of this course Watson offers an interesting academic approach as well as ideas for delivery requiring keen classroom management of often emotive but deeply relevant material.

Heba Youssef critiques the western-centric aspects of the discipline of International Relations whereby the histories and resistance of colonized peoples are "relentlessly erased in the discipline". Her article explores the troubling implications of this positioning, especially in relation to the exclusion of BAME students. She discusses alternative discourses which encourage the students' own interrogation of the erasures in texts that offer a white-washed world view.

John Lynch and Beth Thomas- Hancock conclude this first issue of Decolonising the Curriculum with a presentation of their successful BAME mentoring programme available for students in the School of Education and the School of Health Sciences. The programme now also matches university student mentors with school pupils. These initiatives have proved to be a catalyst for change in highlighting the experience of BAME pupils and students.

CONTENTS

Inside the Classroom: Reflections and Analysis

YAA ASARE

School of Applied Social Science
Y.Asare@brighton.ac.uk

On reflection, my years of teaching about race and ethnicity in the academy equate to an ethnographic experience of "what goes on" when students grapple with questions of race in the classroom. My courses explore the impact of race in society, addressing how the education system fails Black students, considering identity in the context of post-colonialism, and how race and racism relate to the idea of British-ness. How does this experience relate to the project of decolonising the curriculum? Having reached university level study, it often becomes apparent that in previous learning, students have learnt about Blackness as being both problematic and a position of deficit. Many use the term "disadvantaged" to discuss Black people, who are understood as having absorbed their own oppression. The potential damage (for both Black and White students) was brought directly to my attention when a White student said, in a classroom discussion," I was lucky enough to have been born White".

The idea of Black disadvantage had taken root in her consciousness to the extent that she interpreted her white privilege as being indicative of good fortune. Tangentially, the notion of Black people as unfortunate objects of sympathy had developed, a caricaturing of any genuine understanding of complex dynamics of race. What then are the implications of such a statement for how we need to teach about 'race'? The suggestion is that this deficit model needs to be debunked and replaced initially by a deeper understanding of the power dynamics of bi-racialisation (Ifekwunigwe, 1999) inherent in British society. In his critique of the antiracist project, Gilroy recognises the danger of a deficit model of Blackness in highlighting the 'ideological circuit which makes us (Black people) visible in two complementary roles – the problem and the victim' (Gilroy,1992).

In Phoenix's research, Black women respondents recollect experiences of being subjects of a blatant racist discourse in schools, which they resisted but which were nevertheless damaging. The nature of racism that university students today may experience is unlikely to be as direct as it was for these women 's experiences in the 1960's, but manifests as more subtle and cumulative. Essed (1992) investigates the detrimental effects of 'everyday racism' in which negative representations and stereotypical ideas of Blackness impact the careers of women of colour in HE. Unconscious bias training is rolled out to address this pernicious legacy of colonial thinking. Before identifying unconscious bias training as the solution, however, we need to consider whether this personalising of racialised reactions is able to impact on pervasive structural and institutionalised racism (Sivanandan, 1985).

In considering how we might teach about "race" in the university curriculum, we need to acknowledge that some students might be unwilling to engage with interrogating their long-held assumptions. Mazzei (2008) interrogates the reluctance of White student teachers to even discuss race. This silence equates with an unwillingness of student teachers to see themselves as having a racial position; this lack of engagement works alongside a stereotypical view towards the Black pupils they teach. In this way they problematise and victimise Black communities while simultaneously failing to acknowledge systemic racism. To what extent are we countering this perspective through our university curriculum? Situated as "victims" or "problems", a Black perspective in the racial power-play of white hegemony often remains un-interrogated in the academy. Hall (2000) suggests that the histories of the colonised and the coloniser are interrelated – but these links are unspoken, not taught about. In order to better understand ourselves in the West, whatever our heritage might be, there is the need to interrogate the legacy that the former colonialization of much of the Global South continues to have on how race is understood.

Things and Time: reflections on teaching about race and racism on an undergraduate sport and popular culture module

DANIEL BURDSEY

School of Sport and Service Management
D.C.Burdsey@brighton.ac.uk

Overview

This short commentary reflects on my delivery of a Level 6 module: Racism in Sport and Popular Culture. It represents some ruminations on my ongoing personal journey towards anti-racist and decolonial pedagogy: what Meleisa Ono-George (2019, p.4) describes as teaching which 'challenge[s] "exclusionary" education practices that promote, reinforce and reproduce dominant knowledges and the status quo'. I hope these considerations might, in turn, instigate dialogue with colleagues and students that can enhance my practice as well as others'.

The title of this piece, taken from the Wailing Souls' 1974 track/riddim Things and Time, symbolises the module ethos of bringing our (lecturer's and students') popular cultural interests and passions into the classroom; it describes key thematics that underpin the learning content and approach: concepts ("things") and temporal context ("time"); and it denotes the emphasis on elevating and valuing racialised voices (including those from outside the academy).

Things

 'Teaching practice is engaged, anti-racist and decolonial', writes Ono-George (2019, p.4), 'if it forces students, especially those comfortably in the majority, out of their comfort zones'. Our module[1] begins by stressing the importance of naming concepts and talking openly about problems – for instance, racism, white supremacy, colonialism, empire – thus 're-situat[ing] these phenomena as key shaping forces of the contemporary world, in a context where their role has been systematically effaced from view' (Bhambra et al 2018, p.2). This forms the basis for a discussion on all our racialised experiences, opportunities, positions and privileges – not least in the fields of education and sport. This is routinely a challenging discussion, as some white students start from an unwillingness to acknowledge the benefits they accrue from a racist social structure or resist the focus on "them" rather than the racialised "Other". Ultimately, however, their development is often edifying and enlightened.

Time

A central component of our module is thinking about temporal (as well as cultural) context. In the very first class we historicise (and problematize) the concept of race, exploring its emergence as "science" under colonialism and its connections to slavery. Next we challenge the dominant discourse that we are now "post-race" – i.e. in a period after race and racism – and establish racism's structural, systemic contemporary manifestations. This also enables us to draw out connections between colonialism and modern sport (Burdsey 2018): such as the 2018 men's football World Cup squads, the abusive use of Native Americans as team mascots, and discriminatory portrayals of Serena Williams.

Classes and assessment[2]
Fundamental to our module are matters of subjectivity, positionality and voice. I make it clear that as a white academic I simply have some knowledge of racism; but that it is learned/observed rather than experiential, and for that reason my teaching comprises purely one form and source of knowledge. Each week, the majority of module readings (which combine academic and popular sources) are from scholars of colour and/or women (albeit primarily from the Global North). I explicitly explain their selection: both as excellent writing/analysis and as a subversion of a Eurocentric, white, canonical curriculum (Ono-George 2019). Our module also includes a "wild card" week, where students decide on the topics.

In a similar vein, we include different "live" voices and experiences in our class. This year, we were very happy to be able to have Dr. Scott Brooks (Arizona State University) and Dr. Jasmijn Rana (University of Leiden) present their work and facilitate discussion.[3] We also visited the brilliant exhibition curated by Dr. Marlon Moncrieffe on black cycling champions, and engaged in the associated conference on race and education.

I am grateful to my dear friend and co-author, Dr. Stan Thangaraj (City College New York), for the idea behind the module assessment. Alongside an essay component, students submit a piece of creative representation (e.g. poems, posters, collages, playlists), enabling them to consider, analyse and resist racism in ways that are not constrained by conventional, institutionalised written techniques.[4]

Final thoughts
The magnitude of the "task at hand" (Shahzadi 2018) in tackling systemic racial inequality in higher education is apparent (Ahmed 2012, Arday and Mirza 2018, Bhopal 2017, Johnson 2018, Tate 2016). I am likewise cognisant of the dangers of claims of decoloniality that are merely metaphorical (Tuck and Wang 2012); and how such assertions, through their incorporation into the neoliberal university, can dilute radical politics (Sista Resista 2018). The impact of a single semester-long module in addressing any of these issues is, then, inexorably limited; but if we didn't think that the classroom could initiate/develop a progressive politics among young people we would perhaps not have joined the academic world in the first place.

Notes
 [1]   While I am the only member of staff on this module, I use terms such as "our" and "we" here, rather than "my" and "me", to emphasise an attempt to facilitate shared "ownership" of the module and flatten (where possible) power relations between the lecturer (me) and the students. Our module is about collaborative and shared learning: we all bring knowledge and experience to the classroom, and we all benefit from what happens in that space.

[2]   Very useful practical advice can be found in, for example, Keval (2019) and Sista Resista (2018).

[3]   I am grateful to my colleague, Dr. Alex Channon, for helping to arrange Dr. Rana's visit.

[4]   See, for example, the publically available YouTube playlist by Damon Harmon: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLiZrpJrX3qVtJuz7PS2nMqF8QoUn5o8lt

Decolonising the Curriculum: Perspectives from teaching Nursing in Higher Education

DORCAS MAPONDERA
School of Health Sciences
d.mapondera@brighton.ac.uk

Context in Nursing
Student-led calls to decolonise the curriculum deserve responses that not only examine the curriculum, but also provide a contextualised meaning of 'decolonisation'. Current Nursing Curricula are predominantly based on standards set by the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC). Studies combine Higher Education Institutions and clinical placements in hospital and community-health settings. The UK Quality Code for Higher Education (QAA) standards are applied by Higher Education Institutions providing Nurse Education at Foundation Degree, Bachelor of Science, stand-alone Nursing Post-Registration Courses and Masters level studies. In this context, any calls to revise the nursing curriculum must therefore also consider standards of clinical practice that remain aligned to quality delivery of care and service to the public.

If 'decolonise' is taken as the 'removal of an oppressive authority' then the first challenge in examining the British Nursing Curriculum is to identify whether such 'an authority' exists in nursing practice. British based, Nursing focused curricula have a different history, politics, approach and socio-political context to those of the southern hemisphere where the movement to decolonise the curriculum started. The UK health sector has documented concerns in clinical and community settings around race, ethnicity and disproportionate representation. In being responsive and accountable to students and the public, calls to decolonise the curriculum provide an opportunity for the Nursing profession to enhance nursing-specific pedagogy. Questions on if/how the curriculum needs to be decolonised can provide opportunity for local and regional examination of facts and terminology. Nursing can demonstrate accountability in Higher Education while producing professionals who act in the best interests of a diverse population.

What can be done to decolonise the nursing curriculum?
Nurse education is interdisciplinary in nature. The professional scope of learning and practice are determined by the NMC Code. NMC (2015) state that the standards are what the public and patients say they expect. On the other hand, reports such as the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES, 2018), The Royal College of Nursing (2019) and Naqvi (2019) highlight ongoing inequalities in the National Health Service (NHS) based on race. The RCN (2018) describes the impact as 'blighting' on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups (BAME). Nursing students of all backgrounds learning in clinical placements are therefore immersed in environments that depict unfavourable, unprofessional practices showing ethnic and racial prejudices.

BAME Nursing students report experiences of racism at the hands of patients. These environments, practices and lack of demonstrable inclusive leadership create a paradox: students are assessed on NMC Standards of prioritising people, upholding dignity and promoting professionalism - while in environments that exemplify the opposite. Concerns remain where theory work and grading show disparities between student groups with disproportionate representation of lower than expected grades among Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority (BAME) students (The Royal Historical Society, 2018). There is lack of pedagogic alignment in Nurse Education, relating to the inclusivity required by the NMC Standards. Therefore in decolonising the curriculum, collaborative work is needed between the NMC, QAA, HEIs and all NHS linked Stake-holders.

Proposing an inclusive, transformational approach to decolonising curriculum
The Nursing profession has opportunities for engagement and interaction between lecturers, students, clinical mentors and the public. This provides unique scope for social and immersive learning. Local, specific challenges of 'attainment' in theory and academic writing require Nurse Educators to engage with a diverse and evolving student demographic. We have a responsibility to examine aspects of student experiences affected by pedagogic and environmental factors. Panels with students and lecturers would do well to examine terminology such as 'decolonisation' and 'attainment-gap' and the inferences of these terms. A proactive, responsive approach which includes the aforementioned groups and the BAME public could pave a way for transformative work on decolonising the local Nursing curriculum.
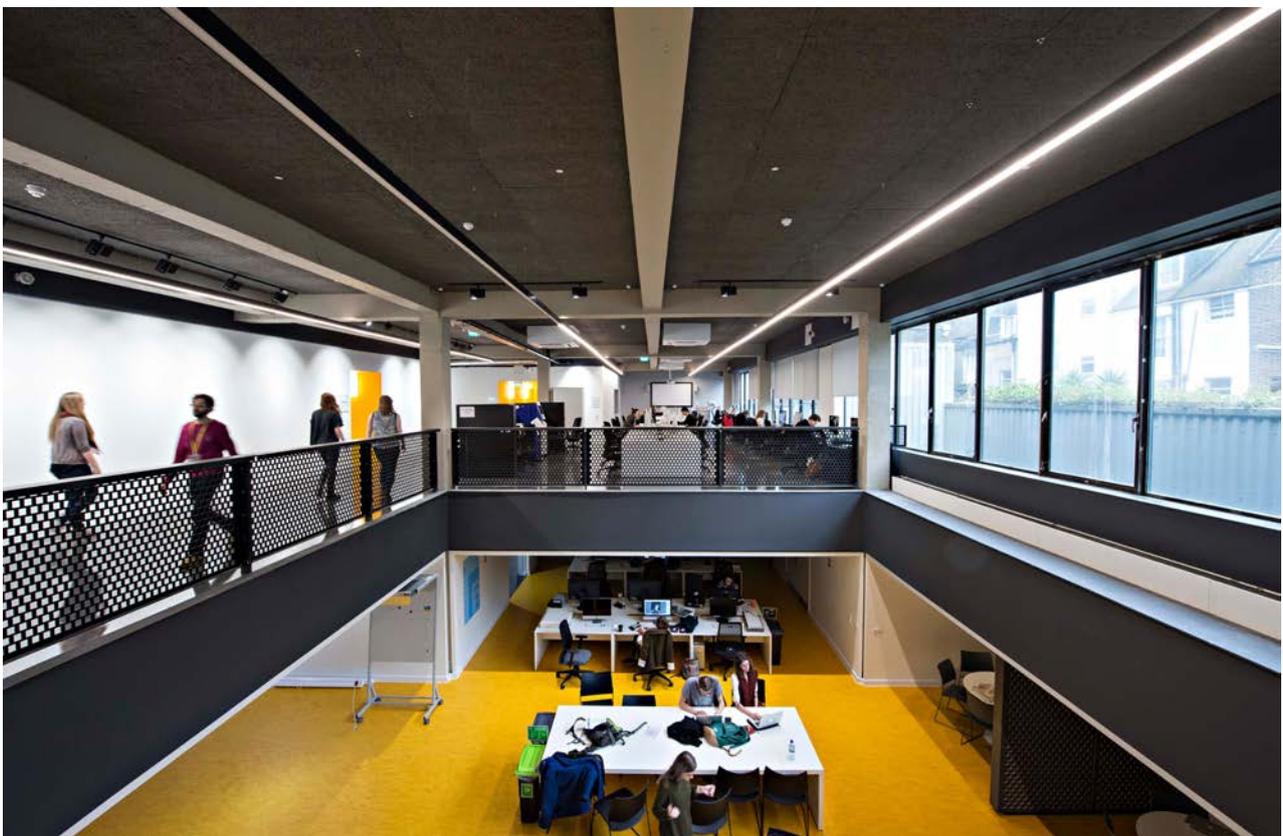
An approach to decolonising the national curriculum for Key Stage 2 history in Initial Teacher Education

MARLON MONCRIEFFE
School of Education
M.L.Moncrieffe@brighton.ac.uk

My examination of the National Curriculum for Key Stage 2 history (education for children aged 7 to 11 years old) (DfE, 2013a) focused on its aims and contents, and the political motives for teaching and learning the 'master narrative' of mass-migration and settlement to the British Isles (Moncrieffe, 2014, 2018; Nichol and Harnett, 2011). A Euro-centric narrative of "nation building" and "national identity" is identified and depicted exclusively by a statutory national policy directive (DfE, 2013a, p.4). It directs teachers to teach children about 'the 8th century Viking/Anglo-Saxon struggle' and 'Viking invasions' through their "violent cross-cultural encounters". The National Curriculum for Key Stage 2 history stops at the year 1066. It provides no other significant narrative of mass-migration and settlement to the British Isles for children to learn of. Its statutory national policy directive ignores the histories and experiences of non-Europeans (people of colour) arriving on the British Isles over the ages through their mass-migration and contributing to "nation building" and "national identity". Instead, "epistemic violence" (Spivak, 1999) is occurring through a "whitewashing" of "knowledge" and "experiences" (Lander, 2016; Moncrieffe, 2018). Teaching about mass-migration and settlement to the British Isles can be engaged with in secondary education at Key Stage 3 (DfE, 2013b), but this is a non-statutory requirement, schools and their teachers are under no obligation to do so.

There are a plethora of national narrative episodes and accounts unwritten by the National Curriculum for Key Stage 2 history concerning mass-migration and settlement by people in the British Isles over the ages. One example is the story of the British citizens from the 20th century African-Caribbean Windrush Generation. They were invited to migrate and settle in Britain by the government. Their mistreatment in society and by the authorities; and a resistance to this through uprisings across cities in England particularly during the 1980s in their "struggles" against the oppressive and racist White-British led political system have been documented (Gilroy, 1987, Moncrieffe, 2018; Sewell, 1998). These are more recent "violent cross-cultural encounters" and "struggles" that could be placed in juxtaposition with those from the distant past for decolonising the curriculum (Moncrieffe, 2018). Children in Key Stage 2 are already learning about mass-migration and settlement involving "violent cross-cultural encounters" and "struggles" between different ethnic and cultural groups i.e. the Anglo-Saxons and the Vikings. They are cross-cultural encounters which resulted in treaties to support "nation building" for shaping a new "national identity". Equally, statutory policies of equality were written following the "cross-cultural" uprisings across cities in England during the 1980s. This impacted on the need for "nation building" for shaping a new "national identity". I see that it is this contrasting of "cross-cultural encounters" from the distant past with more recent times in British history which can promote discussion in the Key Stage 2 classroom on themes such as: 'democracy'; 'tolerance' and 'mutual respect' for those of different faiths and beliefs – "fundamental British values" (DfE, 2014). These are values of co-existence which have emerged as a product of learning from violent "cross-cultural encounters"

Teacher-educators must foster in their trainee-teachers a deep sense of criticality towards the Euro-centric narrative of mass-migration and settlement to the British Isles given in the key stage two curriculum (DfE, 2013a). Decolonising the curriculum focuses its work on the inclusion and amplification of marginalised voices and narratives abused and silenced by various forms of "epistemic violence" (Spivak, 1999). Recognising and applying these marginalised voices and narratives in teaching and learning will shape broader forms of inclusive practice for the educator.
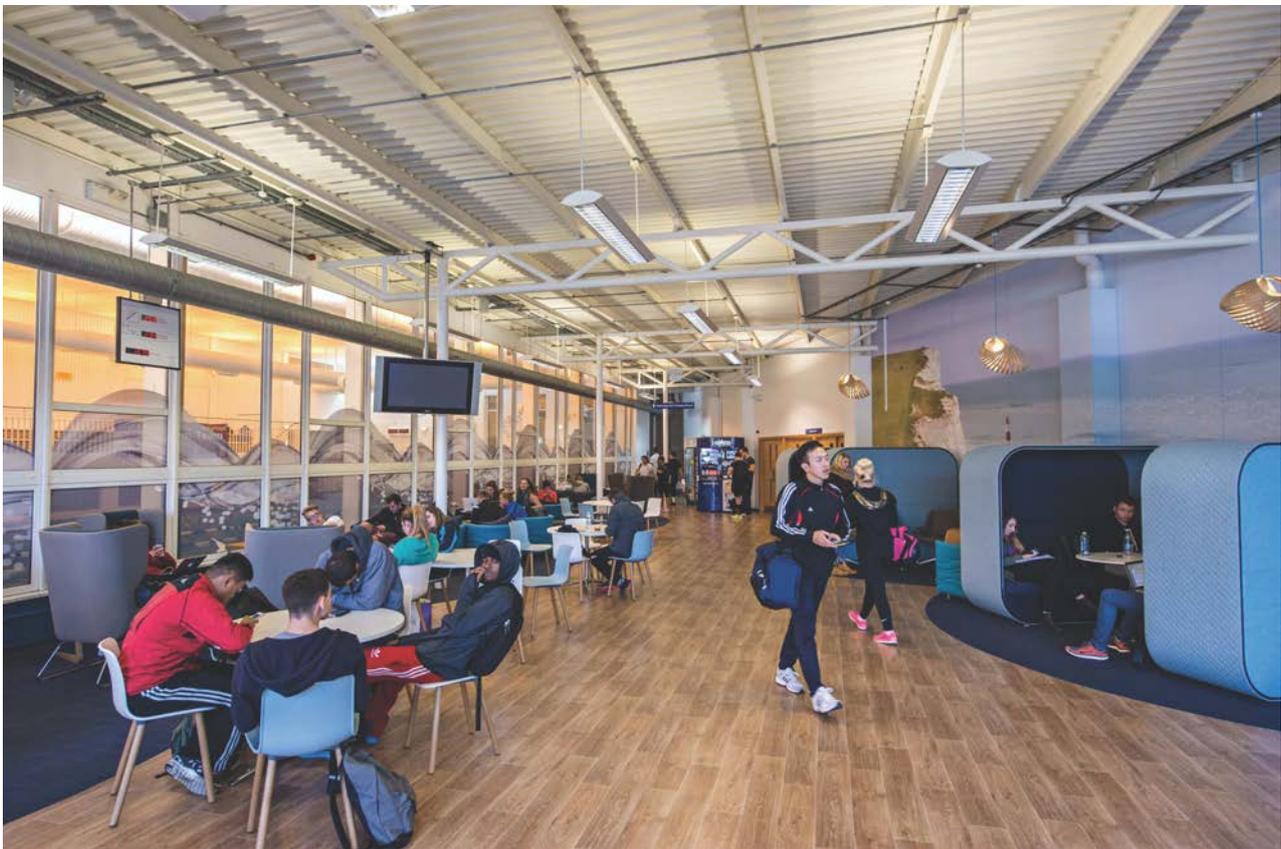
Students and Staff Working in Partnership towards Decolonising the Curriculum

FIONA HANDLEY
Centre for Learning and Teaching
F.Handley@brighton.ac.uk

LAWRANCE ODULAWA
School of Health Sciences
O.Odulawa1@uni.brighton.ac.uk

HOLLY RABER
School of Humanities
H.Raber1@uni.brighton.ac.uk

Introduction

The Developing Learning Communities initiative is a cross University project that focusses on creating a sense of belonging and community among students and staff. It is particularly concerned with issues to do with wellbeing, inclusive practice and diversifying and decolonising the curriculum, and aims to tackle these through staff and students working in partnership. One of its strands of work is a student Curriculum Advisers scheme, in which students are paid to work in partnership with staff to develop small projects that will have an impact on the curriculum, for example through finding out more about how students learn, or creating resources or activities that can be used and reused in teaching. In this paper two Curriculum Advisers recount their experiences of being a Curriculum Adviser on projects which relate to decolonising the curriculum. They discuss why they became involved, and what impact their projects will have.

Lawrance Odulawa is a second-year student on the Masters pre-registration programme in occupational therapy. For his Curriculum Adviser project, he is working with Tania Wiseman, who is the Course Leader on the programme, to find out more about their BAME students and what can be done to support them in their learning. "I'm looking at black minority ethnic group's perspectives on why there's an attainment gap between themselves and white students. When they both come to university, they tend to have the same sort of grades. When finishing the course black ethnic groups don't seem to perform as well so it's a study looking at their perspectives as to why there is an attainment gap.

We're consulting with students to find out whether they feel there is an attainment gap because of a particular area within the curriculum itself. Tania and I have worked closely from the beginning, so in terms of deciding what design to use and what sort of questions we have been working collaboratively to make it a dual project. We've got questions about teaching materials such as textbooks and case studies, the lack of representation of culture and race in materials that students come across when they're on placements, and the diversity of guest speakers or visitors who attend the University.

My tutor found out about the Curriculum Adviser project first, and I think she asked if I would be interested in it, no pressure whatsoever, and she expressed her concerns with the attainment gap. She really made it clear that it's an important area which I knew as well. But I think the main thing for me in terms of getting involved is that I knew it wouldn't be too time consuming because I have a lot of other things going on, such as my placement and my thesis but I knew we could be quite creative to make it quite fun and it really got me interested. I just thought it would be good to make a difference even if it is something small it would really be nice to reduce the attainment gap so that everyone that comes to university has a fair chance of doing well. I think we have to raise awareness as to what things could be changed; things that may have been overlooked. I suppose we just want to make sure that everyone feels included when they are learning."

Holly Raber is a third-year student studying English Language and Linguistics. For her Curriculum Adviser project, she interviewed Professor Suresh Canagarajah, who is the Edwin Erle Sparks Professor of Applied Linguistics, English, and Asian studies at Pennsylvania State University, USA, via Skype. The interview was recorded and will create a series of vodcasts that will be used in the English Language programme.

"I'm working with Sarah Varney-Burch and Vy Rajapillai who are both tutors on the English language side of my course and we've got the opportunity to talk to Professor Canagarajah. We're speaking to him via Skype from Pennsylvania about his work with translingualism and we felt that this has quite a few implications for decolonizing the curriculum. He is talking about language being a mobile resource, people negotiating between one another as they speak, and for everyone to bring their own experiences linguistically and culturally into the standard written formal English that we've been led to expect is the only way to do things.

He talks about code meshing, it's different to code switching where somebody who's proficient in two languages can easily swap from one to the other to make themselves understood, but within translingualism the idea of code meshing is that you bring a little bit of your language, which might be your mother tongue, you bring a little bit maybe of your second language and even parts of other languages you know. It doesn't mean that you need to know all these languages perfectly, it's that you can bring enough to be in a communicative situation to make yourselves understood. Children are translingual, you see children on a beach, they can talk to any children from any nation because they just negotiate until they both understand they want to make a sandcastle. One of the reasons I find it very interesting, is that my father was Jewish, and he could find someone that spoke Yiddish anywhere. My mother said, 'Your father can always speak to people' and it was absolutely true, because putting together a bit of Yiddish, a bit of English, a bit of French he would always get what he wanted. So, I think translinguilism is a mindset, it's being open to the idea that there's no right way, the only right way is that you use everything around you to create your meaning. It's about creating shared understandings through everyone having the confidence to bring their own cultural backgrounds, to show that everyone's experiences are equally valid, and that everyone should feel included. I think this is where Professor Chanagarajah comes across really well because he's got that multilingual background and he's really aware of the value of what other cultures can bring to learning at university. This is important because the University of Brighton has students from very diverse international backgrounds, so it's crucial that they feel empowered to share their experiences.

I signed up as a Curriculum Adviser because I wanted to get involved, I would like to be in a position to give something back. It's the first time I've come across decolonising the curriculum. I wasn't really aware as a native English speaker of how much middle-aged white men dominated all the literature. I think it's important we support our tutors when they want to get involved in something like this but it's also really important that other students see us doing it.

Summary
These two projects highlight the diversity of different approaches to decolonising the curriculum that are taking place as part of the Developing Learning Communities initiative. Some projects are about finding out more about students, and about reflecting on course content to make it more representative of the diversity that people see or would like to see in their discipline or profession. Some projects are about creating a legacy of resources that challenge, in their subject matter, their voice, and their media the traditional boundaries around what is appropriate in curriculum content. A common theme across the all projects is Curriculum Advisers' commitment to partnership working, getting involved and making a difference, and to seeing the curriculum as a place that can make positive change really happen.

Towards Decolonising the BA Humanities Programme Core Module, 'Critical Traditions in Western Thought'

ANITA RUPPRECHT
School of Humanities
A.Rupprecht@brighton.ac.uk

 'Critical Traditions in Western Thought' is taught at Level 5 on the Humanities Programme in the School of Humanities. The Programme offers five degrees; BA Critical Histories, BA Philosophy, Politics and Ethics, BA Globalisation, BA History, Literature and Culture and BA Humanities. Delivered via 52 lectures and 26 small group seminars, the year-long core module forms the intellectual spine of the academic programme. Introducing students to the conceptual and historical developments associated with the idea of 'modernity', it reaches back to the social, scientific and political revolutions of the eighteenth century European 'Enlightenment', and culminates in the global present day in order to foster understanding of the provenance of, and critical engagement with, many dominant assumptions about how the world is. Key concepts such as 'freedom', 'the individual', 'rights' and the place of 'reason' are introduced in relation to their historical moment of emergence, their contestation and their development.

For the thirty or so colleagues who teach the course, the key guiding term in the module's title has long been 'critical'. The course is framed by an interrogation of the concept of 'tradition' itself understood as a process of selection subject to power relations. So, when, during the academic year 2017-18, some students took the initiative to state that 'Critical Traditions' was 'white male-centric' and that it should be 'decolonised', colleagues were challenged to confront what they thought they were teaching and how.

Curriculum development is slowed by the hard practicalities of the relentless academic process of reproduction from year to year. As a first step in responding to student concerns, colleagues held a series of meetings to discuss collectively the issues that had been raised. Views about what to do were varied and contested and it quickly became clear that course development needed to be an ongoing process rather than a one-off attempt at restructuring. It was also agreed that working on decolonising the curriculum was not only about enhancing students' capacities to engage critically with 'canonical scholarly knowledge' nor was it only about adding further content in order to diversify readings and approaches. It was also about empowering students to be able to reflect on the implications of how that 'knowledge' is historically constituted and reproduced, to understand the racialised, gendered and classed contexts in which it developed and to notice the silences and exclusions upon which it establishes its authority. The challenge has been how to re-design the course in order that these questions come to the fore and how to ensure that undergraduate students are sufficiently equipped to engage with them.

Course development has since focused on re-articulating weekly topics, sourcing appropriate readings and re-shaping seminar discussion questions. Making significant changes without over-loading the students with too much reading is proving a challenge. A few examples of course development to date include: embedding John Locke's theory of possessive individualism firmly within the American colonial context, placing the French Revolution in the context of the Haitian Revolution and reading Michel-Rolph Trouillot on the historical 'forgetting' of Haiti, reading Eric Williams's Capitalism and Slavery with Adam Smith, considering Mary Wollstonecraft's Vindication of the Rights of Women in the light of Black feminism's critique of Second Wave feminism, reading W. E. B. Du Bois in the context of WW1, exploring the extent to which mid-20C anti-racist, anti-colonial politics challenged liberal concepts of equality and reflecting on the multiple histories of contemporary human rights in order to complicate narratives according to which (universal) human rights clash with (particular) cultures.

Decolonising the curricula is not only about changing course content, however. It is also about how that content is taught and about the structural context within which it is taught. The current market driven 'rationalisation' of academic provision is narrowing rather than enriching the possibilities for inclusive, creative and empowering learning for everyone. The imperative to decolonise requires a serious commitment to equality, justice and truth.
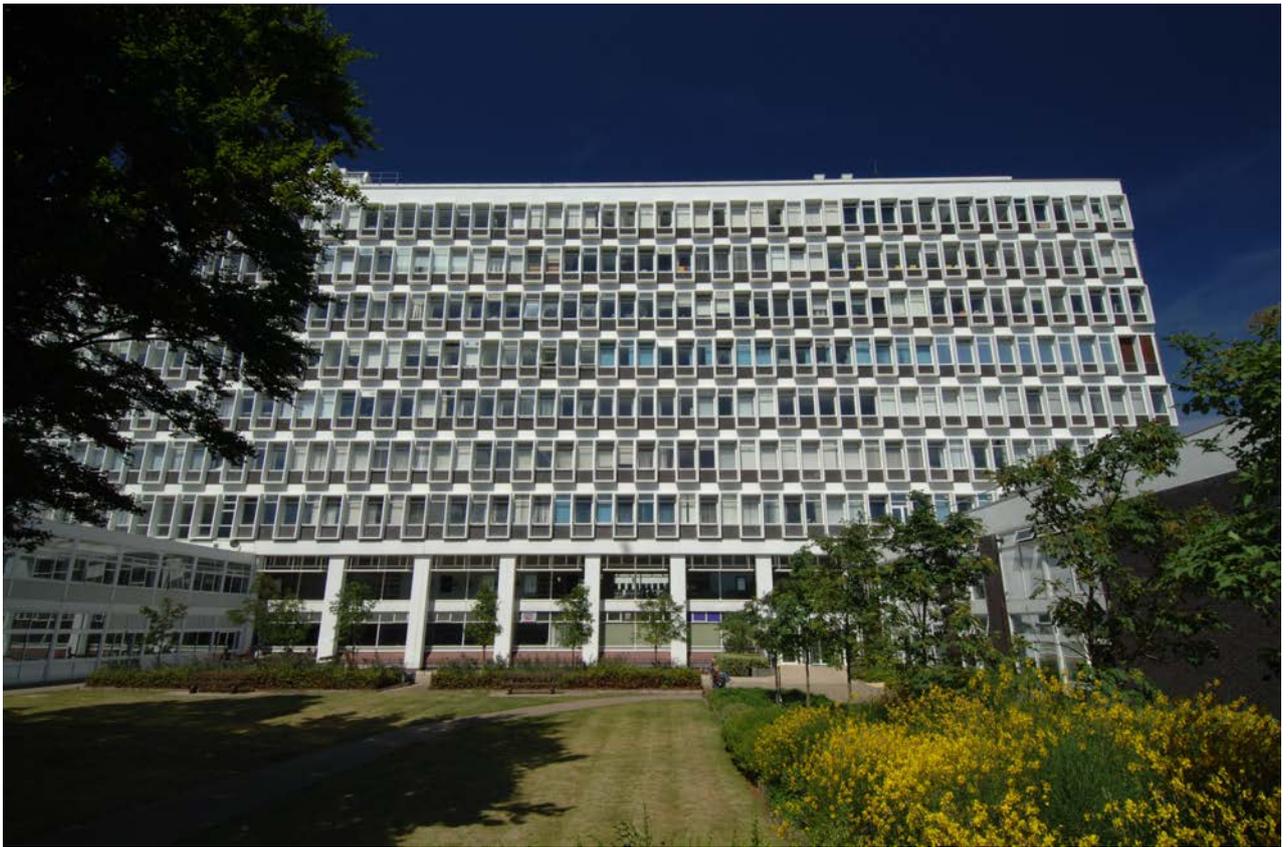
Academic Speech Therapy: a provocation, using performative autoethnography

TIM STEPHENS

Centre for Learning and Teaching
t.p.stephens@arts.ac.uk

Two of my brothers had speech therapy. My eldest brother had a pronounced stammer throughout his childhood and now, even as an adult, when emotions get the better of him. My younger brother gets away with an occasional stutter. One of the problems with contemporary Universities is that educationalists, and by this, I mean the whole class of teaching and support staff, academics and managers, have forgotten how to speak. This also means we have forgotten how to speak about education.

I thought I had escaped this particular affliction because I used to speak very quickly, and fluently, using all the vocabulary at my 'Institutional' disposal, vocabulary that my undergraduate degree had grafted onto my speech, that allowed my family to comment on the change in who I had become. My academic accent grew broad and thick, the more I specialized, the more I reproduced my knowledge in writing. This became the fast-paced disciplinary classification task of research, pedagogy, of a particular managerial kind that allows insider references of increasing subtlety, that constitutes acculturated habitus and distinction. Hence cultural capital is embodied (Bourdieu, 1986, p.17) and constitutes invisible pedagogies (Bernstein, 2003, p.201) whose currency is a learnt language of long sentences, multi-syllabic words and complex grammar; supported by references and evidence. Plus, a certain attitude.

Teaching and commuting between both Brighton and London, I am often conscious of my surprise when I approach The Shard at London Bridge Station, a modernist skyscraper I thought had perished as a design strategy. Here it emerges as a status symbol and successful regeneration concept. Through its layered distinctions, proceeding upward from a ground floor of administrative servitude up to singular surveillance point, expensive, transparent, invisible, it is a Palace in the Sky, balanced on a needlepoint.

I grew up in 1970's Britain, where to be non-white in an all-white area meant that we, my brothers and I, experienced being called numerous offensive terms on the way to school. And on the way home we were told to "go home", "go back to where you came from", "go back to the jungle". And I had to puzzle, in my 8-year-old mind, why these words were not spoken to me in school by other white children? Yet, possibly, worse than being called names was that of being made to feel 'invisible'. That is the chill I feel when simply being 'accepted'. Being judged by my appearance, my skin, I discovered that the limits to our friendliness are entirely self-imposed. Unfortunately, my brown skin was an object of grading, akin to the ethnic classes of colonial administrators (Amselle 1990, p.22 in Simon, Piche, Gagnon 2015, p.5). All those things we do not choose, become part of our identity. Friendships we do not make, likewise. As a child I myself became as prejudiced as any, educated by all-white staff, an all-white curriculum, with all-white language, and, objective, rational all-white thinking, that is, with no knowledge of British rule or cultural exchange, we are, by default, racist, unless educated otherwise.

Who can honestly say they have escaped patriarchy and not internalised those power dynamics? We should neither be surprised, nor shocked, at institutional racism, simply responsible. As American black academic Moton and collaborator Harney encourage us: 'Worry about the University'. We might agree with them that: 'it cannot be denied that the university is a place of refuge, and it cannot be accepted that the university is a place of enlightenment' (2013, p.26).

Being born here of Anglo-Indian-Portuguese heritage allows me experience of three boundaries: class, 'caste' and colour. Bourdieu and Bernstein have generated a significant secondary literature explaining how inequality is perpetuated, and, just as British culture has been touched by migration, from our patios (Spanish) to our bungalows (Hindi), from the fens (German) to our sky (Scandanavian), then almost every topic in every discipline has a cultural history related to Empire it is now our responsibility to unpack and describe. The world-renowned British education system has yet to flower in my opinion, because we have yet to fully express our cultural pluralism. Or take the educational responsibility our historic riches have endowed us.

I'm reminded that since 1940 the IBGE Brazilian institute of Geography and Statistics has used the racial categories branco (white), pardo (brown), amarelo (yellow), preto (black) and indigena (indigenous). However, many if not most people disagree with these categories (Oliveira, 1997, in Petrucelli 2007). Petrucelli classified people's means of identifying their own racial category into 136 overall, including the ambiguous term "Moreno" ("tanned", or "with an olive complexion")" and cor-de-burro-quando-foge (literally, "the colour of a donkey that has run away" (Wikipedia).

In the field of critical education there is a special place for the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. He defined 'illiteracy' very clearly: 'unlettered cultures, full of voices and spoken words, do not have illiteracy… illiteracy is a restriction and a violence to the right of people to participate in culture, which those who know and use the written word must not carry out (unpublished interview)'. Gloria Jean Watkins' friendship with Freire, demonstrates the genuine making of feeling. One of the key messages she gives to the University is at the outset of her book Teaching to Transgress (1994) that we need, using Freire's words: 'to refuse to bureaucratize the mind'.

We lose the power of speech when we lose the power of thought, one based on the true power of authentic feeling. By acknowledging, welcoming and embracing the stranger we are no longer, as Kristeva describes, Strangers to Ourselves (1991).

My father, an immigrant escaping India with his life, after British administrative partition, in the late 40's, arrived here with a tacit 'boarding school education': an RP accent, an ability to box, fencing training, photos of a stint in the Hockey team, a deep love of the English language, yet very little social capital. Hence, he was desk-bound, in the corporate world of petrochemicals, forever a Clerk, too 'different' to promote, unable to say he would 'prefer not to' carry out his administrative duties to the letter (Melville, 1996).

Culture is both internalised through the body and externalised in curricula, behaviour, and buildings. As educators we have to ask ourselves, how do we communicate complexity without using types of verbal (and non-verbal) language, and attitudes, that restrict participation of students? If our institutions are not diversified, curricula taught with critical compassion, we violently exclude student's experience of their own culture. Having also begun my teaching career helping adults who could not read or write, I let my students teach me before I know how to help them. I had to learn, first, how to question the authority I spoke with. I had to enquire into my own cultural inheritance, then theirs. This is horizontal, experiential, not expert, vertical, discourse (Bernstein, 2000, p.158 in McLean, Abbas, Ashwin, 2013, p.10).

As a singer, however, my Dad found true creative expression, choosing deeply emotional songs, rendered with a warm and resonant, well enunciated, grainy, voice that was, well, extraordinary. His stage name reflected knowing irony, Steve Moreno. My father modelled for me how to think-with-feeling, one interpretation of Freire's injunction, something that education should properly do, and we, as educators, should adequately articulate.

Teaching histories of race, racism and resistance: reflections on a two-year undergraduate pathway

JONATHAN WATSON

School of Humanities
J.Watson3@brighton.ac.uk

The option pathway Race and Resistance provides undergraduate students on the Humanities academic programme at the University of Brighton with a suite of interconnected second and third year modules that provide an interrogation of the politics and history of race, racisms and anti-racisms over the last two centuries and across North America, Europe, Africa and the Middle East. As Bhambra et al observe, decolonisation in the academic context is, in part "a way of thinking about the world which takes colonialism, empire and racism as its empirical and discursive objects of study; it re-situates these phenomena as key shaping forces of the contemporary world, in a context where their role has been systematically effaced from view." (Bhambra, Gebrial, Nişancıoğlu, 2018) These modules ask students to engage with these subjects in a developmental way, building sustained, collaborative critical engagement over two years of study. The option pathway supports and complements other initiatives within the Humanities at Brighton to decolonise our learning and teaching (Moncrieffe, Asare & Dunford, 2018). Few of our students have had the opportunity to explore these questions in any sustained way, in relation to Britain or anywhere else, in the British education system prior to university, a factor that, alongside the underrepresentation of Black and minority ethnic (BAME)students and staff in UK higher education, reflects deeper structural inequalities the process of decolonisation seeks to address (Mirza, 2018).

Interdisciplinary in nature, the pathway begins by examining key political and philosophical conceptual frameworks including the genealogy of the idea of race, the role of the nation, migration, hybridity and the intersections of race and gender, before examining case studies from the nineteenth century to the present in the contexts of: European processes of colonisation, anticolonial thought and action, and the postcolonial experience in western Europe; debates over the role of race and ethnicity in the history of Israel/Palestine; processes of racialisation and resistance in contemporary British and Irish contexts; the United States from the rise of the post-slavery racial regimes to the present. In each case, we examine the processes of racialisation, and the forms resistance from oppressed, racialised peoples. The modules interrogate how race and racism have been understood and experienced, from the personal to the structural, through the intersections with other events and social formations, and consider the differing modes of antiracism and resistance that these have produced. As one would expect, the modules evolve in each iteration in part because new scholarship informs our teaching, but also because the subjects under examination continue to provide new content in new contexts.

First taught in 2014/15, BAME students have represented 30-50% of each cohort. The mode of teaching sees one tutor-led session per week, followed by a student-led seminar, where a student interlocutor leads discussion of texts and seminar questions, and all students are graded on their understanding of set readings, their contribution to addressing set questions designed to engage the subject, and their ability to work constructively as part of the seminar group; this mode of assessment encourages a collective ethic where students can express themselves, listen to and support each other. Such a student-centred structure lends itself to the wider work of decolonising the hierarchical structures and processes of knowledge distribution within Higher Education: while the seminar tutor ensures academic rigour, the students determine a path through the material.

The subject matter demands of both staff and students critical engagement and a sensitivity to the subject matter under discussion; teaching staff make clear at the outset that nobody in the group is speaking for or a representative of anyone beyond themselves. Furthermore, the seminar format is not without its challenges and at times debate produces productive points of reflexive tension, often grounded in different perspectives and experience. Staff/student consultation also informs the ongoing process of module recalibration, the updating of reading lists, and the consideration of key texts.

As Karen Salt recently noted, the modes of enquiry fostered in the Humanities – notably testing ideas in discussion and debate as a collective of scholars - provide us with a vital basis for engaged group-led explorations of knowledge and ideas that can challenge and subvert traditions of what ought to be studied in the Humanities that pervade parts of British higher education, often willfully blind to both endemic racism and the diversity of our people and history (Salt, 2018). As such, this set of modules aims to support our students in pushing forward this vital interdisciplinary work.

Reflections on a Decolonial International Relations Module at SASS

HEBA YOUSSEF
School of Applied Social Science
H.Youssef@brighton.ac.uk

One of the central problems in studying International Relations (IR) is its Eurocentrism and its whiteness - an almost exclusive focus on the 'West' and on western world powers, a focus that erases non-white peoples and communities from a discipline that professes to be international. The focus on powerful western states in IR is maintained even when disputes and conflicts between them take place over colonies and resources in colonised places. Moreover, the colonised and racialized peoples and their resistance are relentlessly erased in the discipline (Hobson 2012, p.14-21, and 2015, p.84-95). As Meera Sabaratnam explained in an important talk at the University of Brighton, the perspective from which IR theorists view the world is essentially white; IR theory is written from a white, colonising subject position. This not only portrays a skewed picture of world politics, it erases and silences racialized peoples, their roles, contributions and even their existence. Students often find the story incomplete and many certainly do not find themselves represented when studying a discipline that claims to explore the world. For example, discussions surrounding slavery hone in on the role of English abolitionists like Wilberforce as 'a sort of sacred heart of British nationalist mythology' (Blackburn, 2007; Olusoga, 2018). Discussions of the resistance of enslaved peoples and black abolitionists are effaced in popular media and in some school curricula. This applies to almost all major world events, political developments, and histories from colonialism to global hegemony and economic inequality. How many other disciplines and curricula are also white-centric? What can we do to offer a more inclusive curriculum, hence experience, in our classrooms?

In studying IR, SASS students, colleagues and I try to formulate an inclusive picture of contemporary world politics covering its origins and carefully considering the evolution of the current international political order. In our first-year introductory module in IR we start off by discussing the world before the rise of modern Europe, then move on to explore slavery, colonialism, the Industrial Revolution, world wars, the Cold War, the Non-Aligned Movement, US hegemony, and contemporary global North-south relations. Students research in small groups and deliver their findings to the class and we debate in lively interactive sessions. Our discussions range widely, but one aspect that students are always keen to explore is how 'imperial expansion, expropriation, and slavery became central to the forging of a new global economic order' (Beckert 2014, p. 37), throwing light on the contribution of enslaved and colonised peoples in the creation of wealth in the West and the centrality of their labour in fuelling industrialisation in Europe and beyond. As this year one module progressed, discussions became increasingly critical and nuanced; members of the class developed the skill to read between the lines and detect the silencing of voices and events in mainstream texts.

Rather than replicate the erasure, exclusion, and marginalisation that many BAME students experience outside the classroom, a decolonised IR curriculum analyses world politics, political actors, and events from a fresh, inclusive, perspective. Rather than relegating non-white peoples to the role of either spectators or background props, while major world events and political developments are portrayed as led by white protagonists at the forefront of the world stage, our module team engages in critical scholarship to interrogate mainstream IR approaches and examine the roles of racialisation and eurocentrism in their very construction.

In our decolonised approach, we learn to read against the grain, to disturb the traditional, colonial, narratives that actively suppresses the voices and agency of entire peoples. Students explore the silence on race, colonialism, neo-imperialism, hegemony, and unequal power relations in IR and investigate their origins. A decolonised approach seeks to refocus the camera, as it were, to allow for a full picture, a more realistic representation of the world that challenges and interrogates the dominant, colonial world view. Our decolonised classroom has proved to be an interactive one where students are highly engaged in dynamic, intellectually stimulating discussions.

BAME identity based mentoring programmes

The BAME mentoring programme was established in 2015 in the School of Education, and has been favourably received from its inception. Sussex is not richly ethnically diverse and this is an opportunity to have a mentor who is BAME and has experience of living or working locally. The programme matches BAME students with local BAME professionals enabling them to develop a productive and supportive relationship over a six-month period.

"Mentoring is a one-to-one, non-judgemental relationship in which an individual voluntarily gives time to support and encourage another. This relationship is typically developed at a time of transition in the mentee's life and lasts for a period of time." Through continuous feedback it has been established that mentoring programmes support students in;
- Developing and progressing career plans
- Achieving goals
- Enhancing employability
- Increasing confidence

Significant aspects of the programme are;
- Students can talk to someone who is unbiased and non-judgemental
- Mentors are independent, they are not parents / bosses / lecturers
- It is the student's agenda, they set their own goals with their mentor's support
- Mentor have relevant life experiences

Results show that the programme has impacted positively on BAME students' employability, retention and their student experience.

After the success of the programme a similar project was launched in the School of Health Sciences in 2018 in which local BAME professionals mentor BAME student nurses. This programme has now been expanded to be available to all BAME students in the School of Education and the School of Health Sciences.

Following the success of the identity match mentoring model for University students, a similar programme was established in secondary school where BAME university students mentored BAME school pupils. The programme showed that University students and the school pupils all felt their confidence and communication skills improved. To date there have been 119 pairings, benefitting BAME university students and BAME secondary school pupils. There have also been significant impacts for the institutions involved. The University and Schools have heard the voices and experiences of BAME students and pupils and adapted and changed practices accordingly.

For further information on this scheme contact:
John Lynch on Jk33lynch@btinternet.com
or
Beth Thomas-Hancock on Bt11@brighton.ac.uk

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"CALL FOR ARTICLES"

Decolonising the Curriculum for Teaching and Learning about Race Equality

Issue 2, December 2019

You may submit your proposal by email M.L.Moncrieffe@brighton.ac.uk by **September 1st 2019**.

Please include: **Title of the proposed article.**
Brief summary of the paper **(60 words max)**
Full email contact details for the author(s)
Notification of outcomes: **September 30th, 2019.**
Submission of Articles: **October 31st 2019.**
Publication of Issue 2: **December 2019.**

We invite articles/short provocations of **600 words maximum** (not including title and reference list) which develop on the following questions:
What is being done to decolonise course curriculum?
What are student responses, initiatives and suggestions on attempts to decolonise the curriculum?
What is being done to decolonise teaching methods, and foster teaching and learning on race (in)equality?
What are the challenges staff have faced in their attempts to decolonise the curriculum and teach about race (in)equality?
How can decolonising the curriculum assist with narrowing the BME attainment gap?

The intended practical outcomes of the publication is:
To use and apply student responses, initiatives and suggestions on the importance of, and effectiveness of attempts to, decolonise the curriculum.
To collate and to disseminate best practice from across the University on decolonising the curriculum, with a view to developing opportunities for interprofessional and interdisciplinary networking in shaping actions for future action plans.
To provide instant and immediate access to all stakeholders at and beyond the university with examples of best practice for teaching and learning about race equality.

University of Brighton