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**‘Revolution and Bloodshed’: Representations of African  
Caribbeans in the Leeds press 1968-1989**

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**A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield  
In fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Arts  
(MA) by research**

**University of Huddersfield;**

**January 2010**

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**Word Count: 24987**

## Abstract

This research analyses the representation of African Caribbean communities in the mainstream Leeds press, the *Yorkshire Post* and the *Yorkshire Evening Post*, throughout the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. The analysis focuses on coverage of selected events in each decade which were particularly relevant to the African Caribbean communities of Leeds. The discussion centres on the role of the mainstream local press in perpetuating stereotypes of these communities and the impact this was seen to have on the communities themselves. It goes on to consider representation of the same events through the alternative press where this is available (through the 1970s and 1980s) and analyses the different reporting strategies used in the alternative media and the likely impact of this alternative discourse. It argues that the mainstream press used several reporting strategies to represent the African Caribbean communities through binary stereotypes and projected notions of otherness, threat, criminality, docility and displaced them from the concept of British identity. The work has three overarching themes which summarise the representation in each decade; these are respectively, 'the alien wedge', 'the colony within' and 'here to stay'. The thesis concludes that there were subtle differences in the reporting strategies throughout the decades in keeping with a trajectory of assimilation that started with a discourse of outright rejection of 'coloured' immigration in the 1960s; the analysis ends at 1989 with the identification of a new way of being British in 'black Britishness'.

## **Acknowledgements**

With thanks to my family and friends, especially my two children for their patience and all of the cups of coffee. I would like to thank the University of Huddersfield for giving me the opportunity to carry out this research, with special thanks to Dr. Jodie Matthews who was always helpful, supportive and encouraging and also to Professor Paul Ward for his input.

## Introduction

This thesis considers the representation of African Caribbeans in the Leeds press in the period between 1968 and 1989 and aims to answer the research question: how did this representation contribute to a narrative of Britishness in this setting?

Stuart Hall, and T.J Van Dijk have written extensively on the construction of race in the press; Paul Ward has contributed extensively to the body of work on national identity with a focus on Britishness. This research necessarily draws upon these foundations. It differs by focusing exclusively on representation in Leeds. Max Farrar has written an extensive body of work on the African Caribbean communities of Leeds with particular reference to the Chapeltown area and this research draws upon his work for its local context.<sup>1</sup>

For the purposes of this research, the description African Caribbean is used to refer to any person from an African or Caribbean heritage background and includes the second and onward generations. Another term for African Caribbean in popular terminology is 'black'. This term is used throughout the thesis interchangeably with African Caribbean, particularly where it is in reference to the language used by the press. 'Coloured' is also used by the Leeds press in reference to the African Caribbean community. It is recognised that this term is out of date and in current

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<sup>1</sup> Stuart Hall, *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order*, London, Macmillan, 1978; S. Hall, *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (OUP, London, 1997), pp.13-74.; Teun.A.Van Dijk, *Racism and the Press* (London:Routledge, 1991); Paul Ward, *Britishness Since 1870* (London; Routledge, 2004); Max Farrar, *The Struggle for 'Community' in a British Multi-Ethnic Inner-City Area* (Ceredigion: Edward Mullen, 2002).

All primary sources will be cited in the body of the text with secondary sources appearing in footnotes for ease of reference. Where citations are made from the primary sources all ellipses are mine.

usage could cause offence; it is only used in this research where the term is employed by the newspaper article under analysis. Broadly, the research examines manifestations of the discursively linked concepts of race, ethnicity, immigration and Diaspora, recognising that they are cultural constructions.<sup>2</sup>

Because the analysis of representation in this thesis is specifically of one group an understanding of the history of black immigration to Britain and the context of African Caribbean settlement in Britain and, in particular Leeds, throughout the late twentieth century is necessary. Black presence in Britain can be traced back to Roman times, as recognised in several literary contributions.<sup>3</sup> A recent re-examination of skeletons found in York dating back to the fourth century reveal that one of the richest inhabitants of Roman York was of African origin (*Guardian*, 26 February 2010:11). In fact, there is evidence of a black presence in Britain before the arrival of the group who would come to be known as the English, as early as the second century. The troops guarding Hadrian's Wall in the third century were a division of moors raised in North Africa.<sup>4</sup> During the sixteenth century, black people were employed in Britain as servants, footmen and musicians, and Queen Elizabeth is said to have employed black musicians and had a black maid servant. Black presence in Britain in the late sixteenth century was sufficient in number to cause concern and in 1596 Queen Elizabeth called for all black people to be removed from the England.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> For further theoretical development of these ideas, see Stuart Hall cited in Gunaratnam, Y. *Researching 'Race and Ethnicity; methods knowledge and power* (London, Sage, 2003), p. 49.

<sup>3</sup> Mike Phillips and Trevor Phillips, *Windrush: The Irresistible Rise of Multicultural Britain* (London, Harper Collins, 1999); David Dabydeen, John Gilmore, and Cecily Jones, *The Oxford Companion to Black British History* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007).

<sup>4</sup> Peter Fryer, *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain* (London, Pluto, 1984).

<sup>5</sup> Eldridge, M, 'The Rise and Fall of Black Britain', *Transition*, No. 74 (1997), pp. 32-43.



Later, the fashion for having a black servant led to an increase in black presence during the seventeenth century.<sup>6</sup>

Whilst this earlier presence is recognised, the majority of scholarly literature in the field is concerned with post-war immigration to Britain, following which the issue of a black presence became the subject of academic discourse as well as an area of public and political interest. It is argued by both Paul Gilroy and Mark Christian that African Caribbean presence was seen as problematic from the late 1960s and was presented in popular discourse as a threat to the 'British' way of life.<sup>7</sup> Immigrants were initially associated with issues of morality and sexuality and later a link between race and crime was established, the two often becoming synonymous in political and media discourse.<sup>8</sup> Gilroy traces this back to Enoch Powell's infamous Rivers of Blood speech in 1968 (discussed in more detail in Chapter One): 'legality, the ultimate symbol of national culture, is transformed by the entry of the alien wedge'.<sup>9</sup> The events of the 1970s compounded the perceived link between race and crime, and the difficult nature of the relationship between the police and African Caribbean communities is discussed throughout the chapters. The press coverage of this was instrumental in perpetuating the emerging stereotypes of the African Caribbean communities as criminal, violent and 'other': the antithesis of Britishness. It is the articulation of this dominant narrative that is explored within this thesis.

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<sup>6</sup> David Dabydeen, John Gilmore, and Cecily Jones, *Black British History, 2007*.

<sup>7</sup> Paul Gilroy, *There Aint No Black in the Union Jack* (London, Routledge 1987) and M. Christian, 'An African-Centred Approach to the Black British Experience: With Special Reference to Liverpool', *Journal of Black Studies* 28, 3 (1998) pp. 291-308.

<sup>8</sup> Gilroy, *There Aint No Black in the Union Jack*, p. 80.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid* p.85.

## **Britishness**

While Great Britain came to be as a result of the Act of Union 1707, and the British nation can be said to have been founded on empire, a common commitment to Protestantism, and the monarchy, the concept of a British identity linked to the nation is more difficult to pinpoint.<sup>10</sup> A study commissioned by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) found that ‘Britishness’ was linked with ideas of an island nation, green countryside, the union jack and the queen, with the most common British values identified by research participants as respect for human rights and freedoms, the rule of law, fairness, and tolerance and respect for others. The research found that the concept of Britishness was strongly linked with holding a passport and the Scottish and Welsh participants identified much more strongly with their national identity than with Britain, as was the case with most white English participants. Most ethnic minority participants (with the exception of Africans who were more likely to refer to themselves as exclusively African) saw themselves as British, to the exclusion of any identification with England, since they strongly associated England with white people.<sup>11</sup> The multiple identities which become possible under the banner of Britishness make it apparent that Britishness or the concept of nationhood is not a homogenous concept but a fluid and changing one as argued by Homi Bhaba ‘it is caught uncertainly, in the act of composing itself’.<sup>12</sup> Hence recent years have seen the addition of census categories ‘Black British’ and ‘British Asian’. This research will

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<sup>10</sup> Ward, *Britishness Since 1870*

<sup>11</sup> CRE, *Citizenship and Belonging: What is Britishness?* (London, CRE, 2005), pp.40-41.

<sup>12</sup> Ward, *Britishness*, p.3.

aim to uncover the ways in which the media supports or hinders this process in relation to race and national identity.

The concept of national identity is, of course, further complicated by regions and regional identity. A Leeds identity as part of a British or/and an English identity becomes apparent throughout this research particularly in association with a regional accent. Regional identity is explored further in the work of Ward and D.A.J.

Macpherson and David Renton and the discussion of regional identity at chapter two draws upon this earlier work.<sup>13</sup>

Each chapter grounds its analysis in the local and national context of the period under discussion through a brief discussion in each chapter introduction.

## **Methodology**

This thesis analyses newspaper articles from the archives of the *Yorkshire Post* (*YP*) and the *Yorkshire Evening Post* (*YEP*) and draws upon Stuart Hall's theory of representation.<sup>14</sup> The articles analysed were featured in the time period from 1968 to 1989 and were selected on the basis of events which provided a representation of the African Caribbean community of Leeds. All newspaper articles were coded for several features including genre ( i.e. news report, editorial or letter to editor), the inclusion of pictures, prominence of headline, language used, actors represented including quotations used, and priority given to actors voice. The scope of the thesis does not permit a full analysis of all events relating to the African Caribbean

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid, pp.66-72. ; D.A.J. MacPherson and David Renton, 'Immigrant Politics and North East Identity, 1907-1973' in A.G Green and A.J. Pollard(eds), *Regional Identities in North East England 1300-2000* (Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 2007), pp161-208.

<sup>14</sup> Stuart Hall, *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (London, Sage, 1997), pp.13-74.

community during this time period. For example, the role of black sports men and women in the development of a narrative of Britishness is omitted.<sup>15</sup> This period was selected as Powell's speech is a recognised landmark in the discourse of race relations and anti-immigrant rhetoric and the discourses of subsequent decades were influenced by the speech's legacy. The emergence of Soul II Soul in 1989 was hailed as the first 'Black British' sound in the mainstream.<sup>16</sup> This recognition of a black British identity as part of the historical trajectory following Powell's speech is a suitable place to conclude. This is not to contend that the narrative of Black Britishness, or of African Caribbeans in Leeds, ends in 1989, and an analysis of representation and development of the narrative post 1989 is suggested for future research.

The two daily newspapers examined here, the *Yorkshire Post* and the *Yorkshire Evening Post*, were both published by Yorkshire Post Newspapers, founded as the Yorkshire Conservative Newspaper Company Limited in 1865. A predecessor to the company had published the *Leeds Intelligencer* since 1754 and this became the *Yorkshire Post* in 1866. It is this history which the *Yorkshire Post* relied upon to claim two hundred years of history as the Conservative voice of the region in 1954, this reputation for conservatism continues and is examined throughout the chapters in relation to race and representation.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> See Ward, *Britishness* pp.82-85 and Anthony Clavane, *Promised Land: The Reinvention of Leeds United*, (London, Random House, 2010) for more on this subject.

<sup>16</sup> Phillips and Phillips, *Windrush*, p322 and Paul Gilroy, 'The Black Atlantic as a Counterculture of Modernity', chapter in Kwesi Owusu, *Black British Culture and Society: A Reader*, (London, Routledge, 2000), p.450 .

<sup>17</sup> Mildred A Gibb and Frank Beckwith, *The Yorkshire Post: Two Centuries* (Leeds, Yorkshire Conservative Newspaper Co, 1954)

*In the time lapse since publication this is now a two hundred and fifty six year history.*

The *Yorkshire Evening Post* was founded in 1890 and is known for its liberal stance (in comparison to the *Yorkshire Post*) and its local slant. This attested liberalism is not overtly evident in the representations discussed; however there was an attempt to add balance to the letters to the editor and these strategies are identified throughout the research. The YEP makes claim to have a ‘reputation for quality editorial and a trusted association with the local community’ and that ‘the population can rely on the provision of up to date and relevant information covering all aspects of life in the city’ [of Leeds].<sup>18</sup> ABC’s data illustrates that throughout all of the time periods discussed the *YEP* had significantly higher distribution rates than the *YP*.<sup>19</sup> Both the *Yorkshire Post* and the *Yorkshire Evening Post* are available in microfiche format and easily accessible at the Leeds Local and Family History Archive.

From the late 1960s and through the 1970s and 1980s alternative newspapers sprung up across the country ‘drawing from and on the community politics and/or social movements that emerged during this period.’<sup>20</sup> Where possible, the mainstream position articulated in the two papers described above is contrasted with the representation of the same events within three alternative newspapers. The *Chapelton News (CN)* ran from 1972-1977 and was produced by a small, largely white, group of radicals including community association members, Max Farrar and

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<sup>18</sup> ‘The Yorkshire Evening Post’ [www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk](http://www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk) [Accessed 23 March 2010].

<sup>19</sup> ABC, Circulation spreadsheet 1932-1989 obtained via email from Joanna Brook at Yorkshire Post Newspapers Ltd.

<sup>20</sup> Tony Harcup, ‘The Alternative Local Press’ in Bob Franklin (ed.), *Local Journalism and Local Media: Making the Local News* (London, Routledge, 2006), p.130.

others.<sup>21</sup> The aims of the *CN* were to ‘cover news in Chapeltown which [was] glaringly absent from other newspapers and tell people a little bit more about the place they live in’ (*CN*, October 1972: 4). The *Leeds Other Paper (LOP)*, the longest running of the alternative newspapers considered, ran for twenty years from November 1974 and was initially run by the unemployed and those with free time, later becoming a workers’ cooperative.<sup>22</sup> It claimed to be the ‘the independent voice of the nation’ (*LOP*, 25 August 1989: 1), implying that it intended to speak for Britain. However, its reporting focused on Leeds and West Yorkshire. The *Come Unity News (CUN)* was a short lived community newsletter running to just twelve issues. It was produced by the Come Unity Collective, a self-described group of West Indians, Asians and English who lived in the Harehills and Chapeltown (Leeds 7 and 8) areas of Leeds. The newspaper declared itself to have the following aims: ‘1) to increase people’s awareness of the social, economic and political factors which affect people’s lives; 2) to promote racial and cultural tolerance, understanding and pride; 3) to bring about a sense of unity so that we can develop our power to control our own lives’ (*CUN* March 1980). The aims of the *LOP*, *the CN* and the *CUN* can be interpreted as recognition of the absence of alternative voices for the communities of Leeds and they went to print with the intention of redressing the balance of representation. Whilst it is recognised that many of the alternative newspapers were roughly presented, hand-made and produced with a lack of journalistic training, the content ‘challenged the hegemony of the local Establishment and mainstream media

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<sup>21</sup> Max Farrar, *The struggle for ‘community’ in a British Multi Ethnic Inner City Area: Paradise in the Making* (Ceredigion, Edwin Mullen Press, 2002), p. 221.

<sup>22</sup> Harcup, *The Alternative Local Press*, p. 133.

by demonstrating that there was more than one way of viewing the world.<sup>23</sup> It is worthy of note that the West Yorkshire Archive Service does not hold all twelve issues of the *Come Unity News*. The retrospective ability of the newsletter to challenge established hegemonic representation when compared to the availability of the archived *YEP* and the *YP* for public consumption is indicative of the ways in which the dominant narrative of race and representation is maintained.

The study is focused on Leeds in particular as it has a settled African Caribbean community with which the author is familiar and has a well established local press. Space and time constraints placed upon the research would not have allowed for a national analysis of the research questions, however such an analysis has been identified as a possible future piece of research. It is recognised that newspapers are not the only form of representation and many other forms have been explored within the literature including photography, television and film.<sup>24</sup>

Chapter One considers the representation of Enoch Powell's 1968 speech within the *YP* and the *YEP* with particular consideration given to the response from readers in the 'letters to the editor' section as they represent the impact of the dominant narrative on the communities of Leeds. It goes on to consider the representation of David Oluwale, an African of Nigerian descent who died at the hands of two Leeds police officers. It is argued that the rhetoric espoused by Powell was a contributory factor in validating the attitudes reflected in the behaviour of the

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, p136

<sup>24</sup> For further exploration of representation in photography see Stuart Hall and Mark Sealy, *Different: A Historical Context. Contemporary Photographers and Black Identity* ( London, Phaidon Press,2001).and for an insight into the impact of representation though TV comedy on public consciousness see Gavin Schaffer, 'Till Death Us Do Part and the BBC', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 45, 2 (2010) pp. 454-477.

police officers who pursued Oluwale to his death as well as reinforcing established stereotypes of black masculinity which were promulgated by the *YEP* and the *YP*.

Chapter Two provides an analysis of the representation of the Cowper School protest in 1973 and argues that the organised protest by a community group was represented as noisy, threatening and ungrounded in any legitimate grievance. The chapter goes on to consider the first mainstream representation of carnival in 1973, an event which had been excluded from mainstream representation for the previous six years. Carnival was represented as an exclusively African Caribbean event and defined as 'different'. The coverage of the 1975 bonfire night riots is also analysed and it is argued that the riots were represented as the police coming under siege from 'black' youths. Alternative representation of these events is considered with reference to the *Chapelton News*. It is argued that the *CN* represented the African Caribbean community as part of the wider Leeds community, with a particular focus on the Chapelton area and did not subscribe to the same displacement strategies as the mainstream press. These differences in reporting strategies are subjected to a deeper analysis.

Chapter Three considers the representation of the 1981 riots in Chapelton and considers how representation had shifted in the intervening six years since the 1975 riots. The role of music in both protest and resistance and the development of a black British identity is analysed through the press representation of the Rock against Racism movement and its presence in Leeds as well as the 1989 council funded reggae concert in Leeds. Alternative representation of the events within the *Leeds Other Paper (LOP)* and the *Come Unity News (CUN)* is also considered; as with reference to the alternative press in chapter two, it is observed that the difference in the discourse represented is marked and these differences are analysed.



This thesis argues that in the period between 1968 and 1989 the representation of the African Caribbean or 'black' community of Leeds followed a three part trajectory towards assimilation, identified within the chapter headings as 'the alien wedge', 'the colony within' and 'here to stay'. The representation shifted from an outright rejection of the African Caribbean community as in direct opposition to Britishness to the identification of a new way of being British or 'black Britishness'.

## Chapter One The ‘Alien Wedge’

This chapter critically examines representations of the African Caribbean community in the Leeds press in the late 1960s with particular consideration to the *Yorkshire Evening Post* (YEP) and the *Yorkshire Post* (YP). The reporting of Enoch Powell’s infamous ‘rivers of blood’ speech is analysed and is grounded in the Leeds context, with particular attention paid to the ‘Letters to the Editor’ features in the local press. The chapter also analyses representations of David Oluwale, a Nigerian who was hounded to death by two Leeds police officers in 1969. It argues that the reporting strategies used by the YP and the YEP frame Oluwale within a binary stereotype and define him, and by association the African Caribbean community of Leeds, as ‘other’. In order to contextualise the analysis of these two events the chapter begins with a discussion of the wider political climate of Leeds in the 1960s.

Towards the second half of the 1960s there was an upsurge in African Caribbean political movements in Leeds. These included the Chapeltown Commonwealth Citizens Committee (CCCC), which was not exclusively African Caribbean but represented the interests of the people of Chapeltown, an area in which a large proportion of the Leeds African Caribbean population lived. Other organisations included the Campaign against Racial Discrimination (CARD) and the United Caribbean Association (UCA). CARD became Leeds Congress for Racial Equality in 1968, and the Leeds Community Relations Council was founded out of this in 1969.<sup>25</sup> The first West Indian Carnival was held in Leeds in 1967 and the

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<sup>25</sup> Max Farrar, *The Struggle for ‘Community’ in a British Multi Ethnic Inner City Area: Paradise in the Making* (Ceredigion: Edwin Mullen), 2002, p.31; ‘Racism, Education and Black Self Organisation’, *Critical Social Policy*, 12, 36 (1993), pp. 53-72; ‘Social Movements in a Multi-ethnic Inner City:

United Caribbean Association was instrumental in its inception. Though it has been argued that carnival arose in response to racism, Leeds carnival is not widely recognised as an active protest event or a political response as the movements described above clearly were. Carnival, as an event, did not feature in the local press in its early years and this omission is subject to further analysis in Chapter Two. In summary, ad interim, it can be argued that the exclusion from the mainstream narrative of Leeds events was evidence of a failure to accept the black Caribbean community as part of the Leeds landscape in the 1960s. In addition, as is discussed in further detail in subsequent chapters, the positive representation of a community event, such as the carnival, runs contrary to the narrative that was developing in the mainstream press around the African Caribbean community of Leeds in the late 1960s. This contrary narrative represented the African Caribbean people of Leeds as a threat to the British way of life.

The political activity taking place in Leeds at the time was a reflection of the wider global context of political protest. Known as the 'year of revolt', 1968 saw a large anti-Vietnam war demonstration in Trafalgar Square which resulted in over 200 arrests outside the US Embassy in nearby Grosvenor Square; France suffered the largest strike in its history and students occupied the Sorbonne university in protest at government proposals for young workers. In Prague there was a short lived period of liberalization from Soviet domination and in the United States there were uprisings in Chicago, the assassination of Bobby Kennedy, the civil rights movement was in full swing and one of its most important leaders, Martin Luther King, was assassinated.

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Explaining Their Rise and Fall Over 25 Years' in P. Bagguley and J. Hearn (eds), *Transforming Politics: Power and Resistance* (London, Macmillan, 1998), p.5.

Immanuel Wallerstein and Sharon Zukin propose that ‘after 1968, none of the “other” groups in struggle - neither women nor racial “minorities” or sexual “minorities” or the handicapped ... would ever again accept the legitimacy of “waiting” upon some other revolution’.<sup>26</sup> For some of the Leeds African Caribbean community this desire for action was manifest in the upsurge in political activity in the late 1960s and the subsequent activities discussed throughout this study in the decades which followed.

Perhaps the most relevant of global events to impact on the black community of Leeds was the civil rights movement in the United States and the assassination of Dr King. The assassination sparked riots in the United States; over the course of several days of rioting lives were lost, hundreds of buildings were burnt to the ground and thousands were arrested. The *YP* headlined ‘20 die in US rioting’ (*YP*, 6 April 1968:1) and perhaps surprisingly reported a local link with Dr. King, informing its readers that he was the honorary Vice President of Leeds University Students Union. It is not clear how he came to hold this position as there is no evidence that he visited Leeds University and it is likely that the honorary position was bestowed on the basis of admiration for him. It can be assumed that the student population in 1968 would not have had a high representation from Leeds African Caribbean communities and the involvement of the university is unlikely to have had a major impact on the city’s African Caribbean population. It was the ensuing shock and panic that reverberated through the British government as it watched America erupt as the civil rights movement mourned the killing of its leader which had the greater impact.

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<sup>26</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein and Sharon Zukin, ‘1968 Revolution in the World-System’, *Theory and Society*, 18, 4 (1989), pp. 431-449 (p.439).

The government's attitude to a non-white population can be seen, in part, in legislation designed to limit 'coloured immigration', introduced with the Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962, which restricted immigration for the purposes of employment from Commonwealth countries. This legislation was amended by the Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1968, which further restricted the free movement of Commonwealth immigrants and introduced the distinction between the rights of British Citizens who had ancestors in the British Isles (patrials) and those who did not (non-patrials).<sup>27</sup> This move towards curbing further Commonwealth immigration, combined with the Labour government's proposals to support integration of existing migrants by legislating towards good race relations as the means to prevent the unfolding events in America from occurring in the United Kingdom, were the backdrop to the now infamous speech by the Shadow Defence Secretary, Enoch Powell. The Race Relations Bill (later enacted as The Race Relations Act 1968) was the second piece of legislation brought about by the Labour government to legislate against discrimination on grounds of ethnicity. The 1968 Bill proposed to strengthen the provisions of the earlier Race Relations Act 1965, making it illegal to refuse housing, employment or public services to people because of their ethnic background; it also strengthened the powers of the existing Race Relations Board to deal with complaints of discrimination and set up a new body with the function of supporting good relations between different communities. It was this Bill that provoked such a vehement speech from Powell.

On 20 April 1968, Powell delivered what was subsequently commonly referred to as the 'rivers of blood' speech. He argued that the British would become

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<sup>27</sup> NCADC, *The Degrading of Human Dignity-A Short History of British Immigration Acts 1962-1996*, (2000).

foreigners in their own land and highlighted competition for resources as a problem caused by 'coloured' immigration. He spoke of immigrant settlement as a threat to British legal institutions, stating of the Bill that:

Here is the means of showing that the immigrant communities can organise to consolidate their members, to agitate and campaign against their fellow citizens, and to overawe and dominate the rest with the legal weapons which the ignorant and the ill-informed have provided. As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding; like the Roman, I seem to see 'the River Tiber foaming with much blood'.<sup>28</sup>

The speech resulted in him being removed from his post as Shadow Defence Secretary by the then leader of the Conservative Party, Edward Heath. He was sacked because of fear of him fuelling racist sentiment among the white population of Britain towards black and Asian immigrants. It is also evident from the reports of the day that there was concern from the Conservative party that Powell had spoken outside of the official party line on immigration and his dismissal was in part out of concern for the reputation of the Conservative Party. The *YP* quoted Heath as saying 'Powell went much further than the official adopted policy' (*YP*, 22 April 1968:1). More significantly for the African Caribbean population of Leeds, the speech is recognised as a catalyst for the establishment of a link between race, community problems, criminal behaviour, and immigration as a threat to the 'British' way of life in political and media discourse. Paul Gilroy argues: 'this speech also provides an extended commentary on the way in which legality, the ultimate symbol of national culture, is transformed by the entry of the alien wedge'.<sup>29</sup> Adherence to legal principles is identified here as a symbol of Britishness; the discourse, discussed throughout this

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<sup>28</sup> 'Enoch Powell's "Rivers of Blood" Speech', *Daily Telegraph* (06 November 2007).

<sup>29</sup> Paul Gilroy, *There Aint no Black in the Union Jack* (London, Routledge, 1987), p.85.

chapter, which inextricably links race and immigration with criminality frames the African Caribbean community in opposition to this national culture.

Though not a Leeds-based event, coverage of the speech was relevant to Leeds as an area which had a settled immigrant population. The African Caribbean population was largely, though not exclusively, based in clusters in particular areas of Leeds, especially the Chapeltown and inner city areas.<sup>30</sup> It is likely that the majority of the wider Leeds population had not had any direct personal contact with African Caribbeans and their views were developed through the ideological apparatus of the media. As argued by Teun Adrianus Van Dijk, ‘the media play a vital role in the acquisition and uses of opinions about minority groups...[; they] convey public knowledge, as well as expressed or implicit opinions, about social groups and events most majority group members have little direct knowledge about’.<sup>31</sup> The immediate impact of the speech on the African Caribbean population of the City of Leeds was the development of the narrative of the African Caribbean presence as an unwelcome imposition, as the ‘other’, through the local press coverage of the speech.

There was saturation coverage throughout the week beginning 20 April 1968 in both the *YP* and *YEP*. Space will not allow for a full analysis of all of these articles, but those which supported the development of a narrative of Britishness will be analysed in detail. On the day of the speech, the *YEP* ran this headline on its front page: ‘Race Bill like “throwing a match on gunpowder”’ (*YEP*, 20 April 1968:1). The

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<sup>30</sup> Farrar, *The Struggle for ‘Community’*, p.21-3.

<sup>31</sup> Teun A. Van Dijk, *Racism And The Press* (London, Routledge, 1991), p.7.

headline used a direct line from Powell's speech: it might be reasoned that to use such an inflammatory statement as the headline could only serve to heighten public anxiety over immigration and create antagonism towards the local immigrant communities of Leeds. Despite the headline focusing on Powell's objection to the imminent Race Relations Bill, the main focus of the article was on the numbers of immigrants in England and Powell's predictions for the future should the 'inflow' continue. Powell was quoted as saying that 'already by 1985 the native born would constitute the majority' (ibid). In the context of Powell's speech he did not use the term native to refer to the 'white indigenous' population of the UK as may be assumed when reading out of context, but rather the descendants of the immigrant population. 'Native' was used in colonial contexts to refer to the non-white population of colonised lands, and has here been transferred to British home soil. This is an interesting choice of word, as lexically it should mean the opposite of what Powell meant, which was to portray immigrants as outsiders. As argued by Nairn, 'Powell was once the most passionate of imperialists'; to Powell, 'the world was unthinkable without the British Empire'.<sup>32</sup> The use of imperialist terminology here reflects this argument, illustrating the difficulties encountered by anyone trying to make clear distinctions between British/non-British, insider/outsider, native/immigrant in a colonial and postcolonial context.

The key tone of the speech was the danger inherent in allowing the advancing flood of immigrants who once upon 'us' would dominate 'our' land. It served to establish a categorisation of 'us', the British born. and 'them', who have arrived as immigrants or have been born as the children of immigrants, and the local media

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<sup>32</sup> Tom Nairn, *The Break Up of Britain* (Edinburgh: Big Thinking, 2003), pp.151-154.



established this fear in Leeds. Powell's emphasis was on skin colour as the demarcation of difference, referring to the 'Commonwealth Immigrant' population as the primary cause for concern. Reporting on Powell's response to his dismissal this, the *YEP* headline was 'Stigmatised by Heath says Powell' (*YEP*, 22 April 1968:1); it chose to focus on Powell's response to the accusations of the 'racialist' tone of his speech, with Powell constructed as the victim, unable to express his opinion without being labelled 'racialist'.<sup>33</sup> Throughout the coverage both newspapers reported from the standpoint that it was not what Powell said that was distasteful but the way he conveyed his opinions. It is evident that the *YP* and the *YEP* did not want to appear overtly in support of Powell for fear of being condemned as racist themselves, but at the same time the coverage supported the sentiment behind his words. Heath justified his decision to dismiss Powell as he believed his speech was 'racialist' (*YP* 22 April 1968:1). Heath is quoted in a later analysis of the speech saying 'I am determined to do everything I can to prevent racial problems developing into civil strife'.<sup>34</sup> It is clear from this statement that Heath was concerned about civil disorder occurring in Britain on a parallel with America. The Conservative Party policy of the day was that it was in the best interests of Britain to halt 'coloured immigration' (*YP*, 22 April 1968:1). In dismissing Powell, Heath was not making a stand for the immigrant population he spoke of; rather, he was trying to prevent any civil unrest occurring as a result of Powell's words, thus affirming the suggestion from the Conservative standpoint that the immigrant population were a threat to law and order.

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<sup>33</sup> The term racialist is no longer in common usage, its meaning here is 'racist'.

<sup>34</sup> Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood Speech' (*Daily Telegraph*, 06 November 2007) later reference used as this statement was not present in Leeds press coverage.

In a scathing editorial under the headline ‘Mr Powell’s Speech’ the *YP* took a sneering swipe at what it considered the over-reaction to Powell’s speech commenting that:

Mr Powell is on the right of the Conservative party. Obviously therefore, the reasoning goes, he must in all his views be a hopelessly prejudiced reactionary and on matters of race he is bound to be little better than a fascist hyena, secretly guarding the keys of the gas chambers in anticipation of the next racial holocaust’. (*YP*, 22 April 1968:6)

Powell was portrayed as a victim of over-reaction from the ‘race relations industry’ (*ibid*), the term used by the editorial to refer to commentators on the political left. Once again, it was the way in which Powell spoke which was picked up on and not the words spoken; he was described as having a ‘challenging and highly individual personality and his oratorical effectiveness [has been] seized on by writers and broadcasters of the left’ (*ibid*). In an attempt to distance themselves from the parts of Powell’s speech which had been condemned as ‘racialist’, the *YP* went on to state that ‘Britain can usefully accommodate a proportion of coloured people’ (*ibid*); the statement highlights that it was not immigration *per se* that was the problem, but ‘coloured’ immigration. In recognition of this established rhetoric, Kundnani suggests that ‘white immigrants were not really thought of as immigrants at all.’<sup>35</sup>

Over the proceeding weeks the local press evidenced local support for Powell’s anti immigrant rhetoric. The *YEP* on 22 April ran a letters to the editor column under the headline ‘Hurrah for Powell says E.P reader’ (*YEP*, 22 April 1968:7). The introduction to the letters featured comments from Maureen Baker, the

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<sup>35</sup> Arun Kundnani, *The End of Tolerance: Racism in Twenty-First-Century Britain* (London, Pluto, 2007), p.23.

General Secretary of the Leeds Congress for Racial Equality, damning Powell's statement as 'a deliberate attempt to rouse fear and resentment among both the white and the coloured people' (ibid). The choice of introduction was perhaps an attempt to add some balance to the opinions expressed by the subsequent readers' letters that the *YEP* claimed all 'give support to Mr Powell' (ibid). Mr Carthy of Leeds 16, a suburb of Leeds and several miles from the main areas of immigrant settlement, referred to Powell's speech as a fact 'that the very ordinary man in the very ordinary street has been stating for the last few years'. H. Nevison of Leeds 9, a working-class area, relatively close to the inner-city, agreed with the sentiment that Powell was expressing the 'thoughts of millions of working-class people' as well as offering the congratulatory 'three cheers' for Powell, echoed in the headline. This reference to class adds another dimension to the concept of British identity; as well as locating the African Caribbean members of the community outside of whiteness; they were also located outside of the working class. This paradoxical displacement failed to take into account that a large proportion of African Caribbeans initially came to England to fill the gaps in the post-war labour market. There was also a concern from the writers over access to resources; 'Ree Dundant' (an obvious a pseudonym to refer to the writer's employment status) of Leeds 17, an affluent suburb of Leeds, expressed dismay at being handed his unemployment pay by a 'coloured person'. 'One could not help but think that somewhere in the queue was someone ideally suited for his job and whose forefathers helped to build this country,' the letter continued (ibid). The rhetoric of 'us' and 'them' leads to the conclusion that a 'coloured person' would never be considered British enough to deserve employment in an environment where white citizens are unemployed. Similarly, Miss Paylor of Leeds 12, a largely white working-class area, with some social housing, expressed concern over 'the host of

dependants to whom the path of happiness is the path to the nearest social security centre' (ibid). Mr Parkes of Leeds 11, another predominantly working-class area, echoed Powell's sentiments, proclaiming 'Revolution and bloodshed lies ahead' (ibid), perhaps in this city itself.

A similar picture emerged in the views of the *YP* letter writers. Under the headline 'Humanity of Mr Powell' (*YP*, 23 April 1968:6) and subheadings such as 'Majority view', 'Off the fence' and 'Unpleasant truths' (ibid), Powell was described as 'wise, honest and fearful' with 'more compassion and humanity in him than any other' (Mr Hartley of Knaresborough) (ibid). Interestingly, Knaresborough is a rural town several miles from Leeds and outside of the Leeds postcode area with a tiny scattering of ethnic minority residents even today. This suggests that coverage of the Birmingham speech nationalised a regional issue and had far reaching impact on public opinion outside of Powell's constituency and indeed outside of areas with a visible African Caribbean population. Reginald Wrathmell of Dewsbury claimed that Powell's outburst 'superbly crystallised the views held by a large majority of the British people' and condemned Heath for dismissing 'one of its ablest members in order to appease a minority of immigrants' (ibid). It is worthy of note that many of the letter writers claimed that Powell was speaking on behalf of the majority of the British population. A. Lyons, of Leeds 9, expressed his concern that the rights of 'an Englishman's free speech and self expression' were threatened whilst 'it seems that any foreigner can get up in Trafalgar square and demand this right and back it up with an assault on the police as well' (ibid). The latter comment is reflective of Powell's prediction that the 'black man will have the whip hand over the white man' (*YEP* 22 April 1968:1).

The *YEP* ran a second letters to the editor feature days later with the headline ‘Twenty to One for Mr Powell’ (*YEP*, 24 April 1968:6). It ran alongside a short column which set out the *YEP*’s opinion on the speech:

The migration of races... is as old as man himself. In these islands we have assimilated Iberian, Celt, Norseman, Saxon and French, not without some difficulties. And we have sent millions of colonists overseas, often to the dismay of an indigenous population. Our history now demands that we do not take a hysterical view of coloured immigrants (ibid).

It would appear that the *YEP* was attempting to present a more liberal opinion than the *YP* in its recognition of the history of Britain as incorporating waves of migration. The recognition of Britain’s colonial history here is testament to its lasting ideological legacy as part of the British consciousness. Edward Said elaborates on this idea: ‘in our time, direct colonialism has largely ended; imperialism...lingers where it has always been, in a kind of general cultural sphere as well as in specific political, ideological, economic and social practices’.<sup>36</sup> Such ideological practices are evident within the *YEP*’s comparison of immigration with colonial imposition. As a further attempt to distance the newspaper from the opinions of the letter writers the *YEP* declares its sympathy for the writers but states that ‘to sympathise is not to approve’ and goes on to make the claim ‘this newspaper stands four square for equal rights’ (*YEP* 24 April 1968:6). This statement could result from the *YEP*’s desire to present an overtly more liberal stance than the *YP*, or perhaps mindful of the imminent Race Relations Bill was striving to maintain its distance from any racist opinion. Of seventeen letters and extracts published, fifteen offer support for Powell. It is difficult to know whether this reflects the balance of correspondence sent in or

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<sup>36</sup> Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London, Vintage, 1994), p.8.

the editorial policy. Popular opinions of the day would suggest the former though the editor is recognised as being the ultimate gatekeeper, overseeing ‘selection and rejection’.<sup>37</sup>

In its marginally more balanced representation of views than the *YP*, the *YEP* began with the view point of Lillie and Lewis Minkin of Leeds 3, who identified themselves as descendants of Irish and Russian Jewish Immigrants (*YEP*, 24 April 1968:6). Their background merits further discussion, particularly as the Jewish community of Britain has been held up as a ‘model of integration’.<sup>38</sup> There was a small established Jewish community of around 144 people in Leeds in the early 1840s but the Jewish community was transformed with the mass migration of European and Eastern European Jews fleeing persecution and economic crisis in the 1880s. This was followed by the arrival of Jewish refugees after the Second World War.<sup>39</sup> Whilst the Jewish community in Leeds is spatially concentrated in affluent areas of the city today, when its members first arrived, as with the majority of immigrant communities, they occupied the poor inner-city slum areas and suffered exclusion through poverty and anti-Semitism.<sup>40</sup> In its rise through the social strata of Leeds, the Jewish

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<sup>37</sup> Karin Wahl-Jorgensen, ‘Letters to the Editor in Local and Regional Newspapers: Giving Voice to the Readers’ in Franklin, B (eds), *Local Journalism and Local Media; Making the Local News* (London, Routledge, 2006), p. 224.

<sup>38</sup> Irena Kudenko and Deborah Phillips, ‘The Model of Integration? Social and Spatial Transformations in the Leeds Jewish community’, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 35, 9 (2009), pp. 1533-1549. However, see also Panikos Panayi, *Racial Violence in Britain in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London, Leicester University Press, 1996). Panayi highlights that all immigrant communities in the last two centuries have experienced hostility on their arrival in Britain.

<sup>39</sup> Kudenko and Phillips, ‘The Model of Integration?’ p. 1533.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, p. 1533.

community settled for a time in the Chapeltown area,<sup>41</sup> the same area where many of the African Caribbean immigrants were later to settle on their arrival in Leeds.

The Minkins spoke out against Powell and described his speech as ‘dangerous nonsense’ and as serving to ‘divide race against race, stressing their difference instead of their common humanity’ (*YEP* 24 April 1968:6). They claimed to have always lived in areas with high numbers of immigrants and made an appeal to former immigrants, in particular the Irish and Russian Jewish communities not to forget their experiences on early arrival in Britain, comparing their experience of discrimination to that of the ‘coloured’ population. The letter stated ‘once immigrant groups tend to want to forget their experiences, to establish their sense of belonging, of being ‘British’, by disassociating themselves from more recent immigrant groups. This often results in the denial of others rights in order to protect their own’ (*ibid*). This point articulated the difficulties in defining who is included within a national identity and suggested that association with a British identity is a continuum relative to immigrant population’s arrival and settlement in Britain; it connoted that Britishness is not compatible with any other identity. The Jewish success in integrating into the Leeds landscape has been attributed by the Jewish community themselves, to ‘hard work, collective responsibility and willingness to anglicise’ and blend ‘into the middle-class, predominantly white social landscape of north Leeds’.<sup>42</sup> An individual’s Jewish identity would not necessarily be obvious by appearance; this is not true of the

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<sup>41</sup> Farrar, ‘The Zone of the Other: Imposing and Resisting Alien Identities in Chapeltown, Leeds, During the Twentieth Century’ in Simon Gunn and RJ Morris (eds.), *Making Identities: Conflicts and Urban Space 1800-2000* (London, Ashgate, 2001), p.6.

<sup>42</sup> Kudenko and Phillips, ‘The Model of Integration?’ p. 1540.

African Caribbean immigrant communities of Leeds and it is the visible difference within this presence which appears to be the cause of concern within the letters.

The history of Irish immigration to Leeds is complex. However, the main movements were in the 1850s following the potato famine, the 1930s from County Mayo and in the 1980s, the latter two periods in search of employment.<sup>43</sup> Like the Jewish community, the Irish community of Leeds could also be considered white; this is not to suggest that the category of whiteness is a static or simple concept. Whiteness has been constructed and deconstructed over time and the Irish themselves were excluded from the descriptive category of whiteness in the nineteenth century. In Victorian Britain, the Irish were 'scientifically' identified as a lower race and subsequently represented in popular culture as a primitive and immoral criminal class.<sup>44</sup> The Irish community continue to face discrimination in Britain and suffer from similar issues as the African Caribbean population.<sup>45</sup> This demonstrates the difficulties inherent in the concept of defining 'whiteness'; as contended by Ignatiev 'the Irish case suggests that ethnicity, like race, is a synthetic product'.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, immigrant communities have a long history of being 'framed' within stereotypes and,

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Leeds Irish Community', *Now then* [Accessed 11 September 2010]

<sup>44</sup> Alastair Bonnett, *White Identities: Historical and International Perspectives* (Essex, Prentice Hall, 2000) p.81 and Paul Ward, *Britishness* (London, Routledge, 2004), p. 132.

<sup>45</sup> Eddie Mulligan and Bronagh Daly, *Leeds Irish Health and Homes: A Study of Older Irish Peoples Experiences of Health and Social Care Services in Leeds* (Leeds, Leeds Irish Health and Homes) 2009, p. 9.

<sup>46</sup> Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White*, p. 196.



as recognised by Joanna Bourke. ‘Britishness’ has historically ‘excluded difference’.<sup>47</sup>

The exclusion of difference is expressed with reference to resources within the letters section: L.B. of Leeds 14 asked ‘if a country the size of the US had to stop its “influx” how can our overpopulated isles cope with all the immigrants and their dependants?’ (*YEP* 24 April 1968:6). Spartacus (clearly a pseudonym referencing the Roman slave leader), of Leeds 16 opined that ‘we spread our resources ever more thinly to accommodate the needs of the expanding immigrant population’ (ibid). There is a parallel discourse emerging alongside ‘us’ and ‘them’, making the distinction between ‘our land’ and ‘our resources’ and defining who is deserving of sharing in the benefits bestowed by belonging, and whose consumption is a burden. A similar situation has been identified in the American media with the portrayal of poor ‘urban blacks’, which develops into the belief among the white population that they are responsible for the burden of welfare ‘furnishing symbolic resources which many whites use to justify resentment’.<sup>48</sup> In the Leeds context, this belief that immigrants are a burden was evident in the letters from readers and was used to justify support for Powell.

The threat to what were deemed to be essentially British qualities, such as freedom of speech and choice (even, apparently, to discriminate), was evident in the opinions of the writers. F. Wood of Leeds 13 expressed concern that Powell’s

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<sup>47</sup> Joanna Bourke, *Working-class Cultures in Britain, 1890-1960: Gender, Class, and Ethnicity* (London, Routledge, 1994), pp. 150-1. See for an exploration of the stereotypes attributed to other immigrant communities in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. And see Waters, C, “Dark Strangers” in Our Midst: Discourses of Race and Nation in Britain, 1947-1963, *The Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 36, 2 (1997), pp. 207-238 for an exploration of how sociological studies have contributed to attributing stereotypes.

<sup>48</sup> Robert.M. Entman and Andrew Rojecki, *The Black Image in the White Mind: Media and Race in America* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press,2000), p. 8.

dismissal represented a ‘serious encroachment on free speech’ (*YEP* 24 April 1968:6), whilst R. Baines of Leeds 6, in reference to the provisions in the anti-discrimination provisions of the Race Relations Bill, declared ‘given the choice between going to jail or having coloured immigrants living in my house jail would win every time’ (*ibid*). Mrs N.T in Batley opined, ‘my objections have nothing to do with their colour, but concern with the way they live in filth. These people who are for them should have a few living next door’ (*ibid*). The choice of language here is significant as the writer made specific reference to ‘them’ as different and in declaring ‘they live in filth’ formed the opinion that ‘they’ are a homogenous group, with the same inadequate standards of hygiene. A parallel can be drawn here with the earlier immigrant settlements in Leeds. Both the earlier Jewish and Irish settlers were initially constructed as dirty and as having low standards of hygiene.<sup>49</sup> This is further evidence of the construction of immigrant communities as ‘other’, incapable of subscribing to the norms of the established society. A self described ‘downhearted housewife’ in Leeds 8 expressed fear for the future of her children (*YEP* 24 April 1968:6), though she did not elaborate on what it was that she feared, this fear is sufficient to draw the conclusion that she felt the immigrant population posed a threat to the future of her children growing up in Leeds. It is suggested that the evident fear was a result of the inflammatory headlines at the time of the speech and demonstrates the impact they had on the development of the narrative of the African Caribbean community of Leeds as a threat.

One of a small minority who spoke against Powell’s sentiment, Mrs D.M. Prescott of Leeds 10, wrote that ‘there are more white immigrants to Britain than

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<sup>49</sup> Laura Vaughan and Alan Penn, ‘Jewish Immigrant Settlement Patterns in Manchester and Leeds 1888’, *Urban Studies* 43, 3 (2005), pp.653–671 and Ward, *Britishness*, p. 132.

coloured...it is his emphasis on coloured immigrants that makes clear his racialist attitude' (*YEP* 24 April 1968:6), whilst M Dyson of Roundhay could not believe that 'decent Britons will accept racial intolerance' (ibid). This elucidation of Britishness as representing racial tolerance runs counter to the earlier claims that it was anti-British to dismiss Powell for expressing racial intolerance and provides evidence of what Tony Kushner and Kenneth Lunn question the 'myths of Britain's essential fairness'.<sup>50</sup> The evidence of majority acceptance and support for intolerance within the *YEP* and the *YP* following the speech repudiates this myth. With the exception of Leeds 8, the areas of Leeds from which the majority of readers wrote were outside of the areas in which the majority of African Caribbean population were settled. It is evident from census data evaluated by Farrar that in the year prior to Powell's speech there were six thousand Caribbean people in Leeds, and five hundred Africans, a very small percentage of the overall Leeds population. Though there is no figure given for the Chapeltown (LS7) population in 1967, a year earlier in 1966 the black population of Chapeltown was three thousand. This would suggest that although not a majority, at this time a large proportion of the black population of Leeds lived in and around the LS7 postcode.<sup>51</sup> This adds weight to the earlier contention that the majority of the population of Leeds would not at this time have regular and personal contact with people from the African Caribbean community, leaving the way open for the media to shape the public opinion and create fear of the unknown. Caryl Phillips grew up in Leeds and in a personal testimony about the impact of Enoch Powell's speech on the Leeds African Caribbean community he relates that 'the intensity of verbal and

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<sup>50</sup> Tony Kushner and Kenneth Lunn, *Traditions of Intolerance: Historical Perspectives on Fascism and Race* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1989), p. 8.

<sup>51</sup> Farrar, *The Struggle for Community*, p. 19.

physical abuse shot off the scale'.<sup>52</sup> It is the contention of this research that the ideological apparatus of the local media, in this case the *YP* and the *YEP*, shaped local opinion, thus allowing justification for the behaviour described by Phillips.

There was a great deal of support shown for Powell from his former colleagues as well as manufacturing workers as demonstrated in the headlines 'Tory MPs support Powell proposals on immigration curb' (*YP* 22 April 1968:17), 'Over 20 Tories abstain as race bill gets vote' (*YP* 24 April 1968:1) and 'Mr Powell wins support from many Tories' (*YP* 23 April 1968:1). In addition the local media reported on both local and national strikes in support of Powell, including '500 Dockers March to Westminster' (*YP* 23 April 1968:1) and 'Now a Yorks strike over Powell' (*YP* 24 April 1968:1). The strikes were a significant development as manufacturing workers typically supported the Labour party. Going out on strike in support of a far right Conservative politician was demonstrative of the level of anti-immigrant feeling at the time, supported by the mainstream press coverage of Powell's speech. One of the Leeds strikers commented that 'it does not really follow that all of us agree altogether with everything Mr Powell said... but it comes to something when a man cannot get up and say what he really feels to be right...without having to think about whether he is going to lose his job' (*ibid*). This opinion combined with the concerns raised in the earlier letters; the fear of an erosion of the British value of free speech as a result of the imposition of a community of the 'other'. Under the subheading 'Not racistist', another of the strikers was quoted as saying 'we have nothing personally against

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<sup>52</sup> Maya Jaggi, 'Rites of Passage' (*Guardian*, 3 November 2001), p.6.

coloured people as people, we are not racist, we have a coloured man on our site, he is a good worker and a nice fellow' (ibid). This insightful quote demonstrated a common strategy of predicating a racist statement with a denial of racism ('I'm not racist but...'). In keeping with the same discursive strategy the *YEP* reported 'Limit Immigrants says Jamaican after strike' (*YEP* 25 April 1968). The headline provided justification for the anti-immigrant rhetoric as this time the words were spoken by an immigrant; by reference to the spokesperson as 'Jamaican' the headline also provided the antidote to any suggestion of 'race' as the motive. This reporting strategy permits the indigenous reader to support the anti-immigrant rhetoric with justification from the immigrant community, thus absolving them of any racism.

The legacy of Powell's anti immigrant discourse and its promulgation in the Leeds press is evidenced further in the reporting of the death of David Oluwale and the subsequent investigation and trial. David Oluwale's body was pulled from the River Aire in May 1969; the victim of a campaign of torture at the hands of two Leeds policemen which culminated in his death (*YEP*, November 8 1971:4). Oluwale left Lagos, Nigeria in 1949 as a stowaway on the *Temple Star* heading to Hull. On arrival in England he was sent to Armley jail. This was his first experience of life in Leeds and he continued to lead a troubled life; at the time of his death he was a vagrant. He came to the UK as a Commonwealth British Citizen at a time when colonial subjects could enter freely and were entitled to the same rights as the indigenous population. Following a series of legislative changes, attitudes towards commonwealth immigrants toughened and as demonstrated in the above analysis of letters to newspapers there was support for an anti-immigration rhetoric in Leeds. Kester Aspden discusses the link between attitudes towards immigration and the timing of Oluwale's death further in his study *Nationality: Wog: The Hounding of David*

*Oluwale*.<sup>53</sup> This is not to contend that there is a direct cause and effect correlation between Powell's speech and Oluwale's death; however, it can be argued that the behaviour of the police officers in question was a symptom of the discourse espoused by Powell and its acceptance in the mainstream Leeds press.

When Oluwale's body was recovered there was no significant interest in who he was or how he arrived at his death. The *YP* made brief reference to the recovery of his body in the last column on page sixteen, stating only that 'he has not been identified' (*YP* 5 May 1969:16). The *YEP* had similarly minimal coverage though on the front page, under a small heading 'Body found in canal' (*YEP* 5 May 1969:1). The article reported on another body pulled from the Leeds-Liverpool canal that day, continuing as a secondary point that 'there was still no identification of the body of a man recovered from the River Aire at Knostrop last night' (*ibid*). There was no further coverage in the mainstream press until the outcome of the inquest which was reported briefly in the *YEP* giving only details of the identification of Oluwale and the verdict of the inquest (*YEP* 15 May 1969:1). The *YEP* did not mention Oluwale's nationality and there was no further speculation as to how he came to meet his death by drowning. Oluwale was buried in Killingbeck cemetery, Leeds, in a pauper's grave and forgotten.

In October 1970 a reinvestigation into the circumstances surrounding Oluwale's death was triggered when a young PC decided to report to senior officers a conversation he had overheard, in December 1970 his body was exhumed for a second post mortem. The *YEP* asked 'did David Oluwale, a lonely, somewhat mysterious man...take a vital clue to his grave?' (9 December 1970:5). The

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<sup>53</sup> Kester Aspden, *Nationality Wog: The Hounding of David Oluwale* (London, Jonathan Cape, 2007).

exhumation created a sudden press interest in Oluwale when it appeared that there may be a story behind his death. The *YEP* observed that, ‘throughout the cold night police stood guard over the grave’ (ibid): ironically, the care taken to protect his dead body may have been more fitting during his life. The *YEP* did not make any reference to the circumstances of the investigation and informed its readers only that ‘the file had been reopened due to fresh information’. The *YP* similarly reported, without the morbid element evident in the *YEP*, that the ‘case was reopened several weeks ago because of new information’ (*YP* 9 December 1970:5). The subsequent investigation led to the trial of the two Leeds police officers, Sergeant Kenneth Kitching and Inspector Geoffrey Ellerker, on charges of manslaughter, perjury and grievous bodily harm in November 1971.

The local press covered the trial at Leeds assizes in depth; while the articles analysed here were published in the 1970s they refer to events and attitudes of the previous decade. The *YEP* featured longer and more detailed coverage than the *YP* but nevertheless both newspapers ran daily updates from the trial. Under the capitalised headline ‘Oluwale tormented by police says QC’, the *YEP* informed its readers that ‘two Leeds police officers tormented and hounded to death a Nigerian immigrant’ (*YEP* 8 November 1971:1). The report went on to describe Oluwale as ‘a Nigerian from Lagos’, ‘of fairly poor intelligence’, and ‘a loner with a history of mental illness’ (ibid), and highlighted that he had been in a prison on a number of occasions (ibid). Similarly, the *YP* opened its coverage of the trial with the headline ‘police tormented vagrant says QC’ (*YP* 9 November 1971:1), and carried on throughout the article to describe Oluwale as a ‘Nigerian vagrant’ reporting that he arrived in England as a stowaway. Oluwale continued to be defined by both his vagrancy and nationality in both the *YEP* and *YP* throughout the trial, as illustrated in

the following quotations: 'Death of a Dosser' (*YEP* 9 November 1971:7), 'a Nigerian vagrant' (*YEP* 9 November 1971:7), 'Nigerian loner chased to river by Leeds officers' (*YEP* 8 November 1971:1), 'Police officer accused of he manslaughter of a Nigerian vagrant' (*YEP* 10 November 1971), 'David Oluwale, a Nigerian vagrant' (*YEP* 17 November 1971:7).

There were two strategies at play within the coverage. The first viewed Oluwale through a lens of criminality, referring to his arrival in the UK as a stowaway and his subsequent time spent in prison. This representation supported Powell's earlier rhetoric of immigrants as linked with crime and disorder and served to localise this discourse with a case study which fit with the Leeds narrative. The second strategy defined Oluwale in dual terms as a vagrant and immigrant; in popular representation, Oluwale became an aggregate of the most worthless in society.

The *YP* and the *YEP* went on to represent Oluwale as an individual of low intelligence with an aggressive and violent character. The *YP* informed its readers that, 'He not infrequently offered violence to those who crossed his path' (*YP* 19 November 1971:7), and suggested that 'he had very few social graces' (*ibid*). The paper went on to quote from a nurse at Menston Hospital where Oluwale had spent several years: 'Oluwale kicked and bit me' and was 'built like a miniature Mr Universe' (*ibid*). This latter quote is evidence of the construction of Oluwale within a stereotype which reduces black men to their physical characteristics. As argued by Collins, 'white elites reduced black men to their bodies, and identified their muscles and their penises as their most important sites'.<sup>54</sup> The nurse went on to describe

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<sup>54</sup> Patricia Hill Collins, cited in A. Ferber, 'The Construction of Black Masculinity: White Supremacy Now and Then', *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 31, 1 (2007), pp.11-34 (p.15).



Oluwale as ‘very violent’, ‘very unpredictable’ and ‘very dangerous’, stating ‘when he attacked he would snarl like an animal’ (ibid). Oluwale continued to be represented in this way over the course of the trial; the *YP* reported ‘Oluwale spat in people’s faces, says doctor’ (*YP* November 17 1971:7), adding that ‘a doctor told a jury how a homeless dosser had kicked, struck, bitten and spat in peoples faces’ (ibid). In addition it was reported that Oluwale suffered from hallucinations: ‘he saw animals, lions with fish’s heads and said these animals were going to kill and eat him’ (ibid). This research does not contend that the reporting was a reflection of untruth; however, it was recognised within the press coverage of the trial that Oluwale had spent long periods of time in mental health institutions. The *YP* and the *YEP* had a choice in terms of their reporting strategies and the facts of the case made a more sympathetic reporting possible. There was no explicit attempt to link the behaviour described with a mental health condition or to seek out alternative representations from those who knew Oluwale. Instead he was portrayed within a violent stereotype of black masculinity, as mad, dangerous and uncontrollable. The Institute of Race Relations contends that ‘the penal system cannot decide... whether black men considered to be violent and dangerous are bad (i.e. should be criminalised) or mad (i.e. should be hospitalised)’.<sup>55</sup> In Oluwale’s case both the penal system and the mainstream press decided he was both.

It can be argued that the representation of Oluwale within particular black male stereotypes, as discussed above, served a particular function. The reports of the trial detailed the horrific crimes committed against Oluwale. It was reported that he was ‘hounded’, ‘harassed’ and ‘assaulted’, and that the officers took him out to

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<sup>55</sup> IRR, *Deadly Silence: Black Deaths in Custody* (London, IRR, 1991), p.7.

Middleton Woods and left him there (*YEP* 8 November 1971:1). It was also reported that he had been kicked 'very hard in his private parts...so hard that Oluwale was lifted off the floor' and that a truncheon borrowed from a PC Briggs by Ellerker was returned with marks on it (*ibid*). Yet his horrific treatment at the hands of two police officers did not bring any outward condemnation of the behaviour from the *YP* or the *YEP*. It can be argued that the reporting strategies, which framed Oluwale within accepted stereotypes, served to lessen the impact of the details of Oluwale's treatment; a strategy tantamount to blaming the victim was perpetuated and the police officers' behaviour trivialised. The reader was presented with an account of the behaviour of the police as a necessary response to the uncontrollable black male.

In addition to what can be viewed as racist reporting strategies there was evidence of a racial motivation for the crimes against Oluwale in the press coverage of the trial. It is reported by the *YEP* that Oluwale was referred to as a 'coon' (*YEP* 9 November 1971:7). On another occasion it is reported that when he was driven out of the city and left alone in Middleton woods, Kitching told his colleague 'He should feel at home in the jungle' (*YEP* 8 November 1971:4). Despite the overt use of racist language and the obvious racial inference in reference to the 'jungle', it was not reported that the prosecutors considered race as a motivating factor in the crimes committed against Oluwale. The *YP* and the *YEP* also ignored both the implicit and overt racism and focused their coverage on the behaviour of Oluwale as problematic; in addition, there is not any evidence of a public outcry from the communities of Leeds. Farrar later made the claim that the United Caribbean Association (UCA) was active in exposing the mistreatment of Oluwale.<sup>56</sup> However, prior to their submissions

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<sup>56</sup> Farrar, *The Struggle for 'Community'*, p. 222.

to the Parliamentary Select Committee in 1972, there is no evidence of any action within the local communities regarding Oluwale's treatment or the representation of Oluwale at the trial. Aspden picks up on this theme stating 'it didn't rouse much anti racist sentiment. Activists didn't pack the public gallery'.<sup>57</sup> Ellerker and Kitching were cleared of manslaughter and they were sentenced on assault charges to serve three years and twenty seven months respectively.

There was no alternative representation of Oluwale other than that which was mediated through the mainstream press. The representation was not wholly consistent with the descriptions of Oluwale as related through Aspden's much later study. He is described by some of his former friends and acquaintances as 'easy going and cheerful', 'a good man and a lonely one and in the last few years of his life he weighed no more than about nine stones and was only a small man' and 'very bright, very articulate, very good dancer'.<sup>58</sup> It is also claimed that David Odamo, a fellow Nigerian working as a nurse at psychiatric nurse at High Royds hospital, moved by the press portrayal of Oluwale, sent a letter to the Chief Constable at Leeds stating 'though he was a victim of circumstances, he was not a violent person. He was one of the unlucky ones among us immigrants that accepted his fate'.<sup>59</sup> This letter was never presented as evidence at the trial or referred to within the local press. It would appear that there was the potential for an alternative representation of Oluwale that did not frame him in stereotypical terms or dehumanise him, but there was no alternative means for communicating this. Oral reflection, as evident in Aspden's study, has been

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<sup>57</sup> Aspden, *Nationality: Wog*, p. 210.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 1-6.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, p. 83.

recognised as an effective tool for documenting elements of history that would otherwise remain silent.<sup>60</sup> It is suggested that this is the case for Oluwale; without the testimony of his acquaintances he would have forever been remembered as the media-constructed violent, dangerous monster, a vagrant and a nuisance, a burden to the city of Leeds. It would appear that in recent times the impact of the case of David Oluwale has been resurrected in the Leeds consciousness, perhaps re-fuelled by the publication of Aspden's narrative. A recent campaign has called for a memorial to Oluwale, paradoxically a call for a permanent memorial in the city to a man who during his life was never welcomed or included as part of it.

This chapter has provided an analysis of the coverage in the Leeds press of Enoch Powell's Rivers of Blood speech and the coverage of the trial of the police officers accused of the manslaughter of David Oluwale. It can not be denied that Powell's speech was a landmark in the development of a narrative of Britishness in that it served to define immigrants and their British-born descendants as an unwelcome invasion and a threat to the British national identity. It was clear from the speech that the problem was the 'coloured' immigrant population who presented a visual threat to the homogenous 'white British' landscape. The coverage of Powell's speech in the Leeds mainstream press gave extensive voice to racist public opinion in the form of the letters to editor features. Whilst the *YEP* offered a marginally more liberal undertaking balancing the letters with an editorial, the *YP* made no attempt to offer an alternative to the writers' opinions and was openly derisive of left-wing thinking. The overall representation in both newspapers demonstrated that the

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<sup>60</sup> Ben Alexander, 'Excluding Archival Silences: Oral History and Historical Absence', *Archival Science*, 5, 2 (2005), pp. 1-11.

warnings proffered by Powell would be brought to bear in the communities of Leeds with the evidence that the readers of Leeds shared the same fears; albeit the *YEP* made this representation with a clause which served as a disclaimer ('we are not racist but...') to the subsequent proliferation of racist support for Powell within the letters. The impact of this discourse was considered at a local level in this chapter with reference to the death of David Oluwale at the hands of the police, and it was argued that it was a symptom of the anti-immigration discourse validated by the press coverage of Powell's speech and evidence of local support for the subsequent discourse. The representation of men like Oluwale through a stereotyped lens was a common strategy. As bell hooks argues, 'read any article or book on black masculinity and it will convey the message that black men are violent...that black men as a group are out of control wild, uncivilised, natural born predators'.<sup>61</sup> Throughout the period considered in this chapter there was no recourse to an alternative representation and so the dominant representation was perpetuated unchallenged. In Chapter Two, I will continue with an analysis of representation through the mainstream press and the development of the narrative of the African Caribbean communities of Leeds over the next decade.

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<sup>61</sup> bell hooks, *We Real Cool: Black Men and Masculinity* (London: Routledge, 2004), p.47.

bell hooks does not capitalise her name for political reasons.

## Chapter Two The ‘colony within’

By the 1970s the so called ‘Windrush generation’ was established in the UK and the first and in some cases second generations of their British-born children were growing up in Leeds. This chapter will continue to analyse representation of the African Caribbean community in the mainstream press in Leeds during this decade. In particular, the chapter analyses representation of the Earl Cowper Middle School Protest in June 1973, the so-called Bonfire Night Riots of November 1975, and the first mainstream newspaper coverage of Leeds carnival. The analysis identifies misrepresentation and omissions in the mainstream narrative and will explore the alternative representation of events through analysis of the *Chapelton News (CN)*.

To ground this local research in the national context a brief analysis of the wider issues of the day is necessary. The 1970s began with an unexpected triumph for the Conservative government as they took power with Edward Heath as Prime Minister. The election campaign had stressed their anti-immigration stance,<sup>62</sup> which is unsurprising following the impact of Enoch Powell’s speech. The decade which followed saw political upheaval, a return to a Labour government, strike action, energy shortages, unprecedented public spending cuts and a sharp rise in support for the National Front. By the end of the decade the country was deemed to be in a state of crisis and the Conservative government was re-elected with Margaret Thatcher as leader becoming Britain’s first female prime minister in 1979. This political watershed had a marked impact on the African Caribbean communities of Leeds as will be discussed in Chapter Three.

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<sup>62</sup> Paul Ward, *Britishness Since 1870* (London, Routledge, 2004), p.128.

The political action which occurred around the country during the 1970s was also evident on a smaller scale within the communities of Leeds. On 25 June 1973, parents and children staged a protest outside Earl Cowper Middle School in the Chapeltown area of Leeds and kept their children away from school for a day to make a stand against the lack of facilities at the school and the behaviour of the head teacher. The *YEP* covered the protest with the headline 'coloured pupils in school row' (*YEP* 25 June 1973). The article was accompanied by a large picture of parents and children outside the school carrying banners, demanding 'Headmaster Out' and continued at page four under the heading 'coloured parents in school rumpus' (ibid). The use of the terms 'row' and 'rumpus' in both headlines preceded by reference to 'coloured' served two purposes. It invalidated the protest as a legitimate means of demonstration by neglecting to refer to the action as a 'protest' and used terminology which inferred that the protest was a noisy riot, a disturbance of the peace. This reporting strategy defined the protesters, who were described as 'coloured', as a threatening presence on the streets of Leeds. The article reported that 'black parents' demonstrated and informed its readers that ninety percent of the school's pupils were black, though it did not define its usage of black in this context. It could have been the case that the newspaper included Asian students in this number. Mrs Stoute spoke for 'some' of the parents; she said that the protest was about the poor standard of education at the school. Another parent described as a 'young coloured man', said that the school was a 'dump' and that he just wanted 'a fair education for our children' (ibid).

It is evident from the *YEP*'s report that the parents were protesting against the head of the school; it described them chanting 'out, out, out' and included a picture of the group holding placards to this effect (ibid). The report did not make reference to

the behaviour which was the subject of their complaints, either from the *YEP*'s standpoint or that of the spokespersons in the article. It is claimed in later discussion of the protest that the unrest was partly a consequence of racism toward pupils and parents from the head of the school though this was not identified in the *YEP*.<sup>63</sup> The *CN*'s coverage was extensive providing alternative representation of the events and it recognised that the parents had grievances with the headmaster. One of the protesters remarked claimed that 'the staff get unenthusiastic leadership from the headmaster' (*CN*, July 1973:1), whilst another pointed out that the headmaster 'frequently insulted parents and children' (*CN* July 1973:3). The *CN* did not state whether this was specifically black parents and children or whether the insults were racist. The *CN* was an active community newspaper, and gave a direct voice to the Cowper Parents Action Group, so this omission is notable, particularly in consideration of the later claim by Farrar that 'the remark attributed to the headmaster that appeared to be the most powerful mobiliser of opinion was that "black pupils have lower foreheads and less cranial capacity than the white pupils"'.<sup>64</sup> Max Farrar was able to make this claim twenty years after the event; it might be suggested that at the time the *CN* may have chosen to avoid attributing such remarks to the headmaster as it was concerned about inflaming a tense situation, though the *CN*'s coverage of the bonfire night riots (see later discussion) would suggest that it was not averse to making controversial claims.

The *YEP* overtly avoided associating the protest directly to issues of race, citing the local ward councillor: 'he did not want the protest to turn into a racial issue'

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<sup>63</sup> Max Farrar, 'Racism, Education and Black Self Organisation', *Critical Social Policy*, 12, 36 (1993), pp. 53-72.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid*, p. 58.



(*YEP* 25 June 1973:4). However, as Van Dijk states, ‘many negative things about minorities may not be stated explicitly and thus are conveyed between the lines’.<sup>65</sup> The *YEP* manifested this through its denial of the protest as a racial issue, whilst at the same time racialising the narrative by highlighting that white parents did not take part in the protest. Betty Turner, a local ‘white woman,’ was interviewed for the report; she claimed that both of her children went to the school, had some of the same teachers and had done well for themselves, one being a nurse and one studying at teacher training college (*YEP*, 25 June 1973:4). The reader was therefore offered the discursive position that privileged the white voice as an authority, rejecting the claims made by the black parents. The problem was framed as imagined and placed the stereotypical ‘chip’ back on the shoulders of Chapeltown’s black community. In addition the article categorised the subjects and spokespersons by race and described the protesters as either ‘black’ or ‘coloured’, terms which were used interchangeably between the headline and the article. Where the speaker is white, this is also highlighted. This racial categorisation within the reporting further highlighted the difference between the black and the white subjects and conferred to the reader their difference. Whiteness is usually an unmarked norm, an assumed benchmark against which difference is measured.<sup>66</sup> In this report whiteness was marked; however, it was normalised as the default position. The normalising of whiteness is a powerful strategy as Richard Dyer argues: ‘as long as race is something only applied to non white peoples....they/we function as a human norm. Other people are raced, we are

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<sup>65</sup> Teun. A. Van-Dijk ‘New(s) Racism: A Discourse Analytical Approach’ in Cottle, S (ed.), *Ethnic Minorities and the Media* (Buckingham, Open University Press, 2004), p. 40.

<sup>66</sup> Chris Weedon, *Identity and Culture: Narratives of Difference and Belonging* (Berkshire, Open University Press, 2004), p. 30.

just people. There is no more powerful position than that of being ‘just’ human’.<sup>67</sup>

This research did not identify any coverage of the protest in the *YP*; this silence is as exclusionary as the racialised representation in the *YEP* as it ignores the presence of the African Caribbean communities as part of the city and events of Leeds.

Conversely, the *CN* mediated the Earl Cowper School protest as an organised event, the result of a meeting of the Chapeltown Parents Action Group (CPAG).

CPAG was formed after parents complained about the standard of education at the school to the United Caribbean Association (UCA), and they supported the parents in setting up CPAG in 1973.<sup>68</sup> Violet Hendrikson speaking at the meeting was quoted in the *CN* as stating:

England had a labour shortage after the war and the government needed workers to do the jobs whites refused so they attracted workers from the Caribbean by the promise of a better life” she said “we were disillusioned –it was nothing like we expected. Black children were not given good educational facilities because they were only needed for menial jobs; it seems like a deliberate attempt to hold the kids back. (*CN* June 1973:1)

This statement represents the community as having a legitimate reason to protest, contrary to the earlier denial of a problem represented in the *YEP*; this representation also opposes the view that the protest was a ‘rumpus’ as described in the *YEP*.

Furthermore, the *CN* went on to describe the protest as a ‘perfectly peaceful picket’ (*CN* June 1973:3). It reported that a small argument broke out when a *YEP* journalist crossed the street to talk to some white parents. A black demonstrator told her that she should be writing about the people who were on strike and their complaint about the

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<sup>67</sup> Richard Dyer, *White* (London, Routledge, 1997), pp. 1-2.

<sup>68</sup> The UCA was established in November 1964 by Arthur France, Cedric Clarke (first black Labour Councillor in Leeds in the 1970s) and George Archibald, and campaigned against racism and discrimination.

school; it is reported that she replied ‘I don’t give a damn about your school’ (*CN* July 1973:3). It should be remembered that the *CN* was a community newspaper with the aim of representing the news absent from the mainstream media, and was not above bias or politicization in its reporting. However, the reporter’s response could be construed as indicative of the mainstream media’s response to the black community, giving the white elite the power to shape the dominant discourse.<sup>69</sup>

The July issue of the *CN* contained a much more detailed analysis of the school protest, including an outline of the demands of the parents made at a CPAG meeting of the 24 June, the day before the protest. This further asserted that the protest was coordinated and had genuine demands which had been pre-agreed by the parents (*CN* July 1973). A more sympathetic angle can be expected from the *CN* in keeping with its stated aims (as discussed in introductory chapter) and the *CN* openly pledged its support for CPAG in this issue. In an editorial, it called on white parents of the area to join CPAG to demand a fair education for all children. The editorial expressed the opinion that all of the children, regardless of colour, were being prepared for low-skilled work and that all parents should unite to fight for a better education (*ibid*). The inextricable nature of race and class was a key theme in the academic study of race relations of the day and the editor’s opinion is in keeping with Stuart Hall’s argument that the education system prepares black youth for this subordinate role within the labour market.<sup>70</sup> In August 1973 a self described ‘non prejudiced, non militant parent’ wrote to the *CN* demanding to know why white parents were excluded from CPAG and expressed the view that other schools in the

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<sup>69</sup> Stuart Hall, *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order* (London, Macmillan, 1978), p. 327.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*, p.341.

area had the same problems and they did not have any black children attending. She wrote, 'this is clearly not an issue of race as some have pretended for reasons of their own, but one of class' (*CN* August 1973: 2). CPAG responded to the letter claiming that white parents were consulted but many chose not to be involved, though some supported in principle. This representation along with the call for the white parents to join CPAG challenged the dominant narrative which presented the protest as an issue with the black community. The protest was successful to the extent that the headmaster was eventually removed from that particular school, though the victory was limited in its wider impact as he was promoted in another Leeds school.<sup>71</sup> Farrar was present throughout the event and argues that the protest and coverage enhanced the cultural identity of African Caribbeans in Leeds.<sup>72</sup> Farrar's analysis is appropriate in relation to the development of a local collective identity and action and the favourable coverage within the community-based *CN*; conversely, it could be argued that the coverage within the mainstream local press subverted their political aims and framed the cultural identity of the African Caribbean community within the discourse of the problem 'alien' community within 'our' midst.

The *YEP* used the discourse of the problem 'black' community that it had created around the Earl Cowper Middle School protest to launch a series of articles over three days entitled 'The Colony Within'. The language used immediately set the tone of the power relations, the described colony understood as being under control of the British, constructing the power within the article from the start and implying that

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<sup>71</sup> Farrar, 'Social Movements in a Multi-Ethnic Inner City: Explaining their Rise and Fall over 25 years' in P. Bagguley and J. Hearn (eds), *Transforming Politics: Power and Resistance* (London, Macmillan, 1998), p.5.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid*, p. 5.

the black community of Chapeltown was both non-British and in need of subjugation. The title predicates the description of Chapeltown as a 'melting pot for immigrants from many lands for many years', the suggestion being that previous immigrant communities have managed to blend in, in a way that the black community has not. The first article in the series carried the headline 'A quiet unrest that could lead to black revolution' (*YEP* June 27 1973:5), harking back to the warnings proffered in Powell's 1968 speech the article went on to highlight the failure of the immigrants to blend in claiming that 'black children demonstrate outside their schools and fears of discrimination are voiced' (*YEP* 27 June 1973:5).

The article summarised the views of two members of the Chapeltown community, Peggy Holroyde who was described as the honorary organiser of the Yorkshire Committee for Community Relations and Veryl Harriott described as an attractive, articulate 39-year old social worker. There is a thumbnail picture of each of the women; Holroyde is white and Harriott is black. It is deemed adequate in the case of Holroyde to reference her honorary position; however, Harriott is defined in terms of her attractiveness. There is a well documented history of the construction of black women in reference to their physical attributes as in opposition to a European ideal of beauty, with their physical features being fetishised as in the case of the Hottentot Venus.<sup>73</sup> It is also worthy of note that Harriott's articulateness was confirmed, implicitly validating her worthiness to opine; it can be suggested that the *YEP* assumed that the readers would presume that she was not articulate on the basis of her

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<sup>73</sup> Partha Mitter, 'The Hottentot Venus and Western Man; Reflections on the Construction of Beauty in the West' in Hallam, E and Street, B.V (eds), *Cultural Encounters; Representing Otherness* (London, Routledge, 2000), pp. 35-50. The Hottentot Venus was a nineteenth century black woman (real name Saartjie Baartman) who was paraded around Europe as a curiosity/freak show. Even after her death her genitals were displayed in a glass case to show off her marked otherness.

being black. Both women voiced concerns over discrimination in schools and business in Yorkshire and recognised the frustrations of ‘West Indian’ teenagers, who were born here, spoke in broad Yorkshire accents and regard themselves rightly as entitled to the same opportunities and considerations as the white school boys (*YEP* 27 June 1973:5). This statement is complex and presents contradictions within the narrative as well as providing an example of the difficulties encountered by the immigrant communities and their descendants in finding their place in Britain and in this case Leeds. ‘West Indian’ was used to describe teenagers born in England and is indicative of a trend within the opinion column, followed by those who seek to represent the views of the community as well as the ‘expert’ spokespersons. The term is intended to refer to people of West Indian family origins. However, they are defined as West Indian but described as being born in Britain. This contradiction highlights their difference from the white British community whilst at the same time acknowledging their birthrights as British-born. This is certainly a complicated position to be in as a teenager already struggling to find one’s own identity. Reference to ‘broad Yorkshire accents’ complicates this statement further as it introduces the concept of a distinct regional identity. Accent as defined by Trudgill is a ‘particular combination of English words, pronunciations and grammatical forms that you share with other people from your area and your social background’.<sup>74</sup> This definition identifies an element of collective identity based on shared geography and background. It is clear from the article that the teenagers could not participate fully in a collective regional identity as they were still defined as different through their identification as ‘West Indian’. Neither were they fully recognised as having a wholly

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<sup>74</sup> Peter Trudgill, *Dialects* 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed (Oxon, Routledge, 2004), p.2.

British or regional identity within the discourse. Ward recognises that regional identities are problematic and varied, stating they ‘complement the nation, allowing Britishness to emerge from an apparent diversity of regional identities in which often the same (national) values are validated’.<sup>75</sup>

In the second of the ‘Colony Within’ series, Leeds experts in education, career guidance and other fields of contact with the immigrant community gave their views under the headline ‘You can’t legislate against the heart’ (*YEP* 28 June 1973:8). Geoffrey Ford, a Principal Careers Officer, blamed the difficulties faced by immigrant children on them having been abroad and later being taken into the English education system. This view placed the problem squarely back on to the African Caribbean community. He went on to say that one ‘can’t say there is no discrimination. [...] You can legislate against open discrimination but you can’t legislate against the human heart’ (*ibid*). This placed race both within the physical, difference within the biology of the body, and the emotional. It takes human agency out of racism and presents it as an immutable characteristic of the human condition, naturalizing racial inequality and undermining any attempts to legislate against discrimination. In a strategy already in evidence in the *YEP* reporting of the Earl Cowper School protest, Superintendent Michael Wilson, a Race Relations Officer claimed that he was not aware of any heightening of tensions in the Chapeltown area; the authoritative voice of law and order was privileged in order to silence concerns of racism.<sup>76</sup> Wilson went on to claim, ‘today West Indians are becoming more aware of their identity within the community and of their origins. The fact that this may manifest itself in the Afro style

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<sup>75</sup> Ward, *Britishness Since 1870*, p. 72.

<sup>76</sup> Ian Law, *Race in the News* (London, Palgrave, 2002), p. 12.

haircut or in a distinctive type of dress does not mean they are demonstrating discontent, only their pride in being black' (*YEP* 28 June 1973:8). This statement, whilst continuing to deny that there was tension in the Chapeltown area, introduced the concept of a particular form of black identity emerging through the second generation. Wilson seemed to be responding to a wider debate of the day that a distinct West Indian identity was evidence of protest against the white hegemony; however his denial of discontent is in direct contrast to the claim of respected commentators in the field that a black British identity has grown out of conflict.<sup>77</sup>

In the final 'Colony within' article entitled 'a problem in a class of its own', Derek Naylor summarised a report from the teaching union (*YEP* 29 June 1973:5). The article concluded that 'West Indians present a problem in our schools, being boisterous and unruly'. This pathologised the students in terms of their behaviour and projected notions of deficiency on to the whole community. 'West Indian' is used frequently as a descriptive term to categorise by race, highlighting the difference from the unmarked white norm; once again, this is notwithstanding that many of the students referred to as West Indian would likely have been born in England. The 'West Indian' children are mediated through stereotypes which hark back to the enlightenment period and rely on essentialist theories of race as biology, largely used to justify inferior treatment of, in particular, African Caribbeans during slavery and the colonial period.<sup>78</sup> The main concern for Naylor was that 'ours must remain the major culture taught in our schools' and that the predicted rise in black teachers must

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<sup>77</sup> Gilroy, *There Ain't no Black in the Union Jack* and Stuart Hall, 'Frontlines and Backyards: The Terms of Change' in K. Owusu (ed.), *Black British Culture and Society: A Reader* (London, Routledge, 2000), pp. 127-130 are the best examples of this argument.

<sup>78</sup> David Dabydeen, John Gilmore and Cecily Jones, *The Oxford Companion to Black British History* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 444.



not result in ‘a lowering of standards or proficiency in English’ (*YEP* 29 June 1973:5). This statement is a reflection of what Hackert terms ‘linguistic nativeness,’ which implies ‘a naturally determined, inalienable, and perfect competence and therefore right to ownership, and connects linguistic identity and political membership by way of the idea of the nation’.<sup>79</sup> Naylor went on to state that ‘teachers are sincerely involved in and dedicated to the equal education of the migrants’ (*YEP* 29 June 1973:5). The denial of race as an issue throughout the coverage can be read as a form of racism as it invalidates the community’s claim of discrimination and their political aims well as mediating them in terms of a homogenous and problematic community.

In so far as the mainstream press constructed representations based on established negative stereotypes they did not engage wholly with the social and cultural life of the African Caribbean community of Leeds. The Leeds carnival was in its fourth year before it was recognised at all within the local newspapers and six years before it was recognised in both the *YP* and the *YEP*. Following the Earl Cowper School Protest, the summer of 1973 saw the first coverage of Leeds carnival in both the *YP* and the *YEP*. Brief reference had been made previously to carnival in 1971 with a small feature in the *YEP*, ‘Sunshine carnival the best yet’ (*YEP* 31 August 1971:5); it reported that ‘the colourful West Indian bank holiday carnival which thronged the streets of Leeds was the biggest and best yet’. This was a small column on page five and did not include any pictorial representation. In the following year the *YEP* featured a small photograph of the carnival queen with a few lines of narrative under the subheading ‘fifth West Indian carnival’ (*YEP* 28 August 1972:5). My

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<sup>79</sup> Stephanie Hackert, ‘Linguistic Nationalism and the Emergence of the English Native Speaker’, *European Journal of English Studies*, 13, 3, (2009), pp.305-17 (p.306).

research has not identified any reference to carnival in the *YP* before 1973. Carnival was originated in Trinidad initially by the white elite but was later reordered as resistance to oppression following the emancipation of African slaves in 1834. Carnival has been located as part of the rise of black consciousness in the Diaspora, and as another form of resistance to oppression and hostility. The first Leeds West Indian Carnival was held in 1967, and it is argued that it was the first truly Caribbean carnival held in England as it was the first one organised in England by the Caribbean community.<sup>80</sup> It could be argued that the absence of any coverage in the *YEP* until 1971 and the *YP* until 1973 was due to its failure as an event to meet the criteria defined by Hall in his claim that, in order to be worthy of reporting, news stories typically have to meet three criteria, namely ‘action...temporal recency... [and] newsworthiness’.<sup>81</sup> A more cynical analysis favours the argument that in this case the omission is ‘evidence of the silencing of different cultural voices in favour of the euro/white centric norm’.<sup>82</sup>

In 1973 the *YEP* included a small column alongside pictures of the carnival procession and proclaimed ‘It’s the calypso city’ (*YEP* 28 August 1973:7). The report is placed underneath the coverage of the Leeds gala held on the same day and which took precedence on the page. Under the headline ‘young visitors earn themselves a pat on the back,’ the *YEP* reports on the 60,000 strong crowd attending the Leeds gala

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<sup>80</sup> Geraldine Connor and Max Farrar, ‘Carnival in Leeds and London, UK: Making New Black British Subjectivities’ in Milla Riggio, (ed), *Carnival: Culture in Action — The Trinidad Experience* (London, Routledge, 2004) and Keith Nurse, ‘Globalisation and Trinidad Carnival: Diaspora, Hybridity and Identity in Global Culture’, *Cultural Studies* 13, 4 (1999), pp. 661-690.

<sup>81</sup> Stuart Hall, ‘The Determinations of News Photographs’ in Cohen, S and Young, J (eds), *The Manufacture of News: Social Problems, Deviance and the Mass Media* (London, Constable, 1981), p.182.

<sup>82</sup> Ian Law, *Race in the News*, p.25.

including youngsters who ‘were really well behaved but really enjoyed themselves’ (ibid). The headline and the latter quote both seem to put an emphasis on the young people behaving well. The claims are not sufficient to conclude that this was deliberately represented as in opposition to the behaviour of those attending Leeds carnival; however, this point is worthy of note in consideration of the way in which the African Caribbean community have previously been represented as a problem community. The gala was reported to include maypole dancing, sports and athletics, a display by the RAF, police dogs and parachutists, events which, it can be argued, are considered to be traditional English/British bank holiday events.

In contrast to coverage of the Leeds Gala, coverage of the carnival is mainly pictorial and accompanied by smaller columns of text in both the *YEP* and the *YP*. Under the headline ‘bravely dressed up for the big Caribbean carnival procession’ the *YEP* published a ‘picture of a group of children dressed as “Sioux Indians”’ (*YEP* 28 August 1973). This is an interesting costume choice to highlight as it represents another culture that is neither British nor Caribbean. This illustrates Homi Bhabha’s claim that carnival is a hybrid site for ritual negotiation of cultural identity and practice within and among various social groups.<sup>83</sup> This argument recognises that cultural identity is formed through the mixing of different cultural forms and identities and that culture is not a fixed concept that can be used to essentialise the characteristics of people or groups. The *YP* coverage is at the head of page eight and has two large pictures of the carnival procession with captions below. One image shows a black woman in carnival costume whilst the second picture is an aerial shot of the carnival procession showing a bus stuck in the midst of the procession, perhaps

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<sup>83</sup> Keith Nurse, *Globalisation and Trinidad Carnival*, 1999 p. 663.

to impute that the procession caused an obstruction in the city of Leeds. In all of the pictures the subjects, both participants and spectators, are black. This could be representative of carnival at the time in question. However, the accompanying reports frame carnival as exclusively West Indian. The *YEP* reported that ‘the city’s West Indian community celebrated in style’ (*YEP* 28 August 1973: 7); whilst the *YP* informed its readers that ‘Mardi Gras burst out West Indian style’ (*YP* 28 August 1973:8). As recognised by Hall the photograph as a visual sign is open to various interpretations and the headline, caption or accompanying report serve to direct the reader’s attention to the preferred signification.<sup>84</sup> In this case, the photographs represent both participants and observers as African Caribbean and the report serves to direct the readers attention to this, thus framing the event as exclusively for the African Caribbean community of Leeds. The pictures also provide a visual representation of carnival as ‘other’ set against representation of the normalised Leeds Gala.

The participants in carnival were mediated through established black stereotypes. The happy go lucky, wide grinning, black personality is evident in the use of vocabulary in both articles.<sup>85</sup> The *YP* described ‘thousands of happy laughing faces’ and in comparative language the *YEP* reported that ‘thousands of happy men women and children laughed and swayed’. This stereotype is in direct contrast to the aggressive black stereotype portrayed in the coverage of the case of David Oluwale and the riotous black parents with a chip on their shoulder portrayed through coverage of the Cowper school protest. However, what is referred to as the ‘coon’ caricature, is

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<sup>84</sup> Stuart Hall and Mark Sealy, *Different: A Historical Context. Contemporary Photographers and Black Identity* (London, Phaidon Press, 2001), p.4.

<sup>85</sup> Donald Bogle, *Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies and Bucks: An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Films* (New York, Continuum, 2001), p.1.

argued to be one of the most damaging stereotypes, serving to reinforce the black personality as lazy, docile, unintelligent and a source of entertainment.<sup>86</sup> Whilst this analysis is focused on the construction of stereotypes within the American film industry, it can be argued that the reach of the American film industry is wide enough to have an impact on the construction of African Caribbeans in England and more regionally in Leeds, shaping the perception of the Leeds population toward the African Caribbean community.

There was a noticeable reference to the colours of carnival within the coverage; the *YEP* reported that ‘the gaiety of a colourful Caribbean carnival burst on Leeds’ (*YEP* 28 August 1973:7). This was presented as being in stark contrast with the usual drabness of the Leeds streets. The *YEP* related that ‘thousands of happy men, women and children laughed and swayed along the city’s grey streets’ (*ibid*) and the *YP* similarly described ‘the glitter and gaiety of a sunny Caribbean carnival’ on the ‘hazy streets of Leeds’ (*YP* 28 August 1973:8). Leeds is historically an industrial city and until its recent regeneration it had long been cast as a dirty northern industrial town.<sup>87</sup> Though not necessarily a negative representation, this symbolised the ‘new’ or ‘other’ community as different. It is significant that the Leeds gala was not mediated as an event which changed the city in the same way as the reference to the colour of carnival did; it was simply accepted as part of the Leeds landscape.

On the same day as the carnival, England played a cricket match against the West Indies. This was referred to in the *YEP* coverage of the carnival based on the

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<sup>86</sup> Bogle, *Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies and Bucks*, p.1.

<sup>87</sup> Tony Harcup, 'Re-imagining a Post-Industrial city: The Leeds St Valentine's Fair as a Civic Spectacle', *City*, 4, 2, 2000, pp. 215-231.

assumption that the carnival attendees would be supporting the West Indies team: 'The West Indians also had something else to celebrate, their cricket team's crushing defeat of England' (*YEP* 28 August 1973:7). There was an inherent assumption within the tone of the report that 'West Indians' would not support the England team, despite the fact that many of the younger generation of the day were born in England. Compounding the community's lack of support for the British team, Mr Ian Charles (described within the article as carnival coordinator) states 'the great win was all we needed to make it a day to remember' (*ibid*). The role of sport in the development of a narrative of Britishness is well established and, in particular, cricket has been adopted as the test of allegiance. Infamously in 1994 Norman Tebbit proclaimed that 'a large proportion of Britain's Asian population fail to pass the cricket test. Which side do they cheer for? It's an interesting test. Are you still harking back to where you came from or where you are?'<sup>88</sup> This aligns support for national sports teams as evidence of national identity but also demonstrated the difficulties inherent in identifying with more than one national identity, if indeed one can.<sup>89</sup> Exemplification of the assumed strength of loyalty to the West Indies team is found in the description of the moment the result of the cricket match was announced. The *YEP* went on to report, 'as if by magic drums seemed to throb more incessantly and the dances became more frenzied as if in tribute to the great victory' (*YEP* 28 August 1973:7). These descriptive terms draw upon a discourse of primitivism; Fabian defines 'primitive' as the key term used within a 'temporalizing discourse and argues that this discourse was the means by which non-white people and cultures were displaced both

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<sup>88</sup> John Carvel, 'Tebbit's Cricket Loyalty Test Hit for Six', *Guardian*, 8 January 2004.

<sup>89</sup> Paul Ward discusses at length the role of sport in the development of a narrative of Britishness, see Ward, *Britishness*, pp. 73-92.

spatially and temporally'.<sup>90</sup> This representation within the mainstream press posited carnival in opposition to white Eurocentric norms, displacing it and its 'African Caribbean' participants from the Leeds narrative.

The *Chapelton News*, in seeking to counter the mainstream representation of carnival as a 'black' event, invited 'all to join in' (*CN* August 1973). The newspaper went on the state that 'anyone can join a troupe, dress up or come to the parade'. The September issue of *CN* featured photographs portraying five different family events which took place in the Chapelton area throughout August. Carnival was one such event, but the report included other community events such as Studley Grange carnival and children's summer play schemes (*CN* September 1973:1). In contrast with the mainstream press the *CN* represented carnival within an article about local community events; evident within the pictures and the reporting is the involvement of members of the Chapelton community from a variety of backgrounds including black, Asian and white. The *CN* informed its readers that 'carnival of course is a West Indian celebration, but you only had to look at the faces of people in the crowd that lines the streets as the procession went past to see the pleasure the carnival gives to people of all cultures' (*ibid*). This statement recognised the cultural hybridity of carnival and mediated it as an event for all of the Leeds communities; a view which was not shared with the mainstream press. It can be argued that the sustained representation of the African Caribbean community as the 'other' was a factor in developing tension in the city of Leeds.

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<sup>90</sup> Johannes Fabian (2002) cited in D. Garcia, 'Going Primitive to the Movements and Sounds of Mambo', *Musical Quarterly*, 89, 4 (2006), pp. 505-523.

Tensions between the communities of Chapeltown and the police reached a critical point in the mid 1970s and, on the night of 5 November 1975, Chapeltown saw what has come to be known in local folklore as the Chapeltown riots. Both the *YP* and the *YEP* presented the riot as a coordinated attack against the police. The *YEP* informed its readers, ‘Bonfire plot to provoke police Leeds court told’ (*YEP* 6 November 1975:1), and went on to report that a bonfire had been built to block off a street in Chapeltown in order to provoke a police reaction. This claim was made by Detective Bruce who was reported as informing the court that the force had been instructed to keep a low profile in the area that evening, but were deliberately provoked into a response by the youths (*ibid*). The *YEP* related that on attendance at the scene police cars were hit with missiles, resulting in two police officers being injured, one as the result of his car hitting a tree and overturning. Detective Bruce expressed that ‘He had never been so frightened in all his police career’ going on to state that ‘there are no stones readily available in this area and it is obvious they were brought from other areas’ (*ibid*). The reporting on the event was unambiguous and framed the event as an act of criminality, with the dominant and only voices being those of authority. There was no voice from the Chapeltown community or the rioters within the reporting and no question of the reasons for the incident. The dominant view is compounded in the description of the prosecutor, Michael Mackey, of the event as an ‘explosion of indiscriminate and senseless violence’ (*YEP* 6 November 1975:2). This coverage favoured the view that the rioters were violent criminals acting outside the norms of a law abiding society. Law is considered to be an important cultural achievement in Britain and it is at the very core of national



identity,<sup>91</sup> in this context the representation of the rioters implicitly displaced them from the concept of Britishness.

Significantly the *YEP* does not make reference to the colour of those taking part in the events of bonfire night: the inference that black people were participants can be drawn from Bruce's quote that 'several witnesses both black and white had come forward because the general opinion was one of disgust' (*YEP* 6 November 1975:2). In contrast the *YP* in its coverage on the same day, under its front page headline 'Policemen injured as youths go on firework rampage' (*YP* 6 November 1975:1), made direct reference to the colour of the rioters; informing its readers that there were 'gangs of youths, most of them coloured, roaming the streets looking for targets' (ibid). The colour of the young people was once again highlighted in a statement from a spokesman for Leeds police: '150 youths, most of them coloured were roaming around the area obviously looking for trouble' (ibid). Entman and Rojecki, commenting on the American media, opine that 'mass media convey impressions that blacks and whites occupy different moral universes, that blacks are fundamentally different to whites'.<sup>92</sup> This is evident in the reporting strategies of both newspapers including the *YEP*'s implication that it is surprising that black people came forward and in both the *YEP* and the *YP*'s strategy of framing the behaviour of black youth as wantonly criminal.

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<sup>91</sup> Paul Gilroy, *There Aint No Black in the Union Jack* (London, Routledge, 1987), p.88.

<sup>92</sup> Robert.M Entman and Andrew Rojecki, *The Black Image in the White Mind: Media and Race in America* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press,2000), p.6.

In an attempt to redress the balance of representation, the *CN* dismissed Bruce's account as propaganda in order to hide the fact the truth about the way the police had behaved on that night (*CN* December 1975). It is argued, in juxtaposition to the coverage in the mainstream press, that the bonfire night events represented a conflict between the police and black youths for control of the streets of Chapeltown, following a year of intensive police presence and raids on youth clubs and blues clubs (*ibid*). The *CN's* interpretation of events conversely was that of a community under siege from an over vigilant police force. Commentating on a later period of unrest, Wykes argues that, 'the media concentrated on the violence due to news values, or as a result of their white vantage point on the streets behind police lines, literally and metaphorically, but the net effect of the language used was to reinforce both cultural racism and legitimate interventionist policing.'<sup>93</sup> It could be argued that the mainstream press served this function in relation to the bonfire night incidents in Chapeltown. Marginalisation experienced by African Caribbean communities is well documented in sociological literature and Farrar argues that the bonfire night events were a 'proto-political' response to this marginalisation, by a group of young people whose identity had been formed in opposition to the oppressive 'Babylon'.<sup>94</sup> This view is reflected by Ambalavaner Sivanandan:

By the middle of the 1970s, the youth had begun to emerge into the vanguard of black struggle. And they brought to it not only the traditions of their elders but an experience of their own, which was implacable of racism and impervious to the blandishments of the state...The daily confrontations with

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<sup>93</sup> Maggie Wykes, *News, Crime and Culture* (London, Pluto), 2001, p.38.

<sup>94</sup> Max Farrar, *The Struggle for 'Community' in a British Multi Ethnic Inner City Area; Paradise in the Making* (Ceredigion, Edwin Mellen Press), 2002. 'Babylon' is a term used by the African Caribbean community to refer to the state and in particular the police; this concept is strongly represented in reggae music e.g. Bob Marley's 'Chant down Babylon'. Reggae music was particularly popular amongst the African Caribbean communities of Leeds during the 1970s. See *Ibid* pp. 208-10.

the police and, the battles of Brockwell Park and Chapeltown and Notting Hill and their encounters with the judicial set up had established their hatred of the system.<sup>95</sup>

The *Chapeltown News* produced an emergency edition of the paper in response to the bonfire night incident; such was the strength of feeling in the community that the story had been misrepresented. Under the headline ‘Bonfire Night the Real Story’ (*CN* 10 November 1975:1), it was reported that early in the evening a bonfire was built but quickly died down and that later around one hundred youths with fireworks were out having a good time. Refuting the claims made by Detective Bruce that there was a low police presence in the area, the *CN* stated that ‘there was a heavy police presence in the area that night before any bricks were thrown’ (ibid). Recognising the impact of the reporting in the mainstream press, the *CN* went on to state that ‘the public is once again presented with a picture of Chapeltown as a vicious Leeds Harlem’ (*CN* November 1975:2). Farrar discusses at length this construction of Chapeltown as a place for the ‘other’; describing its construction in the media as ‘a metaphor for hell’.<sup>96</sup>

Following the riot the police launched an investigation, referred to in the *CN* as a ‘full scale operation’ (*CN* December 1975). The *CN* claims that homes were raided and children interviewed at local schools resulting in twelve arrests. The *Chapeltown News* co-ordinated a campaign of support for the accused and the trial resulted in a marked triumph for the Chapeltown community with twenty one of the twenty five charges being dropped. In recognition of the fact that neither the *YP* or the

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<sup>95</sup> Ambalavaner Sivanandan, *Asian and Afro-Caribbean Struggles in Britain* (London, IRR), 1986) p. 140.

<sup>96</sup> Max Farrar, ‘The Zone of the Other’, p. 10.

*YEP* had represented the views of the rioters or the Chapeltown community in their reporting the *CN* stated:

When their officers go into the witness box in court no 2 and are accused of lying ...and when there are serious allegations of corruption, police setting their dogs off their leashes at crowds of children, police driving dangerously at peaceful crowds in Spencer Place on bonfire night, police falsifying notebooks, and extracting confessions through verbal and physical violence, the press is nowhere to be seen (*CN* News July 1976:2).

This statement highlights the importance of the alternative press in representing a different view that has been sidelined and reframed by the mainstream press.

This chapter has analysed coverage in the *YP* and the *YEP* of the Earl Cowper Street school protest, carnival and the Chapeltown riots, all occurring in the 1970s. Once again it has been argued that the mainstream coverage within the *YP* and the *YEP* has represented the African Caribbean community of Leeds through a series of stereotypes and has defined them through a racialised lens as the 'other'. It was identified within the previous chapter that the *YEP* had a marginally more liberal coverage of events, attempting to impose balance in some places. This difference is not apparent in the paper's coverage of events in the 1970s, with the exception that it did provide more opportunities for the African Caribbean community to express itself (e.g. the 'colony within' series); though the strategies used in subsequent reporting disregard these opinions, rendering the impact of this exception negligible. It is argued that throughout the 1970s the African Caribbean were represented as a 'colony within,' a distinct and homogenous community and not a part of the wider Leeds landscape. In fact, African Caribbeans were represented as opposed to it. Their allegiance to Britain was questioned within the dominant discourse, in reference to their purported unlawfulness, sporting allegiances and participation in events

exclusive to 'their' community. The *Chapelton News* attempted to expose the inconsistencies within this dominant narrative; its aims were noble, though it can be assumed that it was limited in its ability to redress the balance on a wider Leeds scale due to its limited distribution. It is essential to note that it was not the intention of this research to focus on the Chapelton area. However, the representation of events uncovered thus far has notably been mediated through almost exclusive reference to Chapelton within the mainstream press. The final chapter will go on to consider how this narrative developed through the 1980s.

### Chapter Three Here to Stay

This chapter analyses local press coverage of the 1981 Chapeltown riots and the Rock against Racism concert of the same year. The chapter then moves its focus to the end of the decade and the emergence of Soul II Soul in 1989, hailed as defining the black British sound. The chapter analyses the impact of this London-based sound on the communities of Leeds and the local music scene with particular focus on the Leeds City Council-funded Reggae Concert in the same year. As with preceding chapters, the analysis draws upon representation of these identified events in the *Yorkshire Evening Post (YEP)* and the *Yorkshire Post (YP)* alongside representation where possible from alternative sources. Alternative representation in the 1980s came from the *Leeds Other Paper (LOP)* and the *Come Unity News (CUN)*, the aims of which can be summarised as an attempt to give a voice to the communities of Leeds who were marginalised or ignored in the mainstream local press.

As with the preceding chapters, consideration will be given to the wider political and economic climate to ground the research within the time period discussed. In May of 1979 the Conservative party defeated Labour at the general elections and took control of Britain with Margaret Thatcher at the helm. The period between the 1974 general election and the 1979 election had seen a large increase in popularity for the right wing National Front, with votes for them representing 0.61% of the overall votes in 1979 and the overall number of candidates going from 89 to 303 in this period.<sup>97</sup> It has been claimed that the Conservative Party benefited from

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<sup>97</sup> David Butler and Dennis Kavannagh, *The British General Election of 1979* (London, Macmillan, 1999), p. 418.

the rise in support for the National Front, as the former had an anti-immigration ideology. Speculating on the motivation of NF supporters, Margaret Thatcher stated:

We do not talk about it [immigration] perhaps as much as we should. In my view, that is one thing that is driving some people to the National Front. They do not agree with the objectives of the National Front, but they say that at least they are talking about some of the problems. Now, we are a big political party. If we do not want people to go to extremes, and I do not, we ourselves must talk about this problem and we must show that we are prepared to deal with it. We are a British nation with British characteristics.<sup>98</sup>

Thatcher's reference to a 'British nation with British characteristics' makes claim to Britishness as an exclusive identity defined by a homogenous set of characteristics; an identity under threat from the 'swamping' of the country by immigrants (ibid).

Economically, the 1979 election followed the 'winter of discontent' with massive industrial strikes bringing the country to a virtual standstill. The early 1980s under the Thatcher government saw industry decline, further strikes and soaring unemployment, and post-industrial Leeds was hit hard. As Anthony Clavane states:

For the first time since the war, Britain imported more manufactured goods than it exported. Many Northern districts became traumatised. ...Thatcher's counter-revolution ravaged communities in the old manufacturing heartlands. Leeds failed to attract the new, faster-growing industries in light engineering, chemicals, electrical goods and cars...The local newspapers were all cataclysm and collapse.<sup>99</sup>

Clavane's statement is reflected in the 1981 unemployment figures for Leeds, with the Chapeltown area faring particularly badly. The 1981 census showed unemployment rates of between 30% and 47% for individual enumeration districts in the Chapeltown

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<sup>98</sup> Margaret Thatcher, TV Interview for Granada *World in Action* ("rather swamped"), 27 January 1978.

<sup>99</sup> Anthony Clavane, *Promised Land: The Reinvention of Leeds United* (London, Random House, 2010), p. 130.

area in comparison with a rate of 11.1% for the city as a whole (see also *LOP* 3 July 1981:3).<sup>100</sup> With Chapeltown being home to a large proportion of Leeds' African Caribbean population at this time, the high concentration of unemployment there as opposed to the whole of Leeds speaks for itself in terms of the disproportionate impact on the African Caribbean community.<sup>101</sup> The remainder of the decade saw a shift towards privatization, home ownership and a free market approach to the economy under the Thatcher government. The Conservative government also declared an end to 'society' during this decade and those who had not benefitted from the economic boom in the ravaged industrial areas struggled to find work, the miners went on strike and the Falklands war was fought, fuelling a wave of patriotism in some quarters.

As shown in Chapter One, the Conservative Party response to Enoch Powell's earlier warnings of the impact of immigration on the British identity was to reject his style of delivery but support his anti-immigration position. The Thatcher government took this forward with the 1981 Nationality Act. It has been claimed that postcolonial immigration legislation served to racialise British citizenship with the aim of preserving a white national British identity.<sup>102</sup> In keeping with this viewpoint Ward states: 'in the 1980s there was a strong element within conservatism of seeking to maintain an exclusive sense of British national identity, around standing up for Britain against European integration, by celebrating victory in the Falklands as part of an

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<sup>100</sup> Max Farrar, *The Struggle for 'Community' in a British Multi Ethnic Inner City Area; Paradise in the Making* (Ceredigion, Edwin Mellen Press), 2002, p.156.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Bob Carter, Clive Harris and Shirley Joshi, 'The Racialization of Black Immigration', in *Black British Culture and Society: A Reader*, ed by K. Owusu (London, Routledge, 2000), pp. 21-36.



imperial and Churchillian tradition, and through tightening immigration controls on racial lines'.<sup>103</sup> The Act reclassified the former category of Citizenship of the United Kingdom and Colonies into three new categories: British Citizenship, British Dependent Territories Citizenship, and British Overseas Citizenship. In addition, the act controversially removed the automatic right of a child born in the UK to citizenship. The absence of coverage of the Nationality Bill and subsequent Act in the mainstream Leeds press could lead to the mistaken conclusion that the legislation was enacted without consequence for Leeds. However, the alternative press was vocal in denouncing the provisions and the impact of them on some of the Leeds communities. The backlash against the proposals in the Nationality Bill was reported in the *Come Unity News* under the headline 'Scrap the Nationality Act' (*CUN* 1 March 1980:5). The *CUN* reported that 'Chapelton people gathered at a protest meeting to issue a resounding condemnation of the government's proposals' (ibid). The Come Unity Collective called on all to join a Leeds demonstration against the legislation and cited the views of some of the local community on the provisions of the act. Joe Richards opined, 'This is a racist act, it's mainly aimed at black people and we must fight to stop it becoming law' and Hughbon Condor added, 'It's just an extension of the alienation of black people in Britain. The pressure is becoming intolerable and they are trying to force people out of the country' (ibid). The views of this local community are reflected in Carter, Harris and Joshi's analysis of post-war immigration legislation: 'specific measures to discourage and restrict black immigration rested firmly on a policy of preserving the homogenous "racial character" of British society'.<sup>104</sup> It is evident from the coverage of the passing of the

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<sup>103</sup> Paul Ward, *Britishness since 1870* (London, Routledge, 2004), p.128.

<sup>104</sup> Carter et al, 'Racialization of Black Immigration', p.32.

legislation and the backlash to it from within immigrant communities that this legislation contributed to a feeling of racial oppression. The backlash to this mounting racial oppression occurred in the form of riots, marches and a social movement through music throughout the early 1980s.

The early 1980s saw a wave of riots spread through the impoverished inner city areas of Britain. The Brixton riots in April of 1981 were believed to have been triggered by the police handling of the investigation into a Deptford fire in January of the same year, in which thirteen young black people died in what was believed to have been a racially-motivated arson attack.<sup>105</sup> The week before the Brixton riots the tension increased as the police employed Operation Swamp. In an attempt to reduce street crime they stopped and searched people, supposedly at random, using the powers of the then controversial 'sus laws'. It was felt that they had unfairly targeted young black men in Brixton during this operation. The culmination of these events and the arrest and alleged mistreatment of a black man in Brixton was the trigger on the back of mounting frustration with unfair treatment by the police. Lord Scarman was appointed to conduct an enquiry into the Brixton riots, and concluded that several factors, including a breakdown in confidence between the police and the 'coloured' community, urban deprivation, racial disadvantage and a rising level of street crime, had led to the Brixton riots. In addition, he controversially concluded that the police were not institutionally racist.<sup>106</sup> Before his investigation was finished and his findings published, there were outbreaks of rioting in inner city areas across the

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<sup>105</sup> Mike Phillips and Trevor Phillips, *Windrush: The Irresistible Rise of Multi-racial Britain* (London, Harper Collins, 1999), p. 323.

<sup>106</sup> Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't no Black in the Union Jack* (London, Routledge, 1987), p. 133 and Sarah Neal, 'The Scarman Report, the Macpherson Report and the Media: How Newspapers Respond to Race-centred Social Policy Interventions', *Journal of Social Policy*, 32, 1, (2003), pp. 55–74.

country. In July 1981, riots occurred in Toxteth in Liverpool, Moss Side in Manchester, Handsworth in Birmingham and a new wave of riots broke out in Brixton. The *YEP* and the *YP* provided extended coverage of the riots around the country, leading with front page headlines such as ‘40 police hurt in Southall race riot’ (*YP* July 4 1981:1), ‘Policeman speared in night of terror’ (*YP* July 6 1981:1), ‘Riot city looter back on rampage’ (*YP* July 7 1981:10), ‘Rioting mob attacks police’ (*YP* July 8 1981:1), ‘Rioting mobs lay siege to city’ (*YP* July 9 1981:1), and ‘Street warfare sweeps Britain’ (*YP* July 11 1981:1). It was no surprise when, on the night of the 11 July 1981, the riots came to the Chapeltown area of Leeds. The *YP* reported the events under the headline ‘Front Line Yorkshire’ (*YP* 13 July 1981:1), informing its readers that ‘Violence flared on the streets of Leeds last night. For the second successive night, police with riot helmets and shields cordoned off the Chapeltown area as black and white youths went on the rampage’ (*YP* 13 July 1981:1). Described as a two-hundred-strong mob, the *YP* reports that the youths destroyed shops on Chapeltown road with petrol bombs. The rioters were described as a ‘Howling mob’ (*YP* 13 July 1981:1), in what can be read as a metaphorical attempt to relate the behaviour of the rioters to an animalistic primitivism. The *YP* reported that shops were looted and a police van was overturned and burnt out (*YP* July 13 1981:1).

In similar style the *YEP* reported ‘Violence Flares on Leeds Streets’ (*YEP* 13 July 1981:1); stating, ‘throughout last night and early today police with riot shields, protective helmets and clothing were confronted by large gangs of black and white youths on the rampage in Chapeltown’ (*YEP* 13 July 1989:1). The article went on to repeat claims by residents of Chapeltown, both black and white, that strangers from outside the area had been involved in the incident, with unconfirmed claims being reported that cars with London and Manchester registration plates had been seen in

the area. The *YEP* reported that a 'senior community relations officer' for the area, Rev. Kenneth Glendinning, claimed that the riots were 'Stage-managed by white people' from outside of the area (*YEP* July 13 1981:5). This was not alluded to in the *YP*, other than in the course of speaking to teenagers on the street; the *YP* claimed that they 'denied that the riot had been organised or premeditated' (*YP* 13 July 1981:7). In laying the blame on outside agitators the *YEP* was able to maintain that race was not a factor in the riots, supporting the narrative that the riots were caused by hooliganism. It may be the case that this was to downplay association with riots in other areas of the country, which were deemed to be 'race riots'. It also indicates the confusion surrounding the situation that the newspaper tried to make sense of (and imposed a narrative on to do just that).

There was not one single event blamed or identified as a trigger for the riots in Leeds, as there had appeared to be for the other riots nationally. The *YP* spoke to some 'West Indian' teenagers on the streets of Chapeltown the day after the riots, allowing them the opportunity to express their opinions on why the riots occurred. A 'West Indian' youth said, 'This has been coming for a long time. The tension has been building up and it was bound to erupt sometime'. Another is quoted as saying 'I think a lot of this is the result of what is happening in other places' going on to refer to lack of employment he is quoted thus: 'most people will blame it on the fact that nearly everyone around here is out of work and that could be right. It is certainly one of the causes if not the only one' (*YP* 13 July 1981:7). In the analysis of coverage of the 1975 bonfire night riots in Chapeltown in Chapter Two, it was noted that the only voice represented in the local press was that of the authorities. It is interesting in this case that the opinions of the teenagers living in the Chapeltown area were featured. It is also worthy of note that there is no mention of racism in the quotations from the

teenagers, if in fact their opinions were published in full. The *YEP* also reported ‘No one knew why the trouble had flared, -and many adult West Indians were shocked and angry. One West Indian father complained of a lack of discipline among the young and not one person interviewed – black or white – blamed the outbreak on racism’ (*YEP* 13 July 1981:5). Despite this departure from the established editorial practice of excluding the voice of the African Caribbean communities, both the *YEP* and the *YP* used these opinions to validate the discourse that the riots were not a result of racism, thus amplifying the voice of authority and supporting the police rhetoric that the riots were hooliganism. The *YEP* cited a police officer who claimed that ‘its not racism - it’s just a mob of mindless criminals wrecking the area where they live’ (*YEP* 13 July 1981:1). This is further evidence of the police and the mainstream press using a strategy of denial of race issues, serving to compound the narrative of the African Caribbean Community as criminal.

Consistent with analysis of the reports of the 1975 bonfire night incident in chapter two, the *YP* and the *YEP* presented a picture of police under attack. In the *YEP* a small column at the left of the main headline proclaimed, ‘Victim of the Mob’ (*YEP* 13 July 1981:1). Headed by a picture of PC Mark Emmet lying in a hospital bed, the article said that he was one of six police officers who were taken to the infirmary. Emmet claimed to have been hit on the head with an unidentified projectile object. The *YP* reported that the casualty departments of both Leeds hospitals were opened to provide treatment to those injured in the rioting, highlighting that those needing treatment were ‘mostly policemen’ (*YP* 13 July 1981:1). It can be speculated that others injured in the riots did not seek hospital treatment for fear of reprisals or arrest; this reasoning is not explicit within the article, thus supporting the framing of the event as the police under attack.

The *YEP* ran a two-page spread, featuring thirteen images of the riot and the aftermath, under the headline, 'Chapeltown's night of violence...how a city suburb erupted' *YEP* 13 July 1981:6-7). Images of police in riot gear, a police van in flames, several images of smashed windows and looted shops, bonfire remnants, burnt out cars and broken windows adorned the page. These images are interspersed with the *YEP*'s 'We say' column which claimed 'it almost seems today that the last of the British virtues, a respect for law and order – epitomised by the policeman on a white horse at the first Wembley F.A cup final is gone' (ibid). The reference to British values as in opposition to the behaviour of the rioters, who had already been 'raced', locates the African Caribbean community as outside of so-called British values. This rhetoric also fits with the political opinion of the day as reflected in Thatcher's earlier cited statement that presented the British nation with British characteristics as antithetical to 'black' immigration.

The use of the term 'suburb' to refer to the Chapeltown area in the headline is worthy of comment as the term suburb is in general usage a term used to make reference to an outlying area. This is not the way Chapeltown was generally represented or referred to in local and national reporting. It is, and has been generally presented as an inner city 'ghettoised' area; which linked the African Caribbean community inextricably with disorder. Farrar argues that in media representations of Chapeltown it is mediated as a 'mecca of vice'.<sup>107</sup> This image does not fit with the notion of leafy suburbia in public consciousness. It can be suggested that the *YEP* presented Chapeltown as a suburb to mediate the impact of the riots as a threat to suburbia and in doing so sought to define a threat to British values. The link between

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<sup>107</sup> Max Farrar, 'Migrant Spaces and Settlers: Space and Time in an English Inner City' in S. Westwood and J. Williams (eds) *Imagining Cities: Scripts, Signs and Memory* (London, Routledge, 1996), p. 13.

British values and the inner city/suburb distinction is discussed by Sibley and he describes the distinction as ‘one which consigns black people to the inner city [and which] has a parallel in the opposition of urban and rural, city and country, with the latter being the home of core English values and the former the source of alien, cosmopolitan values’.<sup>108</sup> The former representation described in this quote would not have been possible if Chapeltown has been described as an inner city area as this had already been mediated as an area for the ‘other’.

According to the *YP*, estimated unemployment in Chapeltown at the time of the riots was twice the national average. It claimed that a 1978 survey of West Indians found that 52 percent were ‘either out of work or in short term or dead end jobs with no prospect of improvement (*YP* 13 July 1981:7). Whilst it does not split the figures for unemployment and underemployment, providing what appears to be an inflated unemployment figure, it is further evidence of the disproportionate impact of the high unemployment rate on the African Caribbean communities of Leeds. This is not to assert that in the intervening six years since the bonfire night riots of 1975 that racism was no longer an issue, or that the African Caribbean communities of Leeds did not encounter problematic incidents with the police (which appears to be the obvious trigger for riots in some of the other inner city areas). However, the 1981 riots are represented within the press as being a reaction to urban decay and unemployment, conditions seemingly experienced acutely by African Caribbean communities in Leeds. In the wake of the riots the *YEP* revisited an investigation carried out 12 months earlier by the newspaper, stating that the investigation has revealed ‘appalling squalor for black and white families alike and massive unemployment - particularly

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<sup>108</sup> David Sibley, ‘The Racialisation of Space in British Cities’, *Soundings*, 10, (1998), pp. 119-129 (p. 6).

among the community's young black people' (*YEP* 13 July 1981:5). The literature would seem to support the fact that the anti-racist element of earlier riots was no longer overtly present and in fact blacks and whites were joining forces to riot against the establishment. Phillips and Phillips argue that 'the battles of the eighties were not inter-communal "race riots" pitting blacks against whites'.<sup>109</sup> It would appear that the reports recognised that African Caribbeans were more integrated into the communities of Leeds than in the previous decades; sharing common problems such as unemployment and revolting against this in common. However the racial element is evident in the disproportionate impact unemployment had on the African Caribbean community. In addition the coverage in the *LOP* (discussed later in the chapter) also suggests that there was a series of overtly racist incidents which triggered the riots. It can be suggested that the press constructed the non racial element of the riots in keeping with its established strategy of denial.

The press continued to downplay the any racial element to the riots and it asserted that 'race hate stays out of inner city's trouble' (*YP* 13 July 1981:7). Despite this the article went on to state of Chapeltown that it 'has a large coloured population and is no stranger to street violence' (*YP* 13 July 1981:7). The linking of violence with the 'coloured' population of Chapeltown in this report is a further example of how the popular press contributed to the development of a narrative of the African Caribbean population as a threat to the law and order, an 'alien wedge'.<sup>110</sup> The *YEP* used the same strategy of denial of race as an element in the riots stating 'the problem

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<sup>109</sup> Mike Phillips, and Trevor Phillips, *Windrush: The Irresistible Rise of Multi-Racial Britain* (London, Harper Collins, 1999), p.351.

<sup>110</sup> Gilroy, *There Aint No Black in the Union Jack*, p. 85



is not one of black people but of neglected urban decay', whilst going on to state that 'due regard must be paid to the resentment felt by young black people with regard to the society of which they are a part' (*YEP* 13 July 1981:5). This conflicting narrative represented a denial of racism whilst recognising resentment felt by black youths. This strategy blamed the black youth for their ungrounded resentment intoning that they were accepted as part of the wider society but chose to stay on the margins through their own volition. This reassures the reader that racism is not a problem within the Leeds landscape but rather the young black youth have a stereotypical 'chip on their shoulder' and have turned to hooliganism, which is described as 'a symptom of a sick and greedy society which seems to lack any sense of purpose' (*YEP* 13 July 1981:6). This quotation suggests that the problem lies within the value systems of society; the rioters are defined as predominantly black, therefore intoning that it is the value systems of the African Caribbean community which are to blame.

Both the *YP* and the *YEP* stressed that the majority of the rioters were black, 'A crowd of about 300 youths, mostly black, later marched through streets at the city end of Roundhay Road' (*YP* 13 July 1981:1), 'The gangs, mainly black' (*YP* 13 July 1981:1), 'large gangs of black and white youths on the rampage in Chapeltown' (*YEP* 13 July 1981:1). This unnecessary categorising of the rioters as black manifests an implicit acceptance of black youths as a social disorder problem. Interestingly, the white rioters are ignored within the representation, other than by association and their involvement in the riots is not theorised. This representation within the mainstream press provides the reader with a Leeds narrative to support the Conservative anti-immigrant rhetoric of the day and implicit within that the need to preserve the homogenous 'white' British society.

The *Leeds Other Paper (LOP)* reported that there had been a rise in racist attacks in Leeds in the weeks leading up to the riot, claiming that the city centre had become a ‘no go’ area for young black people at night (*LOP* 17 July 1981:4). It also reported that in the days leading up to the riots there had been several attacks in Harehills and Chapeltown including a black man being beaten up, a black youth being attacked by three white men, and an Asian restaurant damaged by arson. It is also reported that in a black-owned chip shop a number of white men told customers that it was a ‘Nigger shop’ and called the white women working there ‘nigger loving bitches’. Further to this, the *LOP* reported that on the night of Friday 10 July, seven or eight white skinheads came onto Chapeltown road chanting both racist and Leeds United slogans, apparently smashing windows, including the post office and Jewish bakers shop. It is reported in the *LOP* that from these incidents rumours circulated that trouble was likely to start, and the riots followed the next day (*LOP* 17 July 1981:4). These incidents reported in the *LOP* were not referred to in the *YP* or the *YEP*. As argued by Phillips and Phillips ‘The popular narratives which tell us what happened during these times are stories which paint with a broad brush, editing out contradictory details’.<sup>111</sup> These contradictory details lead the *LOP* to conclude, that the riots were partly attributable to ‘a racist and oppressive police force’ (ibid: 5). It is clear from the analysis that the *YEP* and the *YP* constructed the absence of racism in an opposing narrative to that represented in the *LOP*. It is evident through the alternative representation that overt racism was an issue in Leeds at this time and as this chapter will go on to argue, resistance to racism was not limited to riots.

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<sup>111</sup> Mike Phillips and Trevor Phillips, *Windrush*, p.313.

Further to the more overt form of protest such as riots and the strikes of the 1980s, in this decade music also became a medium of protest. As Neil Nehring argues, 'dance and rock music... were interfused throughout the period and, far from surrendering to Thatcherism, steadfastly opposed it'.<sup>112</sup> As well as opposing Thatcherism, music was instrumental in opposing racism and the rise of the National Front throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s. The Rock Against Racism movement started as the result of a letter sent to the music press in 1976, in response to Eric Clapton's racist comments on stage in Birmingham in August of the same year, in which Clapton told the audience that Enoch Powell was right, proclaiming 'I think we should send them all back'; expressing his concerns of Britain becoming 'a black colony' he advocated voting for Enoch Powell, describing him as a prophet and necessary in order to 'keep Britain white'.<sup>113</sup> The letter to the music press pointed out the irony in Clapton's views, reminding him that his music was influenced by blues and reggae and ended in the following plea: 'keep the faith, black and white unite and fight. We want to organise a rank and file movement against the racist poison in rock music - we urge support for Rock against Racism'.<sup>114</sup> As recognised in this quotation, there was a racist element in the rock scene of the day largely associated with some elements of the British punk movement and their associations with the BNP and

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<sup>112</sup> Neil Nehring, 'Everyone's Given Up and Just Wants to go Dancing: From Punk to Rave in the Thatcher Era', *Popular Music and Society*, 30, 1 (2007), pp. 1-18 (p. 1).

<sup>113</sup> Safraz Manzoor, 'The Year Rock Found the Power to Unite' (*The Observer*, Sunday 20 April 2008) p.4.

<sup>114</sup> John Street, Seth Hague and Heather Savigney, 'Playing to the Crowd; the Role of Music and Musicians in Political Participation', *BJPIR*, 10 (2008), pp. 269-285 (p. 277).

promotion of racist symbols such as the swastika.<sup>115</sup> The RAR movement emerged with close links to the Anti-Nazi League (ANL), a socialist movement opposed to the far right; the RAR movement staged several concerts around Britain, with large events taking place in London, Manchester and the final RAR concert in Leeds on 4 July 1981.<sup>116</sup>

Thousands joined the Anti Nazi League's pre-concert march against racism and the activities of the National Front through the streets of Leeds, ending with the Rock against Racism (RAR) concert in Potternewtown Park, Chapeltown. The RAR concert was attended by 50,000 people and featured performances from Misty, the Au Pairs and a headline performance from The Specials (ibid and *LOP* 10 July 1981:5-6). According to the *LOP* the event passed off largely without incident despite a low police presence. In fact, the *LOP* attributes the peacefulness of the event to the absence of police, asserting that 'the lack of trouble during the day considering the numbers was helped by the fact that there were generally no police to be seen' (ibid: 5). This can be read as a telling indictment on the state of relations between the police and the communities of Leeds at the time. The week preceding the event the *LOP* reported that the event would be taking place, linking it to the success of an anti-deportation campaign for an Asian woman living in Leeds. Under the headline 'we're here to enjoy the carnival' it was reported:

Tens of thousands of people will be dancing and marching through the streets of Leeds this weekend to the resounding beat of reggae and rock music.

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<sup>115</sup> Pete Brown, 'Indie Music is Not the Only Genre that has Erected Racial Barriers', (*Guardian*, 29 September 2010), p. 33.

<sup>116</sup> Alan Miles, (Director) Excerpt of *Who Shot the Sheriff?* (2005) at 'Vimeo'. *Who Shot the Sheriff?* Is a fascinating documentary directed by Miles and tells the story of the Rock Against Racism movement and, amongst others, features footage from the 1981 Leeds RAR concert.

Among those celebrating our multi-racial culture will be friends of Jaswinder Kaur, the Asian woman who has just won her battle against deportation. The carnival will highlight the campaigns being waged by many others-black people against deportations, and against the immigration laws and Nationality Bill in general. (*LOP* 3 July 1981:1)

The *LOP* took this opportunity to make a strong link between the Rock against Racism concert and the provisions to be implemented under the Nationality Act. Though this is not generally understood to be the main cause highlighted by the RAR movement, it highlights further that at a grass roots level there was an impact on the Leeds community at the implementation of the Act as well as a backlash against its proposals that was not mediated in the mainstream press.

Despite the large numbers of people in attendance and performances by several well-known acts at the RAR concert, the *YEP* and the *YP*, did not report on the event. Coverage was limited to pre-event commentary on the approval of the RAR event by Leeds City Council's leisure services committee meeting under the headline 'protest as Leeds clears rock carnival' (*YEP* 3 July 1981:7). Other headlines included, 'Anti Nazi League gets carnival go ahead' (*YP* 3 July 1981:22), whilst the *YEP* reported under the headline, 'Bowling on despite carnival' that the planned bowls championship, a sedate British pastime, scheduled to take place in Potternewton park at the same time as the RAR concert would still go ahead as planned (*YEP* 4 July 1981:1). The *YP*, under the headline 'Marchers keep the peace' reported simply that the march 'passed without event' (*YP* 6 July 1981:1). The fact that the lack of incident was worthy of comment demonstrates that there was an expectation that the event would not pass without trouble, presumably because of its anti-racism message.

The Bramley carnival took place over the same weekend as the RAR event and the *YEP* dedicated a whole page to the event. Under the headline 'knock out

parade' the *YEP* reported that a record-breaking 25,000 people had attended (*YEP* 6 July 1981). Photographs show smiling participants (notably all white) in fancy dress costumes and the article reported the success of events such as tug of war and 'it's a knockout' games (ibid). The absence of coverage of the RAR event, which had double the attendance of the Bramley carnival, can be read as further evidence of the privileging of the white presence in the narrative of the Leeds community. Though many white people attended and took part in the RAR event, its focus was anti-racism, a problem that the popular press was keen to deny. In spite of the lack of coverage of the RAR event in the mainstream press, the legacy it claims is remarkable. Ian Goodyer states 'Rock against Racism and the ANL had thoroughly discredited the National Front... RAR began to demonstrate that they could put thousands on the street in opposition to them, the NF were forced to retreat'.<sup>117</sup> This legacy and its impact on the African Caribbean communities of Leeds is absent from the history of the city as far as the mainstream narrative is concerned.

At the start of the 1980s 'black music' came to be seen as the sound of resistance, rooted in the sounds systems and dub and reggae of the Caribbean islands; it was not identified as a British sound.<sup>118</sup> This changed in 1989 with the emergence of Soul II Soul into the mainstream, hailed as one of the defining moments in black British culture. Ranked fifteenth in the 100 Greatest British Albums by the *Observer*, Soul II Soul's *Back to Life: Keep on Moving* album 'introduced a distinctly British sound'.<sup>119</sup> Soul II Soul were hailed as focal protagonists in the movement of black

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<sup>117</sup> Cited in S. Manzoor, 'The Year Rock Found the Power to Unite' (*The Observer*, Sunday 20 April 2008), p. 4.

<sup>118</sup> Mike Phillips and Trevor Phillips, *Windrush*, pp. 321-2.

<sup>119</sup> Neil Spencer, 'The 100 Greatest British Albums', (*The Observer* Music Monthly, 20 June 2004), p27

British culture into the centre of popular culture in Britain.<sup>120</sup> The influence of Soul II Soul's national and global success and the defining of a black British sound in popular music was evident on the Leeds music scene; Leeds was creating its own black British sound. The year Soul II Soul released *Keep on Moving*; Leeds hosted its fourth reggae concert on the 27 August 1989. It made the pages of the London-based *Caribbean Times*, possibly because the concert was backed, in that year, by Leeds City Council. With a headline 'Leeds reggae comes of age,' Marina Lewycka wrote:

There are some great sounds coming out of Chapeltown, Leeds these days. A distinctive beat of what can only be described as a conscious music is making Leeds a focus for a new trend in reggae. [...] This trend is being actively encouraged by the City Council. On bank holiday Sunday the council sponsored a Reggae Concert at Potternewton Park which gave an opportunity for local bands to play on the same stage as some big national and international names.<sup>121</sup>

There was no coverage of the reggae festival in the *YP* or the *YEP*. Bank Holiday Monday carnival was mentioned briefly in a small text box at the foot of the *YEP*'s first page (*YEP* 29 August 1989:1). The *YP* covered carnival in more detail with the front page dominated by a photograph of the carnival procession featuring the carnival queen. However, alongside it ran the headline 'riots close street party' reporting that the Notting Hill Carnival had closed due to violence. (*YEP* 29 August 1989:1) There was no mention made of the reggae concert despite lengthy coverage of carnival on pages 3 and 4, including several photographs. There is no evidence in the newspapers to explain why Leeds City Council chose to sponsor the event in 1989. However, tension was building up within the Muslim communities of Leeds in

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<sup>120</sup> Mike Phillips and Trevor Phillips, *Windrush*, p.322.

<sup>121</sup> Marina Lewycka, 'Leeds Reggae Comes of Age' *Caribbean Times* November 1986. p.13.

response to the Rushdie affair, leading to protest earlier in 1989.<sup>122</sup> It is possible that the local authority sought to quell any further protest by placating the African Caribbean community of Leeds, as the black and Asian communities of Chapeltown had previously formed alliances under the banner of 'black' as a political descriptor in reference to their discrimination in common.<sup>123</sup> There is no evidence to support this assertion though contextually it is one event which was occurring in the same year. In addition, S.71 of the Race Relations Act (RRA) 1976 introduced the requirement for local authorities to eliminate discrimination and promote good race relations; the funding may have been granted solely in consideration to meeting requirements under the Act.<sup>124</sup> The only local reference to the reggae concert was in the *LOP* which reviewed the music briefly in its 'what's on' page (*LOP* 1 September 1989:8). The absence of coverage of such a large event and one that was funded by the local authority can be read as the exclusion of African Caribbean communities from a narrative of the British mainstream as the representation of RAR and reggae concert was limited to newsletters and newspapers with a self-declared independent focus on non-represented communities.

A further example of how the mainstream press attempted to distance itself from events deemed to be for consumption by the African Caribbean community appeared prior to the carnival in the same week as the Reggae concert. The *YP*

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<sup>122</sup> 'The Rushdie Affair' refers to the publication of Salman Rushdie's controversial novel *The Satanic Verses* (1988). The book was deemed blasphemous by sections of the Muslim community and protests and death threats followed including a Fatwa from the Supreme Leader of Iran.

<sup>123</sup> Farrar, *The Struggle for Community*, p. 254.

<sup>124</sup> Race Relations Act 1976



featured an article, in its 'word wise' column on the use of the word 'carnival', challenging its use in reference to the Notting Hill carnival:

*Carnival* This is hardly the appropriate word for what is happening in Notting hill this weekend. It had a religious connotation as was - still is in many Roman Catholic countries - the time just before lent. The last chance for revelry. Carnival is ultimately from the 11th-12th century Latin, variously carnelevarium, carnilevaria or carnilevariem. Their origin is the earlier Latin carnem levare, to take away the meat. The name was originally proper to Ash Wednesday. The form carnival came into English from the Italian's carnevale. They seem to have made this adaptation from carnelevarem in the mistaken belief that it had something to do with vale, Latin for farewell-to the flesh (*YP* 26 August 1989:12).

The article made specific reference to Notting Hill Carnival in a Leeds-based newspaper despite the Leeds carnival taking place on the same day; perhaps a deliberate strategy to distance the criticism from the Leeds carnival in the run up to the event, or it could be the case that the article was a reprint of a national article. However, the analysis of this article can be applied to the narrative of Leeds as the *YP* had a Leeds-based readership. This analysis of the use of the word 'carnival' is further evidence of the distancing of events determined as African Caribbean; the *YP* takes an event appropriated by the African Caribbean community and attempts to construct it as something which does not fit with the established English definition of carnival. The questioning of a legitimate use of language is further evidence of Hackert's concept of 'linguistic nativeness' which serves to fuse language and identity inextricably in the concept of nation.<sup>125</sup> It may also be argued in response to the article that Carnival was re-appropriated in the colonies by the Europeans. Grisso elaborates on this point: 'carnival took on a European mask because the structures of

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<sup>125</sup> Stephanie Hackert, 'Linguistic Nationalism and the Emergence of the English Native Speaker', *European Journal of English Studies*, 13,3, 2009, pp.305-317.

European domination permitted it no other choice'.<sup>126</sup> The *YP* might be right in technical terms to state that carnival is not the correct term to use to refer to the traditional origins of carnival; however it links its argument to the origins of the word in Latin, whilst failing to acknowledge the European domination of the colonies which forced many traditions into a European frame.

Throughout this chapter, the narrative of the African Caribbean communities in Leeds has been analysed through the coverage of events in the early part of the decade including the 1981 Rock Against Racism concert in Leeds and the Chapeltown riots of the same year, the chapter then shifts to the end of the decade and considers the representation of the Leeds reggae carnival in 1989 with a particular focus on music styles as representative of a shift in the identity of African Caribbeans in Britain. The coverage of musical events and their omission in the mainstream press and the coverage of rioting, despite their difference as journalistic subjects, both contribute to the construction of the African Caribbean community through stereotypes and frame them as different. One of the strongest themes in the reporting of the riots was the insistence in both the *YP* and the *YEP* that the riots were not about race. An analysis of the articles makes evident that representation of the riots and music events is framed by the difference between black and white communities in Leeds. The omissions in the *YEP* and the *YP* of the musical events both at the start of the decade and the end (with the exception of carnival) represent a refusal to engage with the African Caribbean community on a social and cultural level, perhaps because these 'exclusive' events were deemed not of interest to the rest of the Leeds population.. The identified gap in reporting was filled to some extent by the *LOP* and

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<sup>126</sup> Grisso, 'The African and Spiritual Origins of Carnival', *The African*, undated.

to a lesser extent the *CUN*, simply due to its limited issues and the fact that it did not establish itself as a long running publication as the *LOP* did. As was stated in Chapter Two, the intention was not to focus on Chapeltown as a homogenous area. However, it would appear that the events of the day relative to the African Caribbean community were all mediated against the backdrop of the Chapeltown area; this was again reflected in the analysis throughout this chapter and is not to be underestimated in its impact. As recognised throughout the research Chapeltown has already been mediated as a place of the ‘other’ within the press. This insistence on placing discussion of the African Caribbean community within one geographical area of Leeds, an area which has been referred to as a ‘metaphor for hell’,<sup>127</sup> further contributes to their construction as ‘other’.

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<sup>127</sup> Farrar, ‘The Zone of the Other: Imposing and Resisting Alien Identities in Chapeltown, Leeds, During the Twentieth Century’ in Simon Gunn and RJ Morris (eds.), *Making Identities: Conflicts and Urban Space 1800-2000* (London, Ashgate, 2001), p.10.

## Conclusion

This thesis aimed to explore the representation of the African Caribbean community of Leeds in the local mainstream press and draw out the implications for the concept of 'Britishness'.

Chapter One related the analysis of the coverage of Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech in the *Yorkshire Post (YP)* and the *Yorkshire Evening Post (YEP)*, including the letters to the editors. It argued that the local mainstream press generated support for Powell's rhetoric within the city of Leeds and uncovered the way in which it did this through its reporting strategies. The chapter went on to analyse representation of David Oluwale in the same newspapers. It argued that the Powellian rhetoric espoused through both the *YP* and the *YEP* was a contributory factor in the attitudes evidenced in the behaviour of the police officers responsible for Oluwale's death. It uncovered some of the stereotypes within which he was framed and maintains that these stereotypes served to partly justify the officers' behaviour and also obstructed condemnation of the police officers from the people of Leeds. The wider impact of this discourse was to mediate the African Caribbean community as the 'alien wedge' in the 1960s.

Chapter Two analysed representation of the Earl Cowper School protest (1973) in the *YEP* (the event was not reported in *YP*), the Leeds carnival (1973) and the bonfire night riots (1975). It was argued that the representation of the Earl Cowper School protest ultimately privileged the white voice and constructed the African Caribbean community as a problem and as 'other' to Leeds. It considered the protest-prompted 'colony within' articles in the same newspaper concluding that children of immigrants were represented in stereotypical terms in the articles and reveals the

strategy of denial used to downplay accusations of racism. Representation of the Leeds carnival in 1973 were analysed and it was argued that the omission in representation during the early years of carnival, followed by representation of carnival through a lens of stereotypes, mediated carnival exclusively as an event for the black 'other'. Finally the chapter explored the strategies used to report on the bonfire night riots concluding that the mainstream press developed its narrative through a series of stereotypes. Alternative representation through the *Chapelton New (CN)* was analysed for all of the events referenced and it is argued that this alternative medium highlights the omissions and misrepresentations within the dominant narrative.

Chapter Three examined the coverage of the 1981 Chapeltown riots and concluded that the narrative had developed from the time of the bonfire night riots of 1975; with the African Caribbean youth represented as taking part in a wider community protest linked to high unemployment, as opposed to the race riots taking place at the time in other cities. It is recognised that the representation of the 1981 riot in the mainstream press is contradictory, mediating a denial of racism/race as an issue in the riot whilst using particular strategies to 'race' the subjects. This is significant to the trajectory of assimilation recognised throughout this thesis, as at this point in time the black youth of Chapletown were represented (within the mainstream press) as an accepted part of the community but as being in opposition to it. Alternative representation is considered through the *LOP* and it is concluded that the omissions in the mainstream press falsely construct the absence of racism within the riots. The chapter looked at the role of music as a medium of protest in this decade through the Rock against Racism movement as well as the annual Leeds Reggae concert which continues to this day. The absence of coverage of these events in the mainstream press

is noted and the coverage in the alternative press analysed. It is argued that music supported the transition from the alien wedge towards a new way of being 'British' but that this was as a result of the actions of African Caribbeans in Leeds themselves, rather than because the mainstream Leeds press were active in the process.

This thesis concludes that in the period between 1968 and 1989 the representation of the African Caribbean or 'black' community of Leeds followed a three part trajectory towards a form of assimilation. It began with the idea of 'the alien wedge', representing the rejection of the African Caribbean community as part of the British narrative, defining them as a threat to Britishness. Next the narrative used the idea of 'the colony within,' representing the African Caribbean community as an imposed community. Finally, the community's political and cultural assertion encouraged the papers to realise that African Caribbean Leeds was 'here to stay,' which represented a move towards recognising a black British identity. However the mediation of this identity was not reached easily or necessarily in agreement with the mainstream and in fact has been recognised as being born out of resistance.<sup>128</sup> It can be concluded that the local press constructed the African Caribbean community through an imposed narrative of stereotypes and difference through each decade. The limited impact of the alternative press, it is concluded, was noble but insufficient to redress the balance wholly. The impact of the prevalent dominant narrative was the development of a black identity through resistance. Whilst the black British identity is recognised in 1989 as 'a way' of being British, the concept of black Britishness is in itself 'raced' and continues to represent an autonomous identity distinct from 'non-raced Britishness'.

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<sup>128</sup> Stuart Hall, *Frontlines and Backyards: The Terms of Change*, in Owusu, K, (ed.), *Black British Culture and Society : A Text Reader*, London, Routledge, 2000, pp.127-132, (127).

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