

# ANNUAL REPORT

# 2021

INSTITUTE OF  
**RACE**  
RELATIONS

# About the IRR

**THE INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS (IRR)** was the first educational charity on race relations to be established in the UK, in 1958. Since then, it has striven to change its focus in response to changing needs and pioneer new thinking to keep abreast of changes in racism itself. Today, IRR is at the cutting edge of the research and analysis that informs the struggle for racial justice in Britain, and internationally. It seeks to reflect the experiences of those who suffer racial oppression and draws its perspectives from the most vulnerable in society.

**MOST OF IRR'S** information and publishing is now electronic and reports are in many cases available as free downloadable files from the website. *IRR News* is a fortnightly online publication that includes a European-wide collation of happenings across a range of issues relating to migration, refugees and state and popular racism. A fully searchable database of *IRR News*' calendar coverage since 2014 is available. In addition, IRR produces the international quarterly journal *Race & Class* also in print format, occasional reports and briefing papers and has a back file of print materials available for use in education and training. Educational materials are downloadable from the website, and the DVDs *Struggles for Black Community* and *Catching History on the Wing* are also available. IRR's library, known as the Sivanandan Collection, has moved to the University of Warwick; a Black History Collection of leaflets, pamphlets and journals from the 1950s to the 1980s has been retained at the IRR. The organisation also holds occasional meetings, seminars, workshops and conferences..

**INSTITUTE OF  
RACE  
RELATIONS**

Company Number 601929. Charity Number 223989. Company Secretary: Anya Edmond-Pettitt

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# Chair's comment



**IN LINE WITH** former culture secretary Oliver Dowden's exhortation for charities to return to their 'founding missions', it is timely to remind ourselves of our mission to research and disseminate information on 'race relations' and 'the circumstance and conditions in which [people] live and work'. Even as far back as 1958, the material context for racism was acknowledged. And, for IRR, context, meaning connecting not separating issues, has always been paramount. The way the IRR shows links and continuities – between race and class, discrimination and poverty, state power and human rights, imperialism and racism, the intersection of oppression and exploitation – is what marks the organisation out.

Looking back over the year, it has been one of the most contradictory. On the one hand, we have seen serious attempts to mainstream key events in British Black working-class community struggle (in the showing of Small Axe films on television, the ICA showcasing the trials and tribulations of Tottenham's frontline and media interest in the Toxteth riots, the Notting Hill Carnival's history and the 1981 Black Day of Action). On the other hand, a vociferous orchestrated clamour, under a concocted notion of a culture war, has been resisting the telling of a 'national story' which incorporates any whiff of a racially-based, colonial, rapacious earlier history.

History, it seems has its parameters and place. So long as tales of violent racism, and police brutality are depicted as happening in the 1970s and 1980s, they have their validity. For this government and its appointees have been at pains to deny the existence of institutional racism in this country (despite all the evidence to the contrary, especially during Covid, in treatment of refugees and migrants and in incoming legislation), in fact ours is a model of multicultural success. The supposed success is there for all to see in the diversity of the government's Cabinet. We are back, in neoliberal 2021, to previously discarded notions of anyone being able to pull themselves up by their bootstraps and cultural variables holding certain groups back. In policy terms diversification has taken over from tackling structural racism. The optics, i.e., literally the colour of someone's skin has taken over from the 'colour' as it were of actions.

Post-Covid, post-Brexit, poorer and with an ideologically-focused government, we face really serious challenges as a country we need more than ever to remember context and make those connections, which is what the IRR's valiant staff and volunteers doggedly do.

**COLIN PRESCOD**

# Director's report



**THE WORDS OF** philosopher Judith Butler, interviewed in the *Guardian* (7 September) that rather than identity, solidarity should be the foundation of our political culture, resonated with IRR staff. Not because, as the right-wing press or the home secretary would have it, we are 'do-gooders' lost to 'wokery', but by virtue of the fact that we are *awake* to political reality. As we have shown this year, through our fortnightly online service *IRR News* and quarterly journal *Race & Class*, the far Right across Europe, is attempting to eradicate the rights of women and immigrants and launching vicious campaigns against migrants, refugees, racial and sexual minorities. And the ideas of the misogynistic incel sub-culture – a gateway into white supremacy – are also gaining currency, arguably influencing the Plymouth perpetrator of the worst mass shooting in the UK since 2010.

If this was not cause enough for fusing radical traditions to allow for cross-fertilisation, the government's reform of the equalities framework – downgrading safeguards for 'protected characteristics', elevating protection of beliefs and 'viewpoint diversity' – should give us pause for thought. There is an increasing disregard for the spirit if not the letter of the Public Sector Equality Duty (s

149 Equality Act 2010) which, amongst other things, requires public authorities in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination. Leading police chiefs now argue that the disproportionate impact of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill on Black and Gypsy/Roma/Traveller communities is 'objectively justified' while the government implies that the UK is some kind of colour-blind meritocracy wherein anyone can succeed as long as they leave behind 'victim mindsets' and 'failing cultures'. When it comes to the cultures of Black and minority ethnic communities, the government seems intent on creating a league table of good and bad, successful and failing groups. The IRR has made repeated interventions this year about the flawed methodology, emblematic of this approach, deployed in the March 2021 report from the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities.

The year was also one in which a concerted attack was made on the UK's civil rights and human rights frameworks, through a legislative programme that includes the Nationality and Borders Bill; Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill; the Free Speech (Higher Education) Bill; the Covert Human Intelligence Sources (Criminal Conduct) Act and the Overseas Operations (Service Personnel and Veterans) Act 2021.



# Director's report

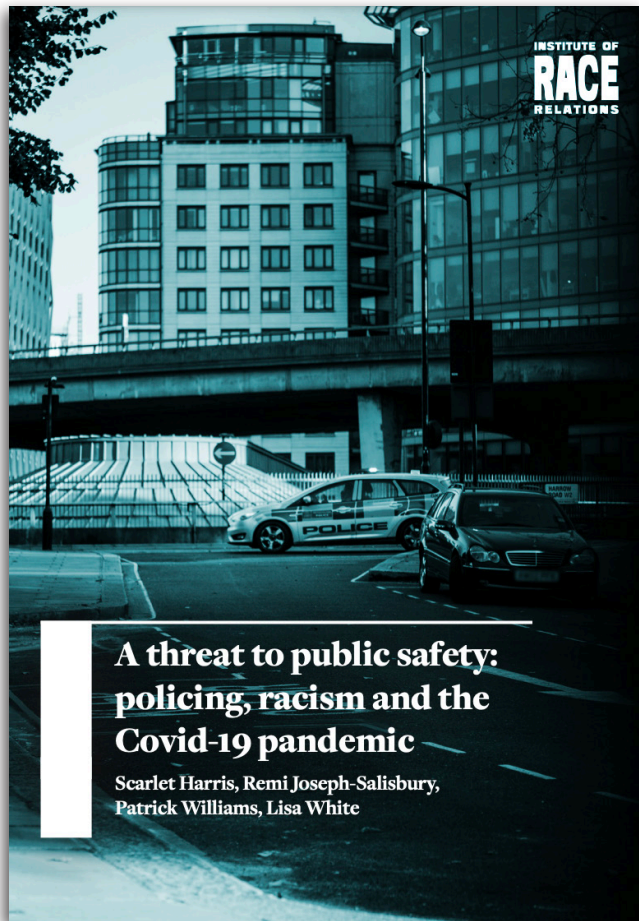
It is a daunting and authoritarian package that will lessen rights – and it is being discussed in parliament at a time when the media is obsessed with the smoke and mirrors of culture wars. All too often, culture wars suck us into debates that generate endless heat while dimming the light. For by pitching one interest group against another, culture wars boost the cause of the far Right, which, in the final analysis, could risk the establishment of white nationalism as a protected belief.

While thanking our numerous funders this year for their continued help, we would like to particularly acknowledge support for building IRR's communications capacity from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation's, aptly named, Shared Ground Fund.

This year, several long-standing supporter-friends of the IRR died, including, Erna Jordaan, Mary Ellison and Gail Omvedt, whose founding contribution to our work was made in times when movements understood by dint of circumstance, that, to quote Sivanandan's wise aphorism, 'one liberation is bound with another'.

**LIZ FEKETE**

# UK: research, analysis, advice



## *Police accountability*

When the IRR gave evidence to the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure, later published as *Police Against Black People* in 1979, the organisation of everyday policing in Black communities revolved around local patrols backed by a central mobile reserve and two specialised units, the Special Patrol Group and the Illegal Immigration Intelligence Unit. Fast forward to 2021 and the organisation of the police is far more complex, due, not just to automation of some functions and the privatisation of others, but also because of the incorporation of data-driven surveillance and predictive analytics into everyday duties. These in turn drive a more rapid and aggressive policing of public space. This year the IRR made its contribution through an investigation into the Metropolitan police's twelve Violence Suppression Units and a survey of the disproportionate use of tasers on BME communities. We also provided critical analysis of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, and, in September, published research from the Centre on the Dynamics of Ethnicity (CoDE) as *A threat to public safety: policing, racism and the Covid 19 pandemic* which revealed how BME communities were most harshly affected by lockdown measures – being more likely to be stopped by the police,

threatened or subject to police violence and falsely accused of rule-breaking and wrong-doing.

## *Defending equalities*

In addition to being able to use *IRR News* to disseminate research and new thinking (see below) we were fortunate to find an additional outlet in *Byline Times* for a number of short but critical analytical pieces about changes to the UK's equalities framework. These centred on the government's imposition of new norms elevating 'protected beliefs' and 'viewpoint diversity' (the latter not in the Equalities Act) over other 'protected characteristics' (which are in the Act). Our focus has primarily been on the Free Speech (Higher Education Bill) and the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities (CRED) report which was widely critiqued by race bodies when published in March 2021. The IRR's contribution to this critique focused not just on its pathologising and stigmatising approach (particularly in terms of the Black Caribbean population) but also on the proposal to abolish the unifying concepts of BAME and BME in data collection. This was accompanied in the report by proposals to impose a new set of ethnic data categorisations for those in receipt of public funds so as to follow a rigid framework for distinguishing racial disparities from racism – which, in our view, could

# UK: research, analysis, advice

insulate the government from potential criticism on policy.

## ***Advisory and expert roles***

As there is a certain support for the government's approach to equalities amongst media commentators, particularly those who take absolutist positions on free speech, this has been a difficult year for IRR in terms of advancing racial justice issues without needlessly courting controversy. Nevertheless, long experience of defending principles of justice and fairness suggests that the most fractious issues in terms of public opinion are most often the decisive ones in defending those principles. We accepted a commission to provide expert testimony for the SIAC hearing for Shamima Begum and other British women and children held in Syrian refugee camps, focusing on whether the Secretary of State had complied with the Public Sector Equality Duty in the context of the decision to deprive Shamima Begum and other young British Muslim women of British citizenship. We followed this with evidence to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Trafficked Britons in Syria, focusing on the potential discriminatory approach of UK policy in the region, particularly with regard to citizenship deprivations, as well as the effect of

the government's policy on discrimination in the UK more broadly.

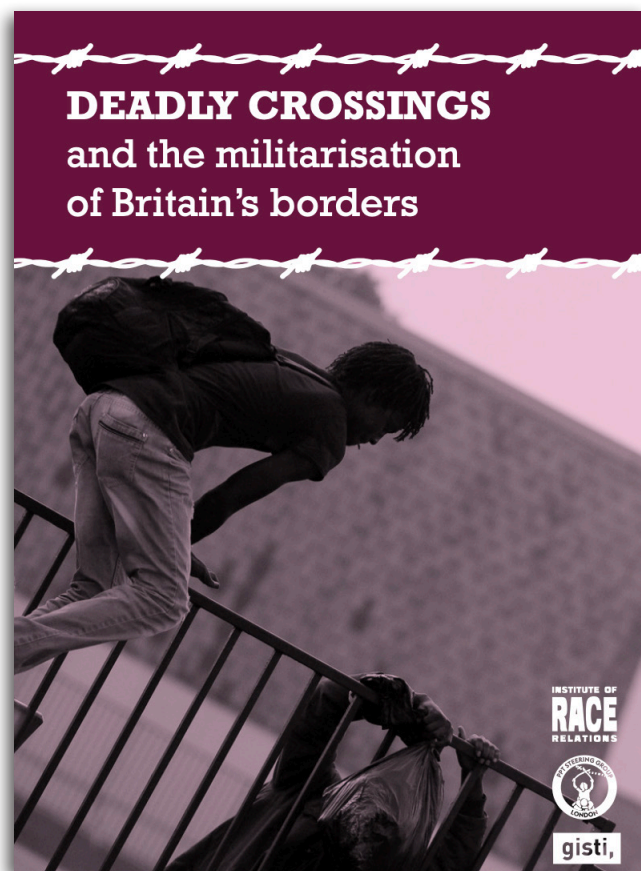
IRR takes very seriously its educative public role, often pioneering interventions in new and sometimes challenging areas. And the success of this has been reflected in increasing invitations for IRR to advise other bodies. We were on the advisory board of an NHS Confederation BME Leadership project on the disproportional impact of Covid 19 on BME NHS staff and BME communities, as well as on the Advisory Board of the Centre on the Dynamics of Ethnicity research which the IRR later published. We also advised a Global Learning London project to develop a Continuing Professional Development tool on migration targeted at teachers of Key Stage 2. We have advised a number of refugee organisations in the UK on how to develop a more pro-active racial justice strategy. Jessica Perera provided input into a Chocolate Film Productions/Howard League/University of Essex video project to promote an anti-racist lawyers' guide on school exclusions and Liz Fekete contributed to the Stuart Hall Foundation's Imagined Futures series.

## ***Staff development***

At IRR we try to break down any division of labour

between administrators and researcher-writers by encouraging all staff to develop a particular research focus: Sophia Siddiqui (on anti-racist feminism), Liam Shrivastava (on the media), Liz Fekete (on the far Right and policing in a European context), Anya Edmond-Pettitt (on Black British history and deaths at European borders) and Jessica Perera (on urban policy and school exclusions). Jessica Pandian worked with us as an (unpaid) Associate Researcher on UK policing issues for part of the year.

# European Research Programme



**A GREAT STRENGTH** of the ERP, directed by Liz Fekete, is its intersectional approach, not only in terms of understanding where the common point between generic and specific racisms emerges, but also in terms of how the policies of the state, political parties, institutions, the media and the far Right, interact. This year we have consolidated previous research and also branched out in new directions.

The lead article in the October 2021 issue of *Race & Class*, 'Racing the Nation: towards a theory of reproductive racism' was the culmination of Sophia's research over the past year into the links between nationalism, popular racism and hard-right attacks on reproductive rights across Europe. It describes the emergences of a nativist demographics – exemplified by a number of far-right conspiracy theories – that marks out migrants, Muslims and LGBTQ people, as a threat to the purity of the nation. Mindful of a possible far-right connection to the Plymouth mass shooting, we have also extended the subjects covered in our fortnightly online Calendar of Racism and Resistance to include information on the Christian Right's influence on race issues and the incel movement which is often a gateway to white supremacist movements and far-right conspiracy theories such as that of the 'Great

Replacement' which originated in France but is now mainstreamed.

Thanks to a grant from the Open Society Foundations, we have also embarked on a three-year research project on structural racism and anti-democratic trends in European policing, the culture of official denial that surrounds deaths in police custody, and the extremist attitudes in and/or far-right organisations' penetration of the police and other agencies.

Anya Edmond-Pettitt has continued to cooperate with Groupe d'information et de soutien des immigrés (GISTI), in counting and accounting for deaths at UK 'borders' with France and Belgium. She co-authored a piece for GISTI's journal which looked at UK complicity in a number of recent deaths, including those of infants Artin Rasul, Mawda Shawri and Aleksandra Hazhar. *Deadly Crossings and the militarisation of Britain's borders*, the first English-language analysis of Channel Crossing deaths, continues to be cited by *Guardian* Comment pieces, *Big Issue* North and Tortoise media, amongst others. Anya is on the Steering Group of the Migreurop project looking at how 'crimes of solidarity' are deployed against migrant crossers.



# European Research Programme

As in previous years, we have worked with journalists from a number of outlets, including *Dewerald Moregen*, *Brussels Morning* and *Byline Times*, and spoken at national and international webinars on a variety of subjects, including the pan-European treatment of refugees and migrant workers, EU-wide legislation that criminalises humanitarian workers, and the threat posed by the 'Great Replacement' and Eurabia conspiracy theories.

The past year has been difficult for many NGOs in Europe, with the activities of two important organisations (that we had worked closely with) the Collective Against Islamophobia in France (CCIF) and the migrants' rights organisation KISA in Cyprus, effectively closed down by their respective governments. 'Speaking truth to power' on race and migration issues is becoming ever more fraught, making an invitation to deliver four lectures on researching race to human rights defenders from across the globe at Essex University's online Summer School the more welcome.

We extend our warmest thanks to volunteers Lou Khalfaoui and Inês Silva who have provided essential research on France, Belgium and Portugal this year. We note with great sadness the death of our friend

and colleague Nina Mühe, an associate researcher with the ERP in the early 2000s as well as Leo Panitch, an editor of the Socialist Register, who was one of the first political analysts to recognise the value of the ERP's work on the threat posed by the far Right.

**Status/الوضع**  
@StatusHour

Check out the [#Europe](#) and the Middle East Podcast's first episode: "Eurabia" and the Great Replacement

Hosts [@alaingresh](#) & Thomas Serres talk with Liz Fekete about the far-right theories in European political discourses

[@OrientXXI](#)  
[#MiddleEast](#) [#Podcast](#)  
[statushour.com/en/Interview/3...](https://statushour.com/en/Interview/3...)



Guest: Liz Fekete  
Hosts: Alain Gresh & Thomas Serres





**IRR NEWS CONTINUES** to be a crucial resource for community groups, activists, campaigners across various fields, as well as students and academics. With over 4,700 subscribers to its fortnightly newsletter, it has in the year published 27 newsletters, 35 feature articles and over 25 editions of its comprehensive calendar of racism and resistance. Our efforts to engage new audiences in creative ways - by publishing timely twitter threads, experimenting with video content and adding more design features to our social media - has resulted in *IRR News* amassing an impressive 12.9k followers (see the communications report).

### *Attempts to redefine racism*

As the government tries to portray the UK as a model for 'good race relations' by treating structural racism as a thing of the past, *IRR News* has been providing an analysis of this approach – via articles, interviews, press releases and twitter threads. In response to the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities (CRED) report, director Liz Fekete analysed how it sets new norms on how race and racism are conceptualised, and Jenny Bourne placed it in its historical context in an article looking at key reports over the past fifty years. The question of who gets to define racism was the subject of a piece by Liz Fekete on the unfair dismissal of a racial justice practitioner over a twitter

controversy that sets a dangerous precedent.

### *Regressive legislative measures*

*IRR News* has responded to proposed legislation in the fields of asylum and migration, education, policing and human rights with a series of interventions highlighting their cumulative threat. *IRR* vice-chair Frances Webber contributed two long-reads analysing the various threats to human rights proposals in 2020 and 2021, as well as an article that questions the legality of the UK government's new plan for immigration. In response to the Department of Education's new guidance on teaching of relationships and sex education, educational campaigner Gus John explored its potential implications for Black Lives Matter activism, and Liz Fekete and Liam Shrivastava warned of the dangers of the government's Higher Education Bill.

One of the key mobilisations of extra-parliamentary movements this year has been in response to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Court Bill. In 'Policing the Brexit state – back to the 1980s' Liz analysed the race and class implications of the bill, which was followed by a forensic analysis by Lee Bridges of the bill's extension of the doctrine of joint enterprise through the introduction of Serious Violence Reduction Orders (which was widely shared by police monitoring

groups and noted by Lord Paddick, vice-chair of APPG on knife crime and violence reduction). The extension of policing measures since the start of the pandemic was the subject of Jessica Pandian's [article](#) on Violence Suppression Units (VSU), which were introduced in London at the start of the pandemic.

## European border policing

The policing of Europe's borders continues to be the subject of key interventions on *IRR News*. Campaigner Frances Timberlake's long-read on the killing of 2-year-old Kurdish Iraqi Mawda Shawri reflected on the implication for the UK of European border policing. The collaboration with GISTI which had resulted in the publication of *Deadly Crossings* has continued, with Anya co-writing a piece pointing to the UK's complicity in migrants' deaths at the borders, '[Where does "Fortress Europe" begin and end](#)' with GISTI's Maël Galisson and Frances Timberlake from Refugee Women's Centre & Refugee Rights Europe. As abolitionist perspectives continue to gain ground, Liz Fekete's [article](#) on the potential for an abolitionist perspective within migrant rights activism in the UK and beyond was shared widely online.

## Neoliberalism and equalities

*IRR News* has made timely interventions in the field

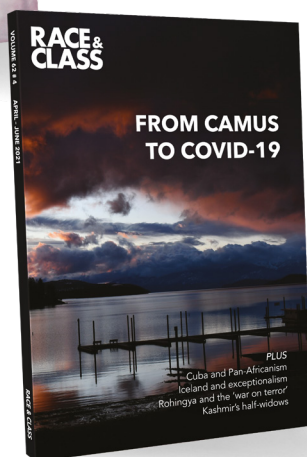
of equalities this year. Amidst growing controversy over the workings of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), Jenny Bourne wrote an in-depth [analysis](#) of the EHRC and its race relations precursors. In an extended version of a speech made to a meeting on a new report *How the EHRC got it so wrong* by Jewish Voice for Labour (JVL), we published Liz Fekete's [contribution](#) on the neoliberal approach to equalities, and why this should be a core issue of concern for the anti-racist movement. This was followed by Sophia Siddiqui's *Race & Class* blog post on '[Feminism, biological fundamentalism and trans rights](#)', which showed how the far Right is mobilising against women's rights and LGBTQ+ rights across Europe and how this has implications for all minorities. In a different vein, Black health activist Wayne Farah contributed a critical [article](#) revealing how the promotion of 'racial democracy' i.e., diversity in the NHS is being prioritised over confronting racialised injustice and inequality.

A huge thank you goes to Tania Bedi, Annabelle Woghiren, Graeme Atkinson, Lou Khalfaoui, Yewande Oyekan, Kaiisha Kukendra, Inês Silva and Neal Tank for their invaluable help in putting together the calendar of racism and resistance and ensuring the smooth running of *IRR News*.





# Race & Class



**IT IS REALLY** encouraging to be able to report that this last year, despite the difficulties of working under lockdown and a world political situation deteriorating on many fronts, the journal has been able not only to maintain its very high standard of coverage but also make inroads in terms of its impact and reach with 101,191 downloads in the first four months of 2021, which is a 33.8 per cent increase from the end of April last year. This is reflected in our impact factor, which has gone up to 2.5 from 1.78. And the promotional work carried out by the Communications Officer and Deputy Editor has, through wider exposure on social media and arranging podcasts and interviews, given the journal the boost it needed to bring some of the issues it raised onto the mainstream agenda – in terms of mental health, Covid-19 impact, the Blue Lives Matter campaign in the US, and xenophobia in South Africa.

In that respect, the very topical special issue 'Race, mental health, state violence' guest-edited by Monish Bhatia and Eddie Bruce-Jones (Volume 62, no 3, January 2021), proved to be a great success, not just in terms of sales but by getting themes across to a wider public through a series of five podcasts with 'Surviving Society' (with IRR's director and contributors to the issue). For it brought together key issues such as non-

accountability over deaths in custody, surveillance and electronic monitoring, the psychologisation of counter-extremism, policing and immigration detention – all of which impact on mental health, as well as situating the issues globally and in terms of community-based and family campaigns against state injustices.

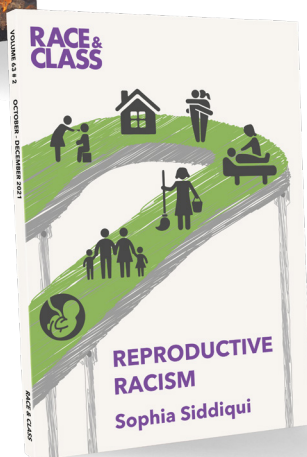
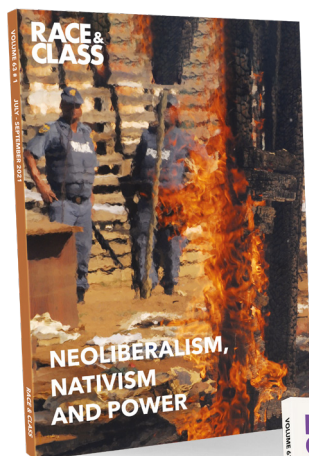
Volume 62, no 4, addressed the issue of Covid-19 with pieces on the necropolitics of neoliberalism from Ahmed Kabel and Robert Phillipson and on the marginalisation of indigenous groups in Argentina by solidarity activists.

'Neoliberalism, nativism and power', Volume 63, no1, approached a number of extremely seminal issues: the way that neoliberalism was entrenching rather than dismantling 'difference' in South Africa, the racial basis of neoliberalism itself, and the organising and power of Blue Lives Matter within US policing practice today.

In October, Volume 63, no2, led with a pathbreaking analysis of 'Reproductive racism' by Sophia Siddiqui, who showed how the maintenance of the heteronormative native family was a cornerstone of far-right campaigning, whilst migrant women were being used to uphold a breaking care system. Other pieces examined Israeli involvement in surveillance, the use of



# Race & Class



'dark monies' in both the Icelandic banking crisis and Brexit, racism in English cricket and the mechanical application of 'diversity' in the National Health Service.

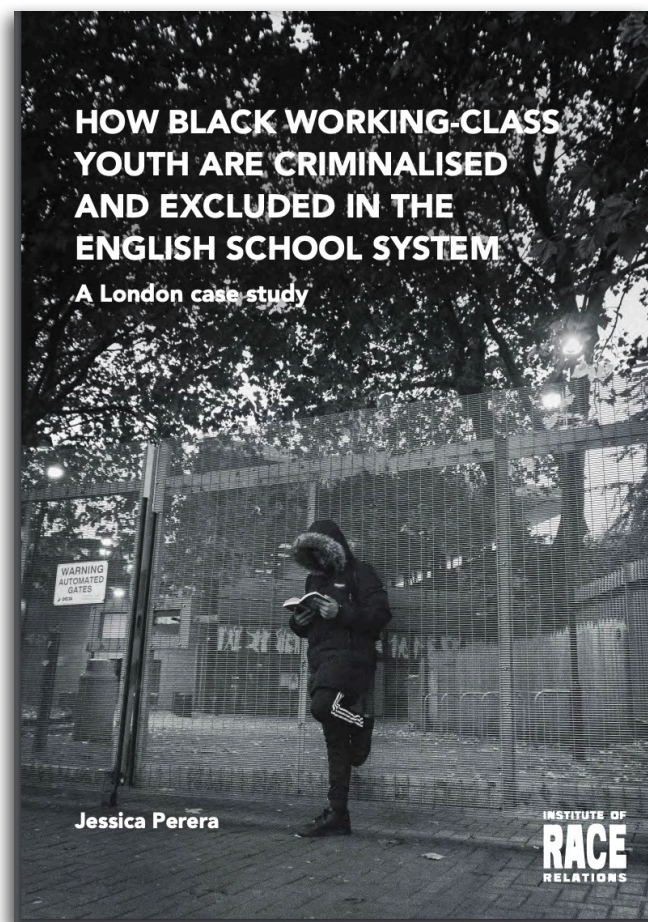
For old-timers who had been involved in *Race & Class* since its inception in 1973/4, this has been a sad year as we felt the passing of so many activists and friends who helped in the development and sustenance of the journal. These included Carmel Budiardjo of Tapol, with whom we worked on East Timor; Gail Omvedt who contributed key original thinking on caste, women's and peasant struggles in India; and Mary Ellison, American Studies lecturer who wrote and reviewed for us on music, film and politics. And we lost twice-exiled Erna Jordaan, the widow of South African Marxist historian Ken Jordaan, a founding political spirit of the journal. It was Erna who kept the familial bonds of the group around the journal alive from 1974 to 2021.

But on a more positive note, we were also extremely pleased to welcome on to the Editorial Working Committee Dr John Narayan of Kings College, London, with research interests on the interlinkages between globalisation, inequality and racialisation, and Hsiao-Hung Pai, intrepid journalist and writer on issues relating to global exploitations.

We were, too, delighted to cosponsor the launch in the UK in October of *Cedric Robinson: The Time of the Black Radical Tradition* by Joshua Myers, with contributions both from those of us who knew and worked with him on the journal from 1980 to 2016 and younger academics deeply influenced by his work.



# Communications report



**THIS HAS AGAIN** been a successful year for the IRR's Communications Programme and we are delighted that the importance of this area of our work was recognised in a four-year grant from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to develop capacity and a small one-off grant from Resourcing Racial Justice.

## *Development and innovation*

Part of the Communications Officer's brief is to update IRR systems and communications channels. In October last year, we launched an [IRR Instagram page](#). As a more visual platform, this has increased the visibility of our archive video content and has enabled us to disseminate our work in different ways to a new, often younger and non-academic audience. With support from the Resourcing Racial Justice fund, we also worked with a new web development supplier, Green Net to convert our regular Calendar of Racism and Resistance into a searchable database. With the switch to hybrid working at home and the office, we have also established a new shared drive and will be implementing shared systems across Microsoft 365. In late June, we added a pop-up sign up form to our website for users to subscribe to our newsletter. We now have an online shop accessible via Facebook allowing users to purchase from within the platform and have added PayPal as an accepted

payment method, meaning customers from abroad can more easily purchase our publications. In the past year, online sales have grossed over £2,000 at an average of £240 a month. The Communications Officer also undertook significant training workshops with staff to ensure that we maximised learning and application across the organisation.

## *Publishing of reports*

This year the IRR has published a number of reports in key strategic areas: *Deadly Crossings and the militarisation of Britain's borders* – the first publication to track deaths in the Channel – was published in partnership with the Permanent People's Tribunal London steering Group and *Groupe d'information et de soutien des immigrés (GISTI)*. The launch was accompanied by an organised twitter storm reaching over 500,000 people and which resulted in good pick up by NGOs, MPs and the media. Our efforts on promoting the special issue of *Race & Class*, '*Race, mental health, state violence*' really paid off drawing interest from practitioners, journalists and academics and a series of podcasts with '*Surviving Society*' showed how a well-matched strategic partnership helps widen our audience and connect with activist groups. Jessica Perera's timely report, *How black working-class youth are criminalised and excluded*



# Communications report

in the English school system was cited on the front page of the *Guardian*. Another strategic partnership this year was with the Centre on the Dynamics of Ethnicity, Manchester University, whose research about the policing of the pandemic we published as *A threat to public safety: policing, racism and the Covid-19 pandemic* showed how racially minoritised communities were more likely to be stopped by the police, threatened or subject to police violence and falsely accused of rule-breaking and wrong-doing.

## Intervening in debates

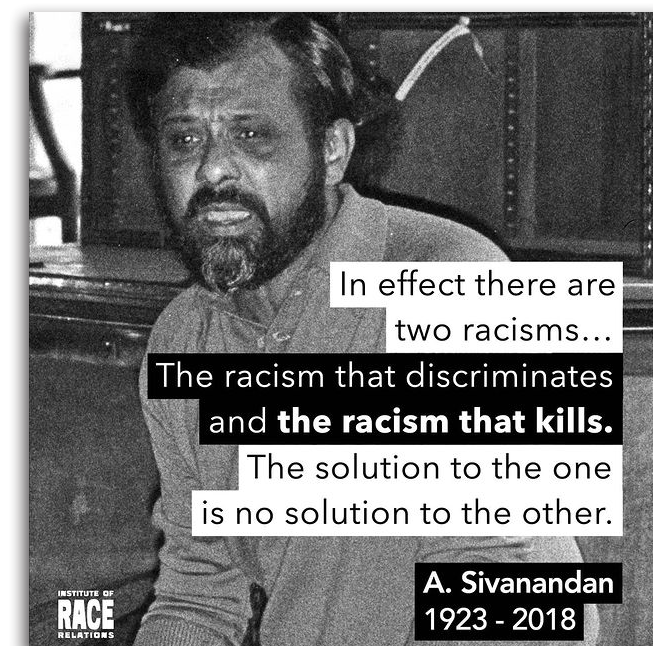
As mentioned in reports on UK research and *IRR News*, we have tried very hard this year through articles on *IRR News* and social media to bring clarity and substance into fractious public arguments, where issues of racism are out of existence on the one side and reduced to an essentialist identity politics on the other. For example, articles have considered the appointment of David Goodhart as an Equality and Human Rights Commissioner (retweeted 1,500 times), the hostile environment, 'who gets to define racism' (over 2,500 hits), the new policing bill and our response to the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities report (over 3,500 hits, 125,000 impressions and quoted on the Guardian blog).

In addition, the IRR has used its unique access to historical film and interviews relating to community-based Black struggles to insert reminders into debates of important traditions and principles. For example, sharing clips from our film on resistance in Notting Hill in 1958 and the Mangrove 9 Trial in 1971; on the hostile environment from 'We have the right to be here', a film premiered online in partnership with Mayday Rooms this year; and comments from Sivanandan on the New Cross fire and Blue Labourism; all of which proved extremely popular on social media.

## Social media

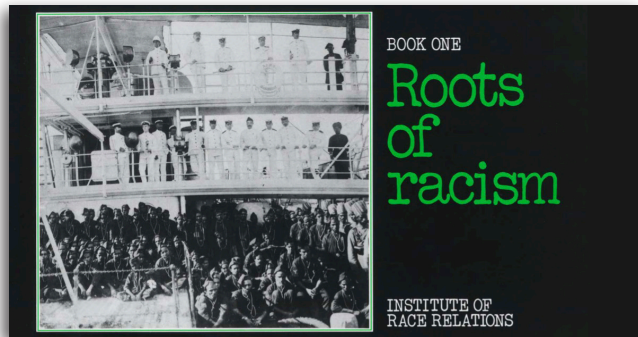
- 3,889 new @irr\_news followers on Twitter compared with 2,909 in previous period – a 33% uptick in follower growth rate.
- A significant reach of over 4 million tweet impressions from @irr\_news
- 1,958 new twitter followers on *Race & Class*
- 992 new newsletter subscribers
- 1,457 followers on Instagram
- Over 5,000 Facebook followers across *Race & Class* and *IRR News*

Overall, we have made great strides in our communications strategy this year, with opportunities



for learning positively grasped. We updated our guidelines for social media to include more detailed instructions and safeguards on the use of images and graphics.

# Black history and anti-racist outreach



**THE INTEREST AND** engagement in British Black History that was ignited last summer shows no sign of waning. Celebration of community histories and anti-racist movements to counter the established historical narrative have been strong over the last year. However, the continuing Covid-19 pandemic has meant that the Black History Collection (BHC) has had to remain closed to the public. With people unable to come to view the collection, staff have utilised online formats and reached out to new mediums to educate and inform.

'Roots of racism' the first of our (pioneering 1980s) anti-racist educational series for young people, now out of print, was, because of renewed demand, digitised and made available on the website and other platforms for free download during this year, and take-up has been excellent.

Staff have participated in online workshops, conferences and podcasts to discuss the importance of retrieving traditions within anti-racist history and how they can inform struggles today. Anya Edmond-Pettitt and Sophia Siddiqui contributed to a UCL conference looking at the histories and trajectories of anti-racism in Britain – on the importance of archives in preserving and providing continuity in anti-racist

history and UK's anti-racist feminist movement campaigns of the '70s and '80s. Sophia also lectured to second year undergraduate Sociology students at City University as part of their 'gender and society' module on Black British feminism.

The connections to be made with the movements of the past were also covered by Chair Colin Prescod in several interventions. He spoke with 'Migrants Organise' and 'Social Scientists against the hostile environment' on the lessons history can provide to the struggle for migrant racial justice and the importance of interventions against the current Hostile Environment. He also provided a blog for the Local Trust examining how the conflicted processes of community development can play out through social upheaval, struggle and action. And he was interviewed by the *New York Times* about the history of Notting Hill carnival in an article that focused on its creator, Trinidadian-born Claudia Jones.

Commemoration even broke through to the UK mainstream on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Brixton Uprisings. The IRR was interviewed for a *Guardian* feature on the 'watershed moment for race relations'. And the IRR provided information to a German historical project highlighting the importance of



# Black history and anti-racist outreach

remembrance of the far-right violence in the German towns of Rostock and Hoyerswerda in 1991.

The Institute also branched out, collaborating with *Surviving Society* on podcasts. Director Liz Fekete talked about some of the key moments in the history of the Institute of Race Relations and the historical and contemporary role of the IRR. Colin Prescod also spoke on a grassroots migrant led community 'CARAG' podcast *Still We Rise* exploring the role of race and class in Britain.

In another departure, IRR Council member Sam Berkson's documentary film 'We have the right to be here' was screened online at the Mayday Rooms. In this oral history three activists, Colin Prescod, Frances Webber and Suresh Grover, are interviewed about their involvement in some of the ground-breaking Black and anti-racist movements of post-war Britain and the dynamics of state racism and resistances to it. The event was very well attended and followed by a discussion with some of the film's interviewees.

Despite the BHC being closed to the public because of Covid restrictions, staff have tried where possible to provide assistance including, amongst other things, to school workshops looking at the little Ilford

school strikes, an oral history project on Brick Lane, the Monitoring Group for The Undercover Policing Inquiry, and the ICA for its exhibition *War Inna Babylon* that showcases grassroots activism in Black frontline communities.

The IRR has begun documenting the life and times of Pearl Prescod (1920-1966), actor, singer, activist and player, to explore her place and role(s) not just on the

Black British stage and screen, but also in community campaigns; and hope to make this publicly available soon.



Sam Berkson, Suresh Grover, Frances Webber and Colin Prescod in conversation for the film 'We have the right to be here'.

# Volunteers

## NEAL TANK WRITES:

I was a communications volunteer at the Institute of Race Relations from June 2020 to April 2021. As someone passionate about anti-racist activism and history, this was a perfect volunteering role for me, and I had the opportunity to learn a lot. Due to the COVID-19 lockdown, I worked at home during my time with the IRR, and despite never being able to meet anyone face-to-face, I received very close support and mentoring. Volunteering at such a historic anti-racist organisation was such a great experience.

The main projects I worked on were the Calendar of Race and Resistance – specifically the culture, media and sports section – and editing historical videos from the IRR archives to make them accessible for social media. Working with IRR's archives was a fascinating experience and really helped me learn more about the experiences of Black and Asian people in the 1950s-1970s, alongside the historical techniques used to resist violence from the state. I also gained constructive video editing and subtitling skills, which I now use in my work.



## TANIA BEDI WRITES:

As an undergraduate History student, where I focused on Black British history and explored notions of identity and belonging as well as Black resistance movements, I utilised the IRR's Black History Collection. It was from here that I learnt more about the IRR's crucial work, including the briefing papers and *Race & Class*, as well as the work of A. Sivanandan. I recognised such research as an essential vessel in tackling issues of institutionalised racial injustice within Britain. I therefore decided to join the IRR team as I started my Master's degree.

My work at the IRR involves compiling news stories concerned with racial violence and harassment as well as racism in the health sector, for the calendar. I understand the importance of this responsibility, as such work enables accounts of oppression to be rightfully highlighted. I have also assisted with an exciting and significant BHC project, focused on uncovering the life and career of Pearl Prescod, the first Black actress to perform in the National Theatre. As a comprehensive (public) history on Pearl was unfortunately nonexistent, this project promises to introduce a generation to her story. I am honoured to contribute my time to an organisation that I consider to be so necessary, in not only addressing contemporary issues but also revealing past narratives that are essential to our understanding of a present-day multi-ethnic Britain. My time at the IRR has been invaluable and I am positive that the insight that I have gained here, into what it means to undertake anti-racism work, will stay with me throughout my future activism.



# Out & About

**Diary of meetings, seminars and webinars at which IRR staff and Council members have made contributions. (This year meetings, workshops, lectures, conferences etc were invariably online events.)**

**2020**

**23 October**

Participant and speaker at 45<sup>th</sup> Permanent Peoples Tribunal, Berlin, on 'Migration and the Right to Health'

**2 November**

Lecture to MA students on the history of institutional racism, University College London

**5 November**

Panel speaker on race, migration and policing at 'Sanctuary: What next? International Seminar Series with and for undocumented

residents in cities', Queen Mary University

**11 November**

Panellist on racism and Covid 19 at 'Exploring Intersectionality – Building Solidarity Across EU-Turkey Borders', Istanbul Policy Centre

**16 November**

Panellist at event on migrants' healthcare and Covid, Malmö University

**19 November**

Chair of parliamentary panel discussion on new research on women

and joint enterprise, JENGBA

**26 November**

Lecture on 'Refugee Crisis' in Europe to the Social and Political Sciences Society at the University of York

**1 December**

Panellist on 'the future of family reunion in the UK', Safe Passage

**16 December**

Presentation on work of IRR at Brown Bag Lunch, Refugee Rights Europe

Screening of oral history



*Images from ICA exhibition*

film 'We have the right to be here' with Mayday Rooms

**22 December**

Discussion with Jana of Tamil

Welfare Association (Newham) on the historic treatment of Tamil refugees, Thousand4Thousand housing charity

**2021**

**19 January**

Speaker on 'Race and Academia' panel discussion, Brunel University, London



# Out & About

## 3 February

Panellist at 'Justice Means Everyone, The Criminalisation of Solidarity', Abolitionist Forum/Pluto Press

## 18 February

Panellist on 'migrants and HIV/AIDS' for LGBT month, Garden Court Chambers

Participant at 'Shrinking Spaces for NGOs working for migrants' rights and rescue at sea' working group

## 26 February

Participant at Peace & Justice Project roundtable discussion on international human rights

## 26 February

Panellist on Europe and the Middle East podcast, 'Eurabia' and the Great Replacement' Jadiliyya and Orient XXI

## 27 February

Panellists at conference on 'Anti-racism in Britain: histories and

trajectories', University College London

## 12 March

Discussant on extraordinary rendition, impunity and human rights for LLM students at Queen Mary University of London

## 18 March

Panel speaker at 'No More Tasers', Resistance Lab

## 18 March

Lecture on 'Anti-racist Feminism' to second year Sociology students, City University, London

*Liz Fekete with domestic workers group WalingWaling at their first non-virtual meeting during the pandemic*

## 8 April

Participant at roundtable 'Every Body counts' on death, Covid and migrants, organised by Last Rights

Participant in 'Borders Think in' with Policing & Borders Working Group organised by Campaign Against the Arms Trade.

## 13 April

Panellist at post-film discussion on extraordinary rendition following screening of *The Mauritian*, organised by students at Queen Mary University of London

## 14 April

Participant at roundtable on 'Racial

justice and legal action' organised by the Baring Foundation

## 27 April

Panellist on the impact of the Windrush scandal on race relations at Q&A to launch videos from the musical theatre production 'On Hostile Ground', Royal & Derngate, Northampton

## 4 May

Panellist at 'Complete the Consultation for the New Immigration Plan', Migrants Organise and others

## 13 May

Panellist at 'How the EHRC Got it so Wrong. Antisemitism and the Labour Party', Jewish

Voice for Labour & the Haldane Society

## 13 May

Panellist at 'We Need to Talk about The Race and Ethnic Disparities Review', Southall Monitoring Group & Southall Community Alliance

## 19 May

Panellist 'How the government is using race and identity politics to divide and rule', School of Anti-Racism

## 24 May

Panellist on 'Digital asylum' on discrimination and digital borders, organised by Anagram in conjunction with Imperial War Museum





# Out & About

## 1 June

Panellist on 'The new plan for immigration and its future impact' organised by Lesbians and Gays support the Migrants (North)

## 2-9 June

Four lectures on 'Researching Race', Essex Human Rights online Summer School

## 4 June

Panellist at 'They don't protect us: a history of the police and monitoring groups', Bristol Copwatch

## 14 June

Keynote speaker on the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities report, Redbridge Equalities and



Conducting a Black History school workshop

Community Council  
AGM

## 17 June

Panellist on 'Talk for Change: legal issues for asylum seekers and migrants in the system' organised by South Yorkshire Migration and

Asylum Action Group

## 21 June

Panellist on 'Depoliticising the hostile environment' organised by Social Scientists against the Hostile Environment

## 29 July

Attendee at webinar 'Decolonisation and its discontents' hosted by Salvage journal & Haymarket books

## 25 September

Keynote speakers at 'The Hostile Environment: whatever happened to human rights?' Linking Day organised by Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

## 28 September

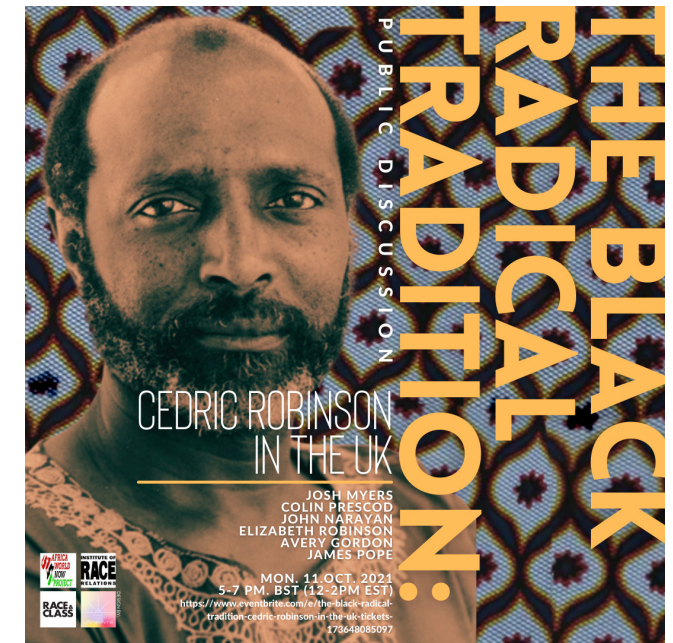
Speaker at 'Funding the intersection between racial justice and migration justice' reflection webinar organised by Migration Exchange & Funders for Racial Equality Alliance

## 29 September

Speaker at Race Equality webinar Joseph Rowntree Foundation

## 11 October

Joint host online book launch of 'The Black Radical Tradition: Cedric Robinson in the UK'



# Finance Report

## Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2021 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)

The purpose of these pages is to provide a summary of the charity's income, expenditure and year end position. This summary is derived from the full annual accounts, and is not a full representation. A full copy of the annual accounts and auditor's report can be obtained from the charity's offices. The statutory accounts have been delivered to the Registrar of Companies.

	Unrestricted Funds (£)	Restricted Funds (£)	Total Funds 2021 (£)	Unrestricted Funds (£)	Restricted Funds (£)	Total Funds 2020 (£)
Income and Endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	101,007	25,186	126,193	65,940	29,580	95,520
Charitable activities	100,180	–	100,180	107,766	–	107,766
Investment income	38	–	38	186	–	186
Other income	7,360	–	7,360	3,412	–	3,412
<b>Total income</b>	<b>208,585</b>	<b>25,186</b>	<b>233,771</b>	<b>177,304</b>	<b>29,580</b>	<b>206,884</b>
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities	(186,963)	(22,160)	(209,123)	(170,156)	(33,054)	(203,210)
Total expenditure	(186,963)	(22,160)	(209,123)	(170,156)	(33,054)	(203,210)
Net movement in funds	21,622	3,026	24,648	7,148	(3,474)	3,674
Reconciliation of funds						
Total funds brought forward	109,092	114,672	223,764	101,944	118,146	220,090
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>130,714</b>	<b>117,698</b>	<b>248,412</b>	<b>109,092</b>	<b>114,672</b>	<b>223,764</b>

# Finance report

## Balance sheet as at 31 March 2021

	2021 (£)	2020 (£)
<b>Fixed assets</b>		
Tangible assets	109,518	113,779
<b>Current assets</b>		
Stocks	800	800
Debtors	69,918	73,758
Cash at bank and in hand	89,532	62,039
	160,250	136,597
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(21,356)	(26,612)
<b>Net current assets</b>	<b>138,894</b>	<b>109,985</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>248,412</b>	<b>223,764</b>
<b>The funds of the charity</b>		
Restricted funds	117,698	114,672
Unrestricted funds	130,714	109,092
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>248,412</b>	<b>223,764</b>



# Contacting the IRR

## COUNCIL OF MANAGEMENT

Sam Berkson, Lee Bridges, Jon Burnett, Eddie Bruce-Jones, Tony Bunyan, Sue Conlan, Rebekah Delsol, Saqib Deshmukh, David Edgar, Gholam Khiabany, Joseph Maggs, Jasbinder Nijjar, Colin Prescod (Chair), Danny Reilly, Cilius Victor, Frances Webber (Vice-Chair)

## FUNDERS

Garden Court Chambers  
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust  
Open Society Foundations  
Paul Hamlyn Foundation  
Resourcing Racial Justice

## VOLUNTEERS

Graeme Atkinson, Tania Bedi, Ann Dryden, Max Goodall, Lou Khalfaoui, Kaiisha Kukendra, Graham Murray, Yewande Oyekan, Jessica Pandian, Inês Silva, Hussain Syed, Neal Tank, Annabelle Woghiren

## STAFF

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**Jenny Bourne** Joint Editor *Race & Class*

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