

# TEACHING ABOUT RACE RELATIONS

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Problems and effects

Lawrence Stenhouse, Gajendra K. Verma,  
Robert D. Wild and Jon Nixon

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Robert D. Wild and Jon Nixon

with contributions by  
JEAN RUDDUCK, PATRICIA SIKES,  
ALISON BERRY and DAVID SHEARD

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**This report is dedicated to the teachers and the pupils  
who took part in the project and placed their experiences  
- including their difficulties - on record to help their  
colleagues and peers.**



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

Lawrence Stenhouse

This is a report of the work of two linked research projects mounted at the Centre for Applied Research in Education (CARE) of the University of East Anglia during the period October 1972 to September 1975. Their intention was to explore some of the problems and effects of teaching about race relations. One project was supported by a grant from the Social Science Research Council and the other, by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. The programme was directed by Lawrence Stenhouse and involved a team of three researchers in the study of forty schools throughout the country. It combined a measurement programme on a pre-test post-test basis, designed and executed by Gajendra Verma, with a programme of case study, executed primarily by Robert D. Wild. The experimental teaching took place in the spring term of 1974.

Publication of the report has been delayed by several factors, including problems encountered by project staff and, more recently, problems facing publishing houses.

As will later become clear, the project aimed to study the problems and effects of teaching about race relations by working with three groups of teachers, each of which adopted a different approach. One group comprised teachers who used drama as a means of dealing with race as a classroom topic. The field-worker responsible for studying these cases was unable, in the event, to deliver a report.

A further setback to the project schedule was the sudden illness of the project director at the climax of the dissemination phase in January 1976: he was prevented from returning to work until September of that year.

Despite the gap in the data and the problems of illness, the report was substantially complete by 1977. Jon Nixon, who teaches drama in a London comprehensive school and is a part-time doctoral student at the Centre for Applied Research in Education, contributed two drama case studies using materials held by the project supplemented by interviews with the teachers concerned. He also added three further studies based upon his own work and upon his own study of another teacher. By the same date a collection of teaching materials was also complete, based on those used by the teachers of the project but re-edited by a sub-committee of teachers working with consultants.

The original intention was to publish report and materials together, but it was not easy to find a publisher. When we did,

## 2 Introduction

he asked that the materials be re-edited from loose-leaf form to book form and be up-dated. This considerable task was accomplished and three books were prepared, edited respectively by Dave Dunn, Dave Sheard and John Waddleton with assistance from other members of the teacher team. The publisher began lay-out work on these books, but, in the face of revised estimates and declining textbook sales, finally found it necessary to withdraw from the contract.

The project report is now published by a publisher who does not have a schools list and to whom, therefore, the teaching materials have not been offered.

We have already been made aware, through our contacts with researchers and teachers, that the aims and conception of this project run counter to what the majority expect of it. Its purpose is expressed in its title. It seeks to throw light on the problems and effects of teaching about race relations to adolescents in order to strengthen the basis of teacher judgment. It does not hope to solve those problems and recommend a particular curriculum or method of teaching, since any school's response will be influenced by its situation, and by the strengths and weaknesses of its staff. It would seem absurd to expect that the pattern of teaching in a school in Brixton or Moseley should be similar to that in a school in Lincolnshire or Cumbria. The most important decisions will be made by schools themselves: the function of the project is to inform those decisions.

Since there is a good deal of confusion about the issues at stake in teaching about race relations, it seems best to set these down as we see them.

Ours is, and will remain, a multi-racial society, and of course a multi-cultural one. Pluralism adds immensely to the social resources of any community; but it is also a source of conflict, and ethnic and cultural boundaries often coincide with boundaries of power and class and access to the good things society has to offer.

Not so far behind us is a society that was a confederation of much more culturally homogeneous local communities (still recollected in dialects), where the stranger in the inn was 'outlandish', at best the object of social caution, at worst of persecution. Still fresh in history is a colonial past with all its pressures towards a conception of hierarchical relationships among races and cultures. Its interethnic assumptions are embodied in English literature, from Macaulay's 'Essay on Clive' to Biggles.

Schools have traditionally been concerned with transmitting moral standards as well as knowledge, and both moral standards and knowledge seem problematic in the area of race.

The problems that we find ourselves facing as teachers are potentially quite frightening and are not to be solved by mere goodwill. Personal and professional understanding and art in teaching are necessary, as is a modesty of aspiration as an

armour against disappointment. Progress in educational practice is measured in decades - even generations - rather than in weeks or terms. Education will not solve the problems of community relations: adult society cannot delegate the reconstruction of culture to schools.

There is, of course, a case for attempting in schools to increase pupils' respect for and interest in people who are culturally or ethnically different from themselves. This is true whatever the identity of the pupils may be, though the need in Britain is probably greatest for the white majority. One can see that in primary schools much can be done through careful choice of materials for reading and of themes in art and the social subjects. And throughout the school system, this is to an extent still true. When a school is itself multi-cultural or multi-racial the quality of its life as a community is of first importance in terms of influence on race relations.

This theme is not, however, the one pursued in this research, which by its brief is restricted to the problems and effects of teaching about race relations to adolescents. Such teaching will normally take place within a subject department or an integrated faculty, and will be an aspect of its general teaching. In the last resort we do teach about our multi-cultural society and race relations within it not because of a sense of social mission (though some may), but rather in the light of an educational aim. We encounter race as teachers of social studies or humanities, of sociology or history or art or music or literature or drama. To avoid the topic of race in such areas is to falsify the relationship of our subject to real life outside the school. And in one way or another, race and inter-racial attitudes arise in all these subjects, and enter into many O-level and CSE syllabuses.

The aim of this research is to help teachers who will teach about race relations in the fourth and subsequent years of the secondary school by documenting the problems and effects of such teaching. Its assumption is that the teacher concerned would wish, so far as possible, to contribute to interracial respect and to combat racism. But how much can be achieved in changing attitudes and values is, it must be conceded, questionable.

We imagine, therefore, that the majority of teachers will wish to teach about race in their subject areas because it is there - like war or social class or the family. Although they will hope to influence attitudes for the better, and will try to do so, in the last analysis they will teach race in their subject so long as they are not shown to be doing harm.

In our project teachers have gone a little further than this. They have been prepared, in the hope of obtaining positive results, to emphasize the theme of race in their teaching of humanities, social studies or drama for a specified school term. They have done so to make it possible to study the problems and effects of teaching about race relations. The aim of this

#### 4 Introduction

study has been to help all teachers who face race as a theme, whether it arises in the normal course of their subject teaching or is introduced as a separate topic.

Perhaps a good starting point is to clarify criteria of decision-making. As a teacher, would you teach subjects or topics (the Black Hole of Calcutta or 'The Merchant of Venice', for instance):

- (a) even if this led to a deterioration in inter-racial respect?
- (b) only if this did not lead to deterioration in inter-racial respect?
- (c) only if this led to improvement in inter-racial respect?

We assume that some of our readers will take position (b), though some will take (c), and some who take (a) would teach reluctantly in the face of evidence that the results of part of their teaching were unhelpful to racial harmony.

A further point. This project is about teaching not in multi-racial schools, but in all schools. And the issues dealt with are socially important for all schools. The condition of race relations in Birmingham, Bradford or Brixton could be in the hands of voters in Brampton, Bournemouth and Boston.

The report we offer falls into two sections: the measurement results, and the case studies of classroom teaching. Our aim is to write for teachers and for those interested in education rather than for researchers and those interested in research, though we hope we have given the latter sufficient information to support critical responses.

## 2 THE TEACHING STRATEGIES WITHIN THIS PROJECT

Lawrence Stenhouse

One group of teachers in our project, those employing teaching Strategy A, as we called it, worked within the tradition of the Humanities Curriculum Project (HCP). There is a story behind this and it would be misleading not to tell it.

The Humanities Project - of which I was director - was, like most patterns of action research in education, complex and multi-faceted. Its occasion was the raising of the school-leaving age, and its justification in political terms (for policy and pedagogy must both be satisfied in education) was seen in the possibility of its offering an ethical basis for the accountability of teachers to pupils, parents and society for their handling of contentious controversial issues in the classroom. Its definition of content was 'controversial human issues of universal concern', and on the difficulties of handling such content was built its pedagogy: a discussion of evidence in which the teacher acted as a chairman aspiring to procedural neutrality.

This is not the place for an extended discussion of the project, but it is probably worth making two asides which relate the work of that project to the work of this one.

First, the context of the Humanities Project was the raising of the school-leaving age (ROSLA). In that context, it might be seen as a bid for an area of mixed ability working across the whole school in the fourth and fifth years. There are schools that have used the project materials and teaching style in this setting; when discussion groups contain the full range of ability, the challenge of difficult reading materials can be met, and met to the advantage of pupils at all ability levels. Schools that have responded to ROSLA by streaming or banding in humanities seem to have created problems for themselves; and they are the majority.

Second, the procedural neutrality of the teacher as chairman rests on the premise that he is not personally neutral. He adopts a procedural neutrality to avoid asserting his views with the authority of his position behind him. He is likely to adopt the stance of neutral chairman because he believes that it furthers discussion as a search for truth and avoids the shaping of view by mere conformity or rebellion. Simply, he will be seen by the pupils as listening more than teachers generally do and not taking sides in pupil discussion. It is appropriate to claim, not that the HCP style of teaching is the right or the only way to teach, but that it is an intelligent, professional response to the problem of pupil discussion which is designed

to promote autonomy and responsibility, and to the problem of the school's responsibility to parents in the circumstances of a pluralist society.

For an account of the Humanities Curriculum Project the reader must go elsewhere (Humanities Project, 1970). Here there is space only to clear up two areas of potential misunderstanding.

Within the Humanities Project there was a good deal of discussion as to whether or not Race Relations should be tackled. True, it was a human issue of universal concern: but was it in a political sense controversial? Did the existence of race relations legislation justify politically the schools' taking a line on race relations irrespective of the feeling of parents? The project staff were divided as to whether the project's logic held in this topic area.

However, the staffs of the Schools Council and Nuffield Foundation urged the project to include race relations among its themes. They had apparently bean under some pressure to see that an appropriate Schools Council project did explore problems and possibilities of teaching in this topic area, and they believed that the non-authoritarian stance of the Humanities Project was likely to be effective to some degree in improving inter-racial respect.

Presumably, the argument would be that part of the problem in race relations is prejudice, in a literal sense: a disposition to make ill-founded judgments or experience uncritical reactions before examining the evidence. If so, the examination of evidence under neutral chairmanship might be conducive to the undermining of prejudice and to reconsideration.

Although there is a reasonable expectation that reflective discussion of evidence might be expected to undermine inter-racial prejudice, it is important to notice that this changes the logical basis of the Humanities Project. The initial justification for the HCP strategy was based on the school's accountability to parents and pupils, and was thus essentially political. The educational advantages of the stragegy could thus be explored in the experiment rather than assumed to justify the experiment. Essentially, the educational (as opposed to the political) justification of HCP came from the results of the experimental work.

In the event, the Humanities Curriculum Project did experiment in teaching about race relations - but cautiously. This was unique among its themes in being evaluated separately, and the experiment was mounted in three schools inexperienced in HCP as well as in three of the experienced experimental schools. Some of the results of the evaluation have been published (Bagley and Verma, 1972; Parkinson and MacDonald, 1972; Verma and Bagley, 1973; Verma and MacDonald, 1971); others are available for consultation at the Centre for Applied Research in Education, University of East Anglia, Norwich.

The findings were summed up by Verma and MacDonald (1971)

in the following passages:

We have thought it important to stress the limitations of the programme, to ensure that the data obtained are treated with caution, but it may still be useful to summarize the trend of the results. Given the prudential nature of the concern which motivated the setting up of this pilot study, the major finding is that no marked deterioration in the attitudinal or personality characteristics of the pupils was manifested in their test responses after exposure to the teaching programme. The effects of the experiment, although not generally significant, tended to suggest a shift in the direction of inter-ethnic tolerance.

The combined picture of the results seems to indicate that there was no general tendency towards intolerance after a seven- to eight-week teaching programme. There is no evidence to suggest that the students generally became less sensitive to or tolerant of members of other racial groups. These results cannot be considered as constituting proof. Analysis of the pilot study along other lines is incomplete, but a decision has already been made to proceed with the editing of a full collection of materials on race, on the grounds that none of the problems encountered in the course of the study would justify the abandonment of further research. No teacher involved in the programme abandoned the course, or found it necessary to reject any of the premises described earlier. In February 1971, each of the schools which participated sent team members to an evaluation conference at which they expressed willingness to undertake the teaching of race with other students in the future.

What conclusion can one reasonably draw from these findings? It seems clear that, in a human issues programme based on the HCP teaching strategy, there is little case for leaving out race relations as a topic because of a fear that inter-racial attitudes will, overall, deteriorate rather than improve. On the contrary, attitudes appear on the whole to improve a little as a result of such teaching.

It is important to get two points clear.

First, since the aim of teaching in HCP is to develop an understanding of human issues, one would presumably teach about race relations even though this did not improve inter-racial attitudes. Our assumption was, however, that one might not teach about race relations if it led to a deterioration of attitudes. Of course, this makes race relations a special case. Few people would exclude twentieth-century European history from British schools on the evidence that it led to less sympathetic attitudes towards Germans (though perhaps they should show more concern about this than they do). However,

## 8 *The teaching strategies within this project*

in a multi-racial society one might well be prepared to argue that race is a special case because of the presence of institutional racism alongside the recognition in our race relations legislation that we should be committed to the impartial treatment of all citizens.

Second, there was no basis in the work done in the context of the Humanities Project for suggesting that the topic of race relations ought to be taught neutrally, and we never at any time made this suggestion. What we claimed was that those who were teaching neutrally could appropriately teach about race relations. There was never any suggestion that teachers who normally advanced their own views in social studies or humanities should change their stance and teach neutrally in the area of race relations, and we had no data to support such a conclusion. No more was claimed than that the Humanities Project offered an intelligent and cogently argued curriculum for experimental development in schools and was therefore a worthwhile extension of the range of choice open to schools and teachers. It is difficult to implement, and some schools find a rigorous curriculum based on an innovative teaching strategy too demanding, given the level of priority they are prepared to give it.

On the basis of research results and of the two positions just outlined, it was decided to publish a collection of materials on race relations. Normally the Schools Council does not (or did not) subject the teaching materials of its projects (as opposed to their research reports) to scrutiny. However, in this case the project wished them to organize a conference at which the materials and their content could be introduced to workers in the area of race relations and to members of those communities that have a basis in racial identity. A copy of the collection of materials on race relations was therefore sent to the Schools Council to support the request for a conference.

The present account of what happened is necessarily based a good deal on hearsay.

Some of the members of the committee of the Council that received the materials were alarmed by them, either in their own persons or because of anticipated reactions or both. Their alarm was apparently not without some foundation, for when they consulted some leading figures in the area of race relations, they had an unfavourable reaction. Whether it would have been possible to allay fears by presenting the materials in the context of the research is difficult to know at this time. As a matter of fact, they were examined out of this context.

The result was that the Schools Council, as copyright holder, vetoed publication of the materials. They cited as reasons for their veto the inclusion in the collection of expressions of extreme views (National Front and Black Power); the use of community newspapers, which by virtue of their departure from norms of spelling and syntax might bring the Black and Asian communities into disrepute; and the problem of misunderstanding or half understanding likely to arise because of the high

reading level of the materials.

The project's response to their criticism was to suggest that the collection be re-edited by a group of teachers, part nominated by the project and part by the Schools Council programme committee. At this point the Council said that the most fundamental objection was to the neutral role of the teacher. The director of the present project asked them to provide further support in order to develop and document other, non-neutral strategies for teaching about race relations. Not surprisingly - given that they probably saw him, erroneously though understandably, as advocating rather than investigating a neutral stance in teaching about race relations - they declined to do so.

The Humanities Project's other sponsors, the Nuffield Foundation, and the consultative committee supported the project in this rather difficult situation and the committee passed the following resolution:

The Consultative Committee recommends that the team carry out further research into the methods of teaching race, under independent sponsorship, drawing on the work and experience already gained by the Humanities Curriculum Project.

We in fact approached the Social Science Research Council (SSRC), who provided a grant of over £43,000 for further research in problems and effects of teaching about race relations. The Gulbenkian Foundation also provided a grant of over £18,000 to include in our work a study of the problems and effects of teaching about race relations through drama. The resulting research, which is reported in this book, took place in the period 1 September 1972 to 30 September 1975.

Since the proposal was put to the SSRC and the Gulbenkian Foundation in terms of a project to explore and report on 'the problems and effects of teaching about race relations', it was necessary to study such teaching.

There is a serious problem here. Any teaching within an experimental framework must satisfy educational as well as research criteria. Let us imagine, for the sake of argument, one hundred possible ways of teaching about race relations. Of these, twenty-five may seem unpromising from the point of view of the research worker. Of the remaining seventy-five, twenty-five may seem unpromising or even educationally inadmissible to teachers. There remain fifty possibilities advocated by teachers and worth studying from the standpoint of public research. These are open to us, but were we to use any of the fifty methods that seemed inadmissible or unpromising we could rightly be accused of using the pupils involved as 'guinea pigs' without due regard to their own rights and their own advantage.

This means that the researchers must work with teaching that

is endorsed by the teachers - and, less importantly perhaps, by themselves - as offering promise of advantage to the pupils.

At this point it might seem that in the experiment we were conducting it was necessary only to find a group of teachers interested in or already engaged in teaching about race relations and then to study what they were doing. But it would be difficult to operationalize and utilize such an experiment. There are many reasons for this, but we shall content ourselves with two here: the need for support, and the need for definition.

Taking a thorny problem such as teaching about race relations and at the same time studying one's own work and making records of it available to researchers is an extremely tough assignment. It is difficult enough to undertake the study, but to make one's problems public in the context of a research is even more taxing, because of a traditional secrecy in the teaching profession about the existence of problems. This tradition is breaking down, but we have a long way to go. Accordingly, we believe that any action research of the kind we are discussing must try to bring groups of teachers in individual schools into more openly co-operative working relationships and into relation with teachers in other schools. Support can be drawn from the mutuality of conferences and meetings at school, district and national level (though it doesn't always work out that way: competition too often creeps in). Setting up a supporting structure of conferences among teachers within a project creates a sort of discussion club about the problems in hand, and a tradition emerges. We don't think it possible or desirable to have a research and development project in which such traditions are avoided. But it does distinguish teachers working within the 'project club' from those outside it.

In the sector of our programme supported by the SSRC we recruited two groups of teachers: one group who would teach by Strategy A, the HCP strategy, and another who would teach by Strategy B, in which the teacher expressed his social commitment in the classroom. In the Gulbenkian wing of the programme we recruited a group of teachers interested in teaching about race relations through drama (Strategy C). We recruited Strategy B first because there was more work to be done with these teachers and in their support. Strategy A came before Strategy C, partly because there was a delay in receiving our funding decision from the Gulbenkian Foundation, and partly because the progress of our research was delayed a little by our principal research worker on this wing of the project suffering a motor accident.

The samples of local education authorities, schools, pupils and teachers are fully discussed later in this book (Chapter 4), where the issue of their representativeness is examined. What we want to do here is take you through the experiences of the teachers involved.

The Strategy B teachers ultimately involved came from sixteen schools. Their local authorities had agreed to meet their expenses in attending project conferences. Although a minority of the teachers had made an initial decision to take part on the project, most were nominated by their schools, which in turn were nominated by their local authorities. Some local authorities declined invitations to take part, as did some schools.

Those Strategy B teachers who were able to do so attended a conference in Norwich on 24-29 May 1973. For this conference I wrote a paper on behalf of the project team; and it seems worthwhile to print this in full since we still feel it might be a reasonable point of departure for a school in thinking about its teaching in this area.

#### SSRC PROJECT: THE PROBLEMS AND EFFECTS OF TEACHING ABOUT RACE RELATIONS

Draft Working paper for the conference of Strategy B  
Experimental Teachers, Norwich, 24-29 May 1973

#### THE NEED FOR CONSENSUS

If teachers from some forty-five schools are to co-operate in a research and development project, there must be consensus about aims and procedures. Without such consensus it will be difficult to communicate with one another and to report the work we have done to teachers who have not taken part in the experiment. The consensus we achieve should discipline our experiment without constraining it. There must be room within the consensus for experimental initiatives and for individual style.

#### GENERAL EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

In the nature of the case the general experimental design has originated with the research team. This design had to be set out in order to attract the support of sponsors and local authorities which makes the experiment possible. The research team must now make sure that the general design is acceptable to all those taking part.

It is proposed that three groups of schools - about fifteen in each group - should be involved in the project. Each group should be involved in teaching about race relations to pupils in the fourth year. Each group should follow a different method or procedure and so far we have called these Strategy A, Strategy B and Strategy C.

Strategy A schools are expected to use the approach of the Humanities Curriculum Project, in which the teacher plays the role of a neutral chairman.

Strategy B schools are expected to use an approach in

which the teacher feels free to express his own or the school's commitment in the classroom.

Strategy C schools are expected to use an approach based on drama.

It is desirable for experimental reasons that the weight of the teaching should fall in the second term of the fourth year. This will allow us to administer tests in the first and third terms. It will also allow us to test the same pupils a year later in the fifth year.

Our basic assumption is that all three approaches will in some sense work, but that each will throw up different problems and provide different insights. At the end of the experiment we hope to have information and materials which will make it possible for schools to make an eclectic approach to the problem of teaching about race relations, drawing on three strategies. We do not think there will be one 'right' way of teaching about race relations.

Our experience suggests that the work in the experimental schools will be demanding on teachers in terms of skill, amount of work and psychological pressure.

It is important to note that the experiment rests on the assumption that there is something to be gained from an attempt to handle race relations as a topic with adolescents. There are those who believe that race relations should not be handled as an explicit topic and others who believe that it should not be handled with adolescents unless it is part of the school's programme from the first year.

#### STRATEGY B: THE TASK OF THE CONFERENCE

This paper is being produced for the Strategy B conference in May 1973. In suitably modified form it will go to the Strategy A conference in July 1973 and the Strategy C conference in September 1973.

As a result of the May conference, teachers in Strategy B schools will have to achieve consensus in a general description of the work they propose to undertake. It is part of the task of the research team to help in this.

On the basis of our present experience we can make some suggestions as to how adequate consensus can be achieved; but they are only suggestions.

It seems profitable to try to be clear about our premises - how we see the situation - and our aims - what we intend to do about it. We may well need to go on to examine the implications of our aims for practice and to define the kind of teaching materials required. Some consensus in the definition of terms is also desirable.

## STRATEGY B: PREMISES

Premises define how we see the situation at the beginning of our experiment. We hope to learn from the experiment so that our premises should be treated as provisional; as hypotheses.

One assumption has already been stated: that it is worthwhile to teach adolescents about race relations.

Other premises will have to be agreed at the Conference. But some questions can be raised here:

- (1) Is racial prejudice characteristic of our society and shaped by social experience?
- (2) Is racial prejudice related to the psychological needs of individuals or of groups?
- (3) Can schools influence attitudes?
- (4) Are schools involved in transmitting racial prejudice - e.g. through textbooks, etc? If they are, is this avoidable?
- (5) Are we to regard ourselves as teachers as free from prejudice or as implicated in prejudice?
- (6) What is the nature of the teacher's commitment in this area?
- (7) Is the school entitled to work against prejudice if parents are prejudiced?
- (8) How do we view the relationship between information, understanding, empathy and attitudes?
- (9) What should be the school's attitude towards well-informed hostility to people who are distinguished as a group on racial grounds?
- (10) Is it more important to assert that all people are similar or that all people are different?
- (11) Do we have to take a line on heredity v. environment?
- (12) What importance do we give to cultural differences?
- (13) Ought all groups to be assimilated or integrated into society, and if so, in what sense?

Many of these are extremely difficult questions. Probably we cannot hope to find even provisional answers to them all. But they ought to be on our agenda.

## STRATEGY B: AIMS

Premises are our expression of the situation as we see it. Aims are general statements of our intentions as teachers. When we have more than one aim we probably need to state our aims in order of importance. If two aims come into conflict, which ought to win?

The following are examples of teaching aims which might be discussed (among others) at the conference:

- (a) to attack/undermine (racial) prejudice in students;
- (b) to attack/study critically (racial) prejudice and discrimination in society;
- (c) to develop tolerance/respect for people of other races/people different from ourselves;
- (d) to encourage pupils to react to difference with interest rather than hostility or fear;
- (e) to provide much fuller and more accurate information about other cultures, racial difference, our multi-racial society;
- (f) to develop an awareness of other cultures, and of differences of value among cultures;
- (g) to help students to develop an awareness of their own cultural identity;
- (h) to help students to respond at an interpersonal level to people from other cultures;
- (i) to help students to question critically racial and cultural generalizations and stereotypes;
- (j) to develop students' capacity to criticize attitudes towards other cultures and other races when these carry the authority of the adult world or the school.

#### IMPLICATIONS

There are two alternative or possibly complementary approaches to spelling out the implications of an agreed aim. One is to analyse it into behavioural objectives, that is, close specifications of how students should perform as a result of the course; the other is to spell out the implications for the teaching strategy and materials. Either approach is acceptable from the point of view of the experiment. More information will be available at the conference.

Out of our discussion we should perhaps hope that some agreement about the use of terms emerges: e.g., race, ethnic, culture, tolerance, respect, prejudice, discrimination.

This paper is very largely concerned with focusing the issues and providing an agenda for the conference. It arises from the problems of educational experiment.

The conference itself involved intensive work and considerable pressures as a group of teachers sought a common identity and basis for working, while a group of researchers working as staff of the conference kept pressing the deadline within the conference for a common statement of intent. Part of my role was to draft and re-draft a statement which attempted to build on the various statements and papers produced by teachers within the conference, and it would be disingenuous to pretend that this was not a position of considerable influence, which must give me a good deal of responsibility for what emerged.

The working paper that was adopted by the conference was as follows:-

CENTRE FOR APPLIED RESEARCH IN EDUCATION,  
UNIVERSITY OF EAST ANGLIA  
SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL PROJECT:  
PROBLEMS AND EFFECTS OF TEACHING ABOUT RACE  
RELATIONS

STRATEGY B: *Working Paper from the Norwich Conference May 1973*

This Working Paper is an attempt to catch the consensus which emerged from the conference. Please comment if you feel that any correction is necessary.

We have set out the paper under the general headings used at the conference:

**PREMISES** These are statements made in the conference about the situation as the participants see it and they provide a basis on which Strategy B is built.

**AIM** This is intended to be a brief statement of the intentions and purposes of the teaching.

**ROLE OF THE TEACHER** This is intended to catch the practical implications of Strategy B for the teacher's approach.

**PRINCIPLES OF PROCEDURE** These provide an amplification and clarification of the implications of the aim.

**TEACHING STRATEGIES TO BE EXPLORED** These point towards problems of content and method in the classroom. It will be important for teachers and schools to try some of them in practice and report results.

The practical side of the experiment is in exploring and testing the teacher role and the strategies.

- What problems do these raise?
- How do they work out in your school?
- How do they need to be changed?
- What do they really look like in practice?
- What do you think are the effects on pupils?

**PREMISES**

- (1) 'Prejudice' is taken to mean prejudgement which involves undervaluing or penalizing people.
- (2) Racial prejudice is a characteristic of our society, related to and influenced by social factors, experience and the acquisition of cultural attitudes.
- (3) Social, economic and institutional factors are influential in the maintenance of prejudice and discrimina-

tion in our society.

- (4) Racial prejudice is also related to the psychological needs of individuals and groups.
- (5) Elements in our society often play upon ignorance and fear in order to maintain prejudice and discrimination.
- (6) Schools often transmit accepted social values which may themselves be factors in racial prejudice.
- (7) Schools may transmit prejudice through structure, curriculum content and textbooks.
- (8) Schools ought to attempt to teach about race relations and to diminish prejudice, discrimination and tension.
- (9) This is a task for all schools, not just multi-racial schools.
- (10) Schools are entitled to work for better race relations, even if the parents are prejudiced and discriminatory.
- (11) It is important that teachers examine their own prejudice.

#### AIM

To educate for the elimination of racial tensions and ill-feeling within our society - which is and will be multi-racial - by understanding prejudice, by developing respect for varied traditions, and by encouraging mutual understanding, reasonableness and justice.

#### PRINCIPLES OF PROCEDURE

- (1) We should help pupils become aware of their own attitudes.
- (2) We should assist pupils to detect bias and the motives behind this.
- (3) We should help pupils become aware of the emotional content in racial tension or conflict.
- (4) We should make clear the historical and social factors which help explain the presence of racial/ethnic groups in society.
- (5) We should help pupils to see that many problems which appear to stem from racial causes may be predominantly social.
- (6) We need to help pupils to see the possibility of organizing for change.

#### ROLE OF THE TEACHER

The teacher should be an example of a person critical of prejudiced attitudes and opinions held by himself and society at large and trying to achieve some degree of mutual understanding and respect between identifiably different human groups.

#### TEACHING STRATEGIES TO BE EXPLORED

- (1) We need to introduce into the classroom a structure and an atmosphere conducive to effective teaching about race relations.
- (2) It is important, particularly at the beginning of the work, to set up situations which help teachers to know more about their pupils and their attitudes.
- (3) We need to help pupils to look at their own views and criticize what they see.
- (4) We should in general focus the work on the experiential and the emotional, factual materials being built round that. Most of the factual data need to be in teachers' books rather than in pupils' materials.
- (5) It will be necessary to examine critically the bias and prejudice expressed in textbooks and other resource materials as well as generally in the arts and literature and mass media. (It may be difficult to deal with all aspects in the classroom.)
- (6) We should help pupils to question critically racial and cultural generalizations and stereotypes; and to criticize their attitudes towards other races even when these carry the authority of the adult world or the school.
- (7) Race relations can be regarded as an aspect of social tension, and there is a need for a study of tension both in society at large and in face-to-face groups such as the teaching group. (This presents problems for the teacher: there are possibilities in simulation, and observations and group self-analysis and drama; but release of tension in the classroom can be frightening and difficult to handle.)
- (8) We should not treat prejudice and discrimination only in the context of colour, but should explore the nature of prejudice in general and of prejudice and discrimination in religious and nationalist contexts (e.g. Ireland).
- (9) It is particularly important to make clear the social, historical and institutional factors shaping prejudice and not to stress individual guilt about the past; but it is important to stress individual responsibility now.
- (10) We should try to develop an awareness of other cultures and of differences of values of other cultures.
- (11) We need to generate interest in and respect for both differences and similarities.
- (12) We need to help people to respond at an interpersonal level to people of other races.
- (13) We should value the choices a plural society can give rather than conformity in the name of integration.

On the basis of this position, the project central team was commissioned to prepare or to seek out and recommend teaching

materials to support the teachers who were working within the experiment.

We cannot pass on from this conference without noting that there was a strong note of dissent from the majority view. One school withdrew. The conference ran from 24 to 29 May. On Sunday, 27 May, the following statement was issued by the members attending from Archbishop Temple's School, London:

Sunday 27th May 1973

Statement to SSRC Conference on the Teaching of Race Relations  
From the representatives of Archbishop Temple's School,  
London

We came to this conference with some experience of teaching in multi-racial schools, some experience of living and working in multi-racial areas of London, and with some hope.

We appreciate the initiative of the University's project team in calling on teachers to participate in putting out teaching materials. We think it would be generally agreed by participants that we gave ample voice to our convictions, basing them on our experience and study in and outside the teaching situation.

The mode of procedure at the conference seemed to allow for the incorporation of these views, with modifications, into the aims, strategies and premises of the project.

We list below some of the contributions we made to the conference which are missing from the formulated document.\* We believe these contributions are fundamental to the problem we are discussing:

- (1) That the problem of race relations is basically a problem of racism and not of prejudice.
- (2) By racism we mean the systematic oppression of a group of people for socio-economic purposes. Attendant on this definition is the conviction that racism must be eliminated. No amount of knowledge of 'cultures' will do this. An obvious example is contained in the history of the Raj in India. Two hundred years of rule may have bred a complete understanding of Indian civilization, culture and habits, but this understanding did not alter the structure of the Empire. A contemporary example is South Africa. In that context, understanding black culture facilitates control.
- (3) We believe that education and the school curriculum have a role to play in the elimination of institutional racism.

\*An earlier draft of the document printed above.

- (4) We do not believe that the contradictory approach which places the onus of racism on the child and his or her family, can work in conjunction with the realization stated above.

Because of this, we feel we are obliged to withdraw from the second part of the conference which deals with teaching materials.

(Signed:) Farrukh Dhondy Hilary Boudillon Barry Simner

Farrukh Dhondy shortly afterwards published an extended statement of his position in the 'Times Educational Supplement' (2 November 1973). It is too long to reprint here, but it is well worth studying and discussing in any school or teachers' centre group.

It is obviously impossible for us to represent Dhondy's view, but we need to make one or two points.

The team from Archbishop Temple was working in a multi-racial context. The withdrawal of the group was an immense blow to the other teachers at the conference, and the remainder of the proceedings were conducted under its shadow. As a result, most of the subsequent discussion took account of what were taken to be the views of the members who had withdrawn. The group did not by any means lose its influence on the conference when it left.

There were many teachers working in the project who were teaching in non-multi-racial areas, who had virtually no prior knowledge about race relations and who knew intimately nobody of a different racial background from themselves. The Archbishop Temple group were experienced and sophisticated. Immediately before their withdrawal from the conference, there were points where we believe it might have been possible for myself as chairman to take an initiative to keep them in the group by endorsing their experience as constituting a right to leadership of the group. I did not do this because I did not feel assured of their patience with people less skilled and experienced than themselves. I believe I was right in this decision.

Finally, we believe that there is a crucial need for teachers for whom race relations and racism are not central concerns of their living to make a contribution within a general educational commitment. Such a commitment is the necessary premise of a project which sees itself in a service and supporting role. The Archbishop Temple group seemed to have a commitment to the elimination of racism which was stronger than and overrode their commitment to teaching. Accordingly, the context of their action must be seen as, in the broadest sense, political. In the project we were concerned only with the educational contribution to that overall political objective.

We do not mean to suggest that political action on racism is

unimportant: on the contrary, we do not believe that the political problem of racism can be delegated to the schools as if they were the means to solve problems that society will not face politically. This project seems to demonstrate that the appropriate contribution of education to interracial respect is limited though important. Probably, its contribution to the elimination of 'institutional' racism is marginal; but it is a consideration of the contribution of education which is necessarily the common ground for a diverse group of teachers.

Another aspect of the Strategy B conference is that it was the occasion of our attempting to negotiate with the teachers their role as co-researchers within the project. Since the major continuity between the Humanities Project and the present project is in the concern for teachers studying and researching their own work, this is an important matter; but we shall defer its full discussion for a few pages until we have described the Strategy A conference parallel to that of Strategy B reported above. This Strategy A conference was held at the University of York from 12 to 16 July 1973.

We have said that we had some difficulty in recruiting Strategy B schools for the project in terms of schools or LEAs not wishing to participate. Our difficulties were even greater in Strategy A, the Humanities Project strategy, no doubt as a result of the publicity attending the Schools Council's veto on publication of the project's collection on race relations, widely known as the 'race pack'. The result of this difficulty was to produce a group that was, on the whole, rather experienced in HCP, that was inclined to find its approach convincing, that was fairly clear about aims, and that did not require training in the method. Accordingly, there was much less work to be done on teaching in the Strategy A conference, and more attention was given to the role of the teachers in the research and to the assembling of teaching materials.

At the end of the Humanities Curriculum Project, the project team had a rather substantial archive of box files full of materials on race relations from which the teaching collection had been selected. This archive included those materials that had been in the vetoed race collection, though they were not identifiable (except that a couple of teachers in the conference had taken part in the previous experiment). During the first two days of the conference the teachers worked through this archive, making comments and suggestions towards a new collection for the new experiment.

Strategy B teachers had already tried to anticipate their needs for teaching materials at their own conference.

At that time, we hoped to produce two sets of teaching materials, but this proved over-ambitious both in terms of time and in terms of finance. In the end we produced a single compromise collection. Some experimental schools used a good deal of our materials, some a little, a few none. Some schools