Equality and Ethnic Identities
Studies of Self-Concept, Child Abuse and Education in a Changing English Culture
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This book combines history, sociology, psychology and educational policy in research on a 40-year, crucial phase of development of ethnic identity, ethnic relations and educational and social policies for children in England, from pre-school to secondary school. The authors show how nursery children of different ethnicities interact in beginning their identity journeys in a culture of both inequality, and evolving ethnic relationships and patterns of harmony, in Britain’s developing multicultural society.

In looking at self-concept development in secondary school children through the lens of various kinds of child maltreatment, Alice Sawyerr and Christopher Bagley argue that ethnic minority children are psychological survivors, and African-Caribbean girls especially are making strong identity steps – it is the “poor whites” who will make up the precariat, the reserve army of labour, who are left behind in structures of inequality.
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and

Christopher Adam Bagley
Liverpool John Moores University, UK
We dedicate this book, with gratitude and affection, to the memory of our colleague Dr. Kanka Mallick of Manchester Metropolitan University, and to the futures of our own children, Richard, Jessica, Michael, Daniel and Abigail. And we pray for the healthy, joyous and prosperous futures of the 22 wonderful children whom we studied in St. John’s nursery school in London.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACE</td>
<td>Adverse Childhood Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANOVA</td>
<td>Analysis of Variance</td>
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<tr>
<td>BTEC</td>
<td>Secondary school-leaving certificate focusing on practice rather than theory</td>
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<td>CCH</td>
<td>Child-Centred Humanism</td>
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<td>CCEA</td>
<td>Children’s Centres in England Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CECA</td>
<td>Childhood Experiences of Care and Abuse scale</td>
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<td>CEVQ</td>
<td>Childhood Events Questionnaire</td>
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<tr>
<td>CNS</td>
<td>Central Nervous System</td>
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<td>CR</td>
<td>Critical Realism</td>
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<td>CSA</td>
<td>Child Sexual Abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCP</td>
<td>Day Care Provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCR</td>
<td>Dialectical Critical Realism</td>
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<tr>
<td>DfE</td>
<td>Department for Education</td>
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<td>DFEE</td>
<td>Department for Education and Employment</td>
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<td>DoE</td>
<td>Department of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>DES</td>
<td>Department of Education and Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>DfES</td>
<td>Department for Education and Skills</td>
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<td>DoH</td>
<td>Department of Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>EYFS</td>
<td>Early Years Foundation Stage</td>
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<tr>
<td>GBCS</td>
<td>Great Britain Class Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTC</td>
<td>General Teaching Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEFCE</td>
<td>Higher Education Funding Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMG</td>
<td>Her Majesty’s Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPPR</td>
<td>Institute of Public Policy Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>MELD</td>
<td>Acronym for the 4 levels of DCR: 1M, 2E, 3L, 4D</td>
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<tr>
<td>MENCAP</td>
<td>‘Mentally Handicapped’ Charity Organisation</td>
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<td>MERN</td>
<td>Manchester Educational Research Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAO</td>
<td>National Audit Office</td>
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<td>NESS</td>
<td>National Evaluation of Sure Start</td>
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<td>NHS</td>
<td>National Health Service of England and Wales</td>
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<tr>
<td>NNEB</td>
<td>Nursery Nursing Examination Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>NVQ</td>
<td>English term for National Vocational Qualification. NVQ 3 is a first year college level qualification.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>--------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>OFSTED</td>
<td>Office for Standards in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONS</td>
<td>Office for National Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power1</td>
<td>In DCR: enabling, emancipatory power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power2</td>
<td>In DCR: coercive, repressive power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRU</td>
<td>Pupil Referral Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSHE</td>
<td>Personal, Social and Health Education curriculum</td>
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<tr>
<td>PISA</td>
<td>Programme for International Student Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>PTSD</td>
<td>Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>QCA</td>
<td>Qualifications and Curriculum Authority</td>
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<td>RE</td>
<td>Religious Education</td>
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<td>RSES</td>
<td>Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale</td>
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<td>SATS</td>
<td>Scholastic Attainment Tests</td>
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<td>SEN</td>
<td>Special Educational Needs</td>
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<td>SEU</td>
<td>School Exclusions Unit</td>
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<td>SSCC</td>
<td>Sure Start Child-Care Centre</td>
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<td>SSLP</td>
<td>Sure Start Local Programmes</td>
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<tr>
<td>StJ's</td>
<td>St. John's Nursery School</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organisaton</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>1M</td>
<td>In DCR, the first level: Non-Identity, Absence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2E</td>
<td>In DCR, the second level: Second Edge, Negativity ‘absenting absences’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3L</td>
<td>In DCR, the third level: Totality of Social Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4D</td>
<td>In DCR, the fourth level: Inner Being and Transformative Agency</td>
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AFRICAN AND RUSSIAN JOURNEYS

Reflections on Autoethnography

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is in essence our attempt to chronicle and understand the role which our own identities have played in planning, undertaking, and writing about ethnic identity, disadvantage and racism. Our twin research journeys began for Christopher (CAB) in 1968 when he began researching ethnicity in England, and continued that journey in Canada, The Caribbean, India, The Philippines, Bangladesh and Hong Kong. Early in Christopher’s academic journey two students arrived separately in England to begin nursing studies: one, Alice (AAAS) had origins in Sierra Leone and Ghana, and began her research journey which resulted in 2016 in the PhD in psychology on which this book is based. The secondurse, Loretta Young (LY) from Jamaica went on to study sociology, and became the partner of CAB.

Loretta’s ideas and research have contributed to our own perspectives which has culminated in the research of the two of us, Alice and Christopher, which has become increasingly focused on ethnic identity, including our own ethnicities as we journey in the world, have partners of differing colours, and children of mixed ethnicities. Alice and Christopher have been research partners since 2008, working together on projects on identity, education and ethnicity within the Manchester Educational Research Network (MERN). A member of this network, Dr. Kanka Mallick died before her due time, and this book carries forward work which she designed and initiated. Christopher and Loretta, together with Kanka and others, engaged in work on child abuse, and on the identity and adjustments of children in contrasted social and cultural settings (Bagley & Mallick, 1979–2001; Bagley & Young, 1979–1999). These joint endeavours have provided the intellectual grounding for this book, based on Alice Sawyerr’s interpretation of the issues of ethnicity, identity and child maltreatment addressed by members of the MERN.

Our subjective-objective approach is emboldened by the literature on autoethnography, defined by Ellis et al. (2011) as: “... an approach to
research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyse personal experience ... this approach treats research as a potential, socially-conscious act” (p. 1). In this model, autoethnography is both process and product. For Alice and Christopher, autoethnography is an implicit intellectual process which informs their intuition as they write, construct studies, and interpret data. For us, at least, an approach which is grounded in qualitative sociology and psychology does permit us to undertake “mixed methods” research, which includes quantitative research on such topics as self-esteem, child maltreatment, ethnicity and adjustment. Our value assumptions, manifested through our biographies, are incorporated into the research model of dialectical critical realism, which is discussed in detail in a later chapter. An excellent example of autoethnography coupled with critical realism comes from the Aboriginal scholar Chris Sarra, who in his book *Strong and Smart: Towards a Pedagogy of Emancipation* (2011), writes an autobiography of his experience as head teacher of a rural Australian school, and how his identity as an Aboriginal Australian informed his pedagogy. Excellent examples of successful autoethnography are found in the educational and social research papers written and edited by Hughes (2011), Short et al. (2013) and Pillay et al. (2016).

**AN AFRICAN JOURNEY**

*Alice Sawyerr* writes: The role I have played in this research reflects my belief and understanding that research is never a neutral matter: it is important to make the researcher’s role as visible to the reader as possible. Such information is valuable in indicating ‘where the researcher is coming from’, making apparent her value perspectives and biases (Evans, 1998). In particular, I do not wish to distance myself from the multi-ethnic nursery practitioners, children, parents and carers at the nursery that I worked with as a clinician over a ten year period (1994–2004), work which also included the *Identity Project on “Myself”* in 1998 with the practitioners, parents and pre-school children (Sawyerr, 1999).

Evans (1998) observes that: *Researchers using ethnographic and biographical approaches often include reflexive accounts describing how they came to their topics and giving some personal details in order to situate themselves in relation to their work.* Connelly and Clandinin (1994) also observe that texts written as if the researcher had no autobiographical presence result in: “… Deception about the epistemological status of the research. Such a study lacks validity.”
It would be unseemly for me as an African researcher to write a historical case study on my participatory observations and interviews with multi-ethnic nursery practitioners and children from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, which did not include a reflexive account of my personal experience of ‘colour and ethnicity’. Distancing myself from participants in this study would be what Fine (1994) describes as ‘othering’. It is for all these reasons that I include the following account of myself in ‘An African Journey’ in this chapter, and ‘not for reasons of self-publicity’ (Evans, 1998).

My journey begins in Freetown, Sierra Leone in West Africa, where I was born. My parents were Creoles (Krios) from Freetown. My upbringing in the first five years of life was in Freetown, and then my parents moved to the then Gold Coast (now Ghana) where I attended primary and secondary boarding school.

I came to the UK to study nursing at age 19. During my training at The London Teaching Hospital in Whitechapel (now the Royal London Hospital), I developed an interest in psychology, but was persuaded by my parents to complete nurse training in the UK first before beginning degree studies in psychology. After becoming a State Registered Nurse at the London Teaching Hospital, I left for university education in Ontario, Canada in 1974. There I completed a four-year full time psychology degree in three years in 1977 (attending summer school each year) in Toronto. I married after graduation, and worked as a clinician at a juvenile correction system in Ontario, providing assessments and writing reports on young offenders for court hearings. By this time, I had two children.


I left child protection social work in 1994 to work, for 10 years as a clinician in a multidisciplinary outpatient specialist all-age National Health Service (NHS) Mental Health Trust Clinic, with the added responsibility for service provision for all six local authority day nurseries in a generally affluent area of central London, but with pockets of extreme deprivation. I initially taught part-time at Royal Holloway, University of London (RHUL) for nine years (1995–2004), while also working full time with the NHS Mental Health Trust.
Subsequently I worked full time at RHUL for 11 years (2004–2015) teaching Psychology, Family Therapy and Mental Health.

Now, I consider some of the key developmental stages in my life. I reflect on where I lived in the world, whether I was in a predominantly black or white environment, and whether or not it made a difference to me personally, educationally or professionally. I continue ‘An African Journey’ on a personal note, with the unveiling of cultural and ethnic origins and the importance of this historical background in my understanding of the concept of ethnic identity, and my subsequent professional and research development.

As far back as I can remember, between ages 5 to 19 years I was living in the Gold Coast (now Ghana) a predominantly (black) African society. I had no reason to doubt my identity and I was conscious and proud of the fact that I was black and African, like every citizen in the country. My parents were, of course, black and African. My dad was darker in complexion, while my mum was quite light in her skin colour. My complexion is halfway between that of my mum and my dad’s. My mum had long wavy soft hair. I have softer curlier hair than my dad. I did not attach any value or significance to either of my parents’ complexion or hair texture at the time, or wondered about their ethnic origins. I was aware that my mum’s relatives were all light skinned, and my dad’s relatives were all darker in complexion.

On reflection now, I do not remember ever thinking of myself as being different in any way, because some of my friends that I grew up and attended boarding school with had parents with similarly “different” complexions, like those of my parents. I was never asked at school about my ethnicity or identity, only my name and the names of my parents. There isn’t even a word for ethnicity or identity in the Creole (Krio) language which is my mother tongue (a Sierra Leonean dialect), or in the Ga dialect which I am fluent in, spoken in Accra, Ghana where I lived with my parents for 14 years.

When I arrived in the UK at age 19, I lived with my uncle (my dad’s younger brother) and his Nigerian wife in a flat in Earls Court, in Southwest London which although predominantly white, had a mixture of black and other ethnic minorities. We moved later to Golders Green, North West London, which is predominantly ‘white’, and is also the main residential area for London’s affluent Jewish population. We had many family members visiting from West Africa. Local family friends and former school mates, mostly students would visit us regularly to have dinner, which we referred to as our favourite dinner parties. The house was always lively at weekends which I looked forward to when I visited my extended family, from my nursing residence in Whitechapel, East London.
The hospital patients and the community in Whitechapel were a mixture of English, Irish, blacks from Africa and the Caribbean, Asians and other ethnic minorities. The staff and students at the hospital were also from multi-ethnic backgrounds. This was once the area off residence of newly arrived Jewish refugees, who later moved to Golders Green; now it is the home of a relatively new population from Bangladesh. My friends and student colleagues were a mixture of whites, blacks and individuals from different parts of the world. I never saw myself as being different and have no recollection of being made by others to feel ‘different’ because I was black.

On completion of nurse training in the UK I left for Canada where I was a full-time undergraduate psychology student. Being an international student I was given priority for accommodation on campus for three years. Toronto is a cosmopolitan city, similar to London with students from all over the world. There were blacks who identified themselves as black Canadians, or as African Canadians and West Indians.

I was perceived and referred to by my white and non-white friends and work colleagues during my stay in Canada, as an African Canadian, because of my Canadian citizenship. I did not have any experience of being an isolated black person during my student days, or during professional life as a clinician working in statutory settings with white children, adolescents and young adults and their families from diverse cultural backgrounds. Again I never saw myself as being different and have no recollection of being made by others to feel different (or disadvantaged) because I was black.

On my return to the UK in 1987 with my family, I worked as a clinician with children and their families from multi-ethnic backgrounds in Ladbroke Grove in West London. I also conducted joint assessments and investigations with Kensington and Chelsea Social Services, working collaboratively with health visitors and local community organizations and interpreters. The fellow staff team members were from diverse ethnic, cultural and multi-faith backgrounds. During this stage in my life, I have no recollection of being made by others to feel different: my ethnicity did not seem to matter. It was my qualifications, ability, skills and professional experience that counted.

When I joined the NHS (National Health Service) children’s mental health clinical centre I did not give much thought to the fact that I was going to be the only black clinician on site. This was a highly respected centre of excellence staffed by a team of all-white clinicians and administrative staff. Most had been working there for more than a decade. The clinic was headed by a psychiatrist, and I was familiar
with all of the staff members in the clinic, and was warmly welcomed when I joined.

The only transition I had to make was from that of a former joint student/trainee from University College, London, to the status of a colleague in the NHS children’s mental health centre. The clinic provided free NHS Mental Health outpatient services to all who would self-refer, or be referred by various health, legal and welfare agencies, including managers of local day nurseries in the borough, for child and parent assessments, and whatever therapy was considered necessary. During my first months at the clinic I began to notice and experience a strange pattern of behaviour from referred clients, who were all new to me. I would go to the reception room to call out the name/s of the referred individuals, couples or family members, greet them and lead them to the consulting room, close the door after them, introduce myself, sit down and attempt to begin the session. However, the individuals, couples or family members would fix their eyes at the consulting room door as though they were expecting “the real clinician” to join them in the session. I would reintroduce myself, ask them to introduce themselves and go through standard assessment and routine interviews with them before starting to engage them in a conversation about their reasons for attending the initial sessions and how they would want to use the sessions. I noted that these clients were all white.

I also observed different reactions from black and mixed parentage children, couples and families, who had also been referred to the clinic. They reacted in the following ways:

- Some black Africans and African Caribbean clients after entering the consulting room would turn around and shake my hand congratulating me for being the first black clinician at the clinic. They used words like: *You have made it, you have arrived Sis. It’s good to have some colour in this place.*
- Others presented themselves as quiet, polite, respectful and watchful. They would not refer to me by my first name but as: *Miss Alice, Mrs Sawyerr, Miss, Madam or Ma’am.*

However, there was a notable non-attendance by some white clients who having met me, did not call to cancel their subsequent, missed appointment. This was in contrast to all of the black clients. I raised this in a staff meeting when all of the clinicians were present and tried to find out whether this
was a familiar pattern. Colleagues informed me they had never had similar experiences in all the years they had been working at the clinic.

Only the director of the clinic, a consultant psychiatrist remarked that it could be related to my ethnicity i.e. my being black in a visibly all-white clinic – even though some of the clinicians were Jewish, others were European or South American. Although the ‘absentee’ behaviours of some clients, and reactions from ethnic minorities had not been anticipated, they had to be given serious consideration. With time, as some of the clients began to settle in the sessions they also began to open up with me, which involved taking risks in sharing their feelings and becoming more reflective. This gradually extended to the sharing of the following with me.

For the white clients:

• They did not mean to be rude or disrespectful in the initial session when they were staring at the consulting room door.
• They were expecting a white clinician, as the clinic has never had an ethnic minority clinician in the staff team.
• Some had been referred to the clinic previously and were familiar with the ethnic composition of the staff team.
• My name on the appointment letter did not indicate to them that I was non-white so they may have been shocked to see me, and thought I was a new secretary or a student on placement, taking them to the consulting room before the arrival of the clinician.

For the black clients:

• They said it was a pleasant surprise for them to finally see a black clinician at the clinic – that was why they congratulated me.
• Some expressed their belief that a black clinician would be more able to take into consideration other cultural and traditional perspectives other than Eurocentric ones. This would include different child rearing practices, hierarchical structures in black families as well as the struggles, prejudices and injustice that black families face in society, especially when involved with social service, the police and the school systems.
• Others said they were surprised and could not help but wonder how I had managed to get a clinical post at that clinic. They thought I must be knowledgeable and well experienced.

Most of my colleagues admitted that they had never thought of my ethnicity becoming an issue, or had expected these reactions from white and ethnic minority clients. When I began clinical work with referred children
and their parents and carers on site at the day nurseries (rather than at the clinic as my colleagues had done previously), all the nursery practitioners presented themselves to me as relaxed and friendly. They would ask me to join them in the staff room during my lunch break. I also became aware that the nursery practitioners whose children and their parents I was working with jointly (with the clinic and the nursery), were giving feedback to the other nursery practitioners about the work we were doing together. These included:

- Positive changes they were observing in the children’s behaviour,
- The fact that the parents were fully engaged in the work with their children at the nursery,
- Also, they appreciated that they did not have to collect their children from nursery and travel with them on two buses each way, to and from the NHS Mental Health Trust Clinic.

The preschool group room nursery practitioners also began to join me in the staff room during the lunch breaks and invited me to their group room for afternoon tea with the children. They eventually told me that they had initially thought that I would be ‘a coconut, brown on the outside but white on the inside in my thinking, attitude as well as behaviour’. But they admitted that over time they had come to realize that their assumptions about me were wrong! The nursery workers also felt able to express their concerns to me about the number of black and mixed parentage children who were being referred to the NHS Mental Health Trust clinic rather than to Family Centres. They were concerned that the children were being ‘pathologised’ and labelled before starting school at age five.

During the identity project on ‘myself’, one of the preschool group room’s black practitioners played an important and leading role in getting her colleagues, the children and parents to work collaboratively with her on completing the project tasks, concerning their children’s ethnicity and identity, since some of the children seemed confused concerning these areas. In one of the identity project staff consultation sessions, we talked about our own ethnic backgrounds and identity. We gave permission to each other to ask clarifying questions. When it was my turn, I described my ethnicity and cultural background as ‘black African, Creole from Sierra Leone’. However when I was asked which section of the Creole ethnic group in Freetown I belonged to, I could not answer, as I had never asked my parents about this.
I was able to ask my mother about this. She informed me that her ancestors were the freed slave settlers in Nova Scotia who had escaped from slavery in the USA. The British government had subsequently resettled many of this population in the western part of Freetown, although many remained in Halifax, Nova Scotia, where most of Canada’s black population live, only overtaken in size in recent years by African-Caribbean settlers in Toronto, and Haitians in Montreal. She also explained that there had been a lot of interracial marriages (between ‘blacks’ and people of various shades of colour) over the generations on her side of the family, hence the lighter skin complexion which prevailed in her family.

She also explained (as dad had passed on by then) that, my father’s ancestors were originally from Nigeria, from the Yoruba people. They had been settled by the British government in the Eastern part of Freetown shortly after emancipation was declared by Britain. They had been taken from Nigeria but had subsequently escaped being sent to the Americas or Europe, so had not been involved in interracial marriages, which she pointed out explained their darker complexion and their retention of their Nigerian, Yoruba first names. Their surname had been changed to ‘SAWYERR’, and the family has maintained a particular spelling of the surname which has remained a prominent name in Sierra Leone, Ghana and in Nigeria (spelled with a double R at the end).

‘An African Journey’ started with my birth in Sierra Leone, travels through Ghana, England, Canada, and back to England where my interest in ethnic identity issues developed and led me to the discovery of my ancestral historical roots in Nigeria, and in the freed slave populations of Nova Scotia. Despite these diversities of background, I came to have a consciousness of “colour” and of ethnic difference and how others react to personal ethnicity, only in my postgraduate studies and professional work. I had been largely protected by my family, my social class position, and the cultures in which I grew up and began my career. Only in Britain did I come to understand, emotionally, how racism works and how it could disadvantage minority individuals, and their children.

In 2002 my colleague Fola Shogbamimu introduced me to Professor Christopher Bagley, his former teacher and research supervisor. Professor Bagley and his Jamaican partner Loretta Young had a keen interest in ethnicity and cross-cultural psychological issues (the topic of Loretta’s thesis), and since 2008 I have been associated with Professor Bagley’s Manchester Educational Research Network. This collaboration explains the convergence of Christopher Bagley’s ideas with my own approach, and my
use of materials and data available from the Manchester group, including material collected by Dr Kanka Mallick.

CHRISTOPHER BAGLEY: ASHKENAZI EXODUS – MULTICULTURAL AND MULTIFAITH JOURNEYS

Christopher Bagley writes: My great-grandfather, Abraham Abramsky arrived in London in 1876 with his wife and two young sons, settling first in Bethnal Green. They were escaping pogroms inflicted in a town in what is now Belarus, in the region ‘Beyond the Pale’, to which Ashkenazi Jews were relegated. The two young boys – one of them my grandfather, one of them my grand-uncle – chose different routes in adapting to English society. My grand-uncle chose the “integration” route, maintaining a strong and overt Jewish identity, while adapting to the public legal and social norms of British society. He made good in the rag-trade (the slang term for the garment and fashion industry), and moved to Golders Green, where his family descendants are Orthodox Jews.

My grandfather chose the route of “assimilation”, which my father and I have inherited. My granny used to say: “Good Jews make it in the rag-trade, and move north to Golders Green. Bad Jews [meaning my family] make it in car-breaking, and move south to Charlton.” I am a Bad Jew, even though I retain remnants of our secret language (Yiddish). My grandfather changed his name to the Anglo-Saxon sounding “Bagley”, and his sons were enrolled (like me) in the local Church of England school. Having the name Christopher allowed me to pass for Christian, even though I remained a Secret Jew.2 “Passing”, pretending to have an Anglo-Saxon ethnic and Anglican religious identity to which I was not really committed, gives me I think, a duality of thought and identity, which makes one open to new ideas and cultures. My father graduated from car-breaking to car-making, and worked on the production line of Morris Motors (now British Leyland) in Oxford, and was a Communist shop-steward. Like my dad, I joined the Communist Party, but kept a dual identity (my hallmark) as a Christian-Marxist. It was not only social and economic equality I took from Prophet Jesus, but pacifism as well. Unlike my “Christian” peers, I took the message of Jesus seriously, and became a lifelong pacifist.

Pacifism led me to Quakers, and as an alternative to compulsory military service in the 1950s I became a psychiatric nurse at the Quaker hospital, The Retreat at York. My early training in social psychiatry inspired the ambition to become a psychiatric social worker, in which profession I initially qualified
after studies at Exeter University, where I also obtained the Certificate in Education, enabling me to teach in secondary schools. Again, the duality, teaching and social work. I have always believed that schools and teachers are important agencies in social work and social care, a passion shared with Professor Colin Pritchard at Southampton University (Bagley & Pritchard, 1996a, b). The marriage of educational studies and multiculturalism has also resulted in a fruitful collaboration with Professor Gajendra Verma at Manchester, and we have co-edited many books in this field.

My dad died young, and we moved to London to live with my more-or-less Jewish grandfather when I was 16. His house was close to Clapham Common in South London. Grandad explained that during the war a huge air raid shelter was constructed beneath Clapham Common. When the Empire Windrush, a troopship taking Caribbean soldiers and airmen back to the islands, filled her empty hold in 1948 with the first group of African-Caribbean migrants to Britain on her return journey. The new arrivals had to be housed somewhere. In the shelter beneath Clapham Common was the “ideal” place for the authorities (out of sight, out of mind). And this is why there is a large settlement of Jamaicans in the houses around Clapham Common, based on the original 500 settlers from the Windrush, and subsequent “chain migration”. It was natural that my sister and I should spend our teenaged years in the Jamaican culture transported to London. (My Jamaican creole is about as good as my Yiddish).

When doing research on children with epilepsy, I was greatly intrigued (and privileged) in being able to review files completed by Anna Freud (Sigmund Freud’s daughter) on her patients at the Hampstead Child Guidance Clinic (Bagley, 1972). At the Institute of Neurology in London I was the bibliographic research assistant to Dr. Eliot Slater, whose textbook on psychiatry I had used a few years before as a student psychiatric nurse. My task was to translate from German the neglected neuropsychiatric literature on schizophrenia for the revision of his textbook, and for a clinical review of this literature (Davison & Bagley, 1969). Yiddish certainly helped in reading and translating modern German. This experience has left me with an obsession for systematic reviews of academic literature (eg, Bagley & Thurston, 1996a, 1996b).

My fascination with spatial relationships and urban geography stems from my first teachers of sociology, at Exeter University, which led to research on my first publication whilst still an undergraduate (Bagley, 1965), and to later research on behavioural ecology of Brighton, Sussex and then in Calgary, Canada. Maps (and Descartes) excite me: the Cartesian conceptualisation of
number and space brings feelings of control and achievement: *I draw maps, therefore I am*. I was inspired too in a Master’s in urban education, by my teacher Colin Ward, the anarchist and sociologist of the city (Ward, 1988) – there’s a tension of course between my love of Descartes, and my reverence for socialist anarchy. Intellectual tensions too, are stimulating and paradoxes lead to strange and exciting solutions, such as critical realism. My favoured ecological approach is illustrated in the contrasting of social disadvantage and achievement in two schools in Greater Manchester, reported in Chapter 8. I found that many of the ‘zones of deprivation’ identified by Friedrich Engels in Manchester in 1845 still contained pockets of deprivation, in 2008.

My Jamaican partner, Loretta Young, was first my graduate student, and then my wife. It was a nice coincidence that my doctoral supervisor at Sussex University was the Jamaican sociologist Fernando Henriques, a black Sephardic Jew with Brazilian-Portuguese origins. Fernando used to say, with irony: “If there’s anything worse than being black, it’s being Jewish and black.” My doctoral thesis was on the social and psychological antecedents of racial prejudice. Though I immersed myself in the literature of social psychology in writing the thesis, I regard myself as both a sociologist and a psychologist, separate but merging identities.

Psychology I learned from Hans Eysenck, when I was at the MRC Social Psychiatry Unit at the Institute of Psychiatry, based at the Maudsley Hospital in South London. I was intrigued by Hans’ passionate opposition to psychoanalysis. Could it be that bad? My reading said no, so I had a brief, didactic Freudian analysis at the Tavistock Clinic. Again duality: behaviourism and psychodynamic psychology as complementary approaches to understanding human endeavour. And ultimately from psychoanalysis and its extension into Jungian and Adlerian ideas of the self, I know that my true self can never be adequately revealed: only G-d is aware of the contents of that self, its struggles, its doubts, its despair, its heights. But the Tavistock analysis gave me the confidence to ‘come out’ as a confident multidisciplinary scholar, and as a Jewish-Quaker. At the Maudsley, it was my privilege to work with the Quaker social psychiatrist Michael Rutter, co-publishing with him work on the African-Caribbean population of Camberwell, South London (Rutter, Yule & Bagley, 1973).

Loretta and I have wandered through the world, spending most of our professional lives in Canada. We are now resident in both Manchester and Amsterdam, where our daughter Abbie (now Dr. Abbie Vandivere) is a lecturer in technical art history at the University of Amsterdam (probably the only black person working in this field in Europe).4
While serving at the University of the West Indies I had a salutary experience in perceiving colour. Towards the end of long committee meeting I glanced at my watch and saw an arm extending from a short-sleeved shirt. I had a moment of existential panic: *my arm had turned white*. All of the other arms in the room were shades of rich dark and light brown. My own arm had palsied, withered, turned white. Then I realised that all of me was white! I have been immersed for many years in a black, Jamaican kinship that oftentimes I forget about being white, about being the odd one out. My sister also married a Jamaican partner, and we are delighted by the various shades of brown of our children and grandchildren, the varied texture of their hair, and so forth.

In the East, Gajendra Verma, Kanka Mallick and I have researched education and cross-cultural psychology in India, including an ecological study of murder in Mumbai. The years I spent in Hong Kong provided a fruitful partnership with John Tse, including our book on suicidal behaviours in Chinese adolescents (Tse & Bagley, 2002). My interest in suicide stems from undergraduate sociological study of Durkheim’s *Suicide*, and this interest has resulted in much fruitful collaboration with social psychiatrists, with publications too numerous to mention here. From Hong Kong I administered Canadian charitable funds which enabled young sex workers in The Philippines to return to high school (Bagley, 1999), work which has proved fruitful in saving young lives (Bagley et al., 2017). Suffice it to say that the former adolescent sex workers, “rescued” by our scholarship funding, now name any first-born son “Christopher”, and nominate me as honorary godfather! I have a book full of birthdays, and linking with my godsons is an exercise in spiritual joy.

My spiritual journey led me to examine concepts of G-d, and I found the Islamic concept the most interesting and attractive. Five years ago, I converted to Islam, becoming a Muslim-Quaker (Bagley, 2015). I remain a pacifist, and my involvement with Palestine has led me to try and elaborate a philosophy of Islamic pacifism (Bagley, 2017). With Muslim colleagues, I am also trying to elaborate the concept of an Islamic society in which women have equality with men, and children and adolescents are not sexually exploited (Bagley et al., 2017).

In conclusion, I find differences in ethnic identity, in cultures, in religion, in disciplines of research, intensely interesting and exciting. Different ideas and nuggets of identity spark against one another, merge, and then part again with new form and identity. Life is so rich, so exciting, so full of space
and colour! We are all different, and all the same as Quakers would say, within the divine body, the Divine Kingdom on earth.

*Alice and Christopher* aver that their intellectual partnership has been rich and rewarding. Neither of us could have produced this work on their own, and we have through an academic partnership, been synergistic in developing interesting intellectual ideas on identity, and on dialectical critical realism. Read on!

NOTES

1 My father’s younger brother Professor Akilagpa Sawyerr, an academic lawyer, was Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana from 1985 to 1992. He was honoured in 2016 by having a campus thoroughfare named after him. The eulogy at the public ceremony said of him: “After leaving office, he continued with service through the Association of African Universities where the campaign to pressure academic freedom in African Universities was given greater voice. This has ensured that many universities, to a large extent, are able to operate without much political interference.” *StarrFMonline*, April 18, 2016 www.starrfmonline.com

2 Except that, forced into the showers at my grammar school, I had to explain what circumcision was all about.

3 I am ‘a person with epilepsy’, which is an inherited, family condition. My mother was permanently excluded from school at the age of 10, when she had a seizure in front of her classmates. Teachers feared that this gentle child would ‘become violent’. My research on racial prejudice has been paralleled by work on prejudice and discrimination against people with visible disabilities (e.g. Bagley & King, 2005).

4 www.fromthegroundup.nl When I told Abbie that she would have reduced fees if she enrolled at the University of Calgary, where I worked, she replied: “Any university which employs you can’t be worth attending.” She was probably right.

5 I am also elaborating a Muslim account of ‘gay identity’, arguing from Qu’ranic and Sunnah sources how Islam can uphold gay partnership. This is work in progress.
CHAPTER 2

SOCIAL CLASS, IDEOLOGY AND IDENTITY

INTRODUCTION

The research embodied in this book began in the late 1990s when Alice Sawyerr was developing a programme of identity enhancement for preschool children in nurseries in an Inner London Borough. This stemmed from work in a child, adolescent and adult NHS Mental Health clinic which served two distinct areas in the borough – very affluent area and predominantly white (group) population and a multi-ethnic client group from one of the most disadvantaged areas of London. It was clear from my (that is, Alice’s) clinical work that some black children were confused about their ethnicity and their identity, and they had obviously been influenced by the stereotypes of black ethnicity held by the majority of white persons around them. A number of the children I was working with were attending the local authority day nursery, which I will call St. John’s (StJ’s). It was closed some years ago, when the Local Authority replaced the nursery with a Sure Start Children’s Centre.

But in 1998 the preschool age children (3–5 year olds) including some of the children in my clinical caseload, were showing some confusion about their ethnicity and identity. So, I devised an identity enhancement programme which might counter the negative stereotypes about ethnicity and skin colour that the children seemed to be identifying with. I described this programme’s success in a book chapter (Sawyerr, 1999), and my work seemed to have had some influence.

In 2002 I began a linked research project, focussing initially on all of the children in StJ’s, overtly examining how the “Six Early Learning Goals” prescribed by government, were being implemented in this multi-ethnic day nursery. Included in the goals were “Knowledge and understanding of the world” and “Social and emotional development”, and I wanted to see how these goals included, if at all, any understanding of issues of colour and ethnicity. This research was only partially completed, since the nursery was arbitrarily closed, and was then re-opened a few months later as a Sure Start nursery, with an entirely new group of children. The politics underlying these changes we discuss below.
I analysed in detail video-recorded interactions of staff and children, interactions between the children and the audio recorded semi structured interviews with staff. More recently I have been able to focus the lens of research on to a Britain that seems to be changing rapidly in terms of ethnicity, migration, class, politics and social service provision, and I review the nursery school observational data in the light of these changes. Because the research spans a long period of time, we decided to place the two pieces of research presented below (including the study of Northern Schools carried out in 2006–2007) within the context of a historical review of equality, ethnicity and gender in Britain, with special reference to issues of education, health and community development. The period 1968 to 2008 has been chosen since it fits well with the review of literature on education, inclusion and inequality which Christopher Bagley and I were undertaking as part of the Manchester Educational Research Network programme of research.

This book embodies two “empirical studies” on ethnicity, identity and self-esteem, which are developed and discussed within three intellectual contexts. First of all, the remainder of the present chapter will set out a perspective on equality in Britain today, looked at from the perspectives of social class divisions, which are analysed within a Marxian framework which discusses the role of ethnicity, gender and occupational status in forming the strata of society. The purpose of this initial discussion is to establish a value position, in which concern is expressed for the life chances and social mobility of the lowest strata of society.

Secondly, Chapter 3 elaborates the theoretical framework of Critical Realism, a philosophy of social science research which assumes that (contrary to positivist or social constructionist methodologies) that reality exists independently of the researcher, and can be elaborated and understood within the framework of critical realism, whose ultimate goal is the emancipation of individuals and institutions through a self-conscious, freely chosen process of morphogenesis.

Thirdly reflecting our value grounding of identity studies, Chapter 4 establishes the basis of the value position which underlabours the critical realist model, informing and evaluating the actions of individuals in the matrix of critical realism. This chosen value position is called Child-Centred Humanism, which argues that all human institutions and actions should be evaluated according to the degree that they regard children’s interests as having primacy in all of society’s institutions: the needs and rights of children must be considered, implicitly or explicitly, as the building blocks of all of humanity’s social institutions.
Chapter 5 is concerned with episodes of equality and ethnicity in the period 1968 to 2008. This time period was chosen firstly since the empirical materials considered in this volume were planned for and gathered in a ten-year period occurring within this time frame (1998 to 2008); this entire period is also one of significant change and development in research and policies concerning ethnicity, gender and equality in British society. In order to do justice to this perspective, we have to consider, historically speaking, the preceding decade as well. Since other scholars have written systematic reviews of this history, we summarise their accounts, and instead focus in detail on specific episodes and themes, such as the history of medicine, the history of childhood, equality and exclusion of youth in British society, and specific episodes and themes in the movement towards ethnic equality. This Chapter should be read in parallel with Appendix A of the thesis, which is a lengthy and systematic review of the literature on equality and exclusion of youths in the period 1968 to 2008.

Chapter 6 establishes the themes of ethnicity, gender and identity in charting “the evolution and development of self-esteem research in Britain and America”, observing significant changes which these studies have identified, through the decades from the 1960s onwards, from the pessimistic findings of “doll studies” to recent decades in which positive self-esteem in ethnic minority children has made remarkable gains. Our empirical work in this field is outlined in Chapter 7, which presents the findings of an observational study of a multicultural day nursery, following our development of a programme for enhancement of ethnic identity in young children. The findings of this study are placed within the context of a critical realist case analysis.

Chapter 8 extends the review of literature to older children and adolescents, including American studies showing that African American adolescents now have excellent levels of self-esteem. This review in addition, focusses on gender, including literature showing that adolescent females have significantly lower levels of self-esteem (as measured in particular by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale: the RSES). Reasons for this are explored, including the literature on the negative impact of sexual abuse on self-esteem in females. It is argued that differential levels of self-esteem observed in many cultures might be explained by the incidence and impact which child sexual abuse has on adolescent girls.

Issues of ethnicity and gender are explored in the second empirical study of this thesis, including the analysis of a previously unpublished data set collected in 2006 to 2007, in ten Northern English Schools, focussing
on 2,025 school students aged 11 to 18. Using standardised measures of self-reported abusive events, the study showed that the RSES is indeed a structurally reliable measure when used with English students, and correlated significantly with validated measures of mental health. When history of sexual abuse was taken into account, self-esteem differences between the genders did not reach statistical significance. Within boys, ethnicity was not correlated with self-esteem, but in girls, those of African-Caribbean origin had higher levels of self-esteem than their female peers.

In the final Chapter, the importance of treating the school as a unique community which can address the social and psychological needs of all students is stressed. This is illustrated by two schools in the Northern Schools sample, which had marked differences in terms of histories of sexual and physical abuse, self-esteem and psychological adjustment. It is advocated, using the critical realist model, that schools and the communities they serve, should be unique centres for social action research which address problems of the families and children they serve.

CONCEPTS OF CLASS, ETHNICITY, INEQUALITY, GENDER AND EXPLOITATION

It will rapidly become apparent to the reader that a concern with Marx’s idea of class oppression, alienation and ‘the reserve army of labour’ frequently occurs in the pages that follow. The work of Marx which we have drawn on is his political humanism and freedom from economic determinism, and not Marx’s frequently misunderstood and misapplied writings on economic reform (Singer, 1996).

It is possible to be a Marxist scholar, and not to mention Marx, or Marxian concepts at all. Thus in Brian Simon’s Education and the Social Order 1940–1990 (published in 1991) Simon simply spells out in great detail how educational systems control and socialize young people in ways which make them acquiescent and useful for the prevailing social, political and economic order of Britain. This is despite periods of educational reform and “break out” (such as the beginning of comprehensives, and the expansion of the university sector). The established order of capital clearly, in Simon’s historical analysis, re-imposes itself and reorders changing institutions, in a phase which Simon labels “downhill all the way” beginning in the 1970s with the re-imposition of neoliberalism, which reflected, according to Clarke (2007) the crisis of capitalism brought about by America’s prosecution of the Vietnam war, bringing in its wake “neoliberalism globalisation, imperialism with empires” (Radice, 2007).

Despite a New Labour government slogan that an era of “education, education, education” would be initiated in Britain (Wragg, 2004a), the
decrease in funding for education and social services has continued (in Britain and other capitalist economies) inexorably from 1980 into a condition which Tomlinson (2013) describes as the increasing globalisation of capitalist enterprise:

Governments in modern capitalist nation-states are overseeing and encouraging a vast expansion of education and training, for reasons which those in control of policy and practice are not always clear about. Groups who were previously excluded or received minimal schooling are now included in formal schooling for longer and longer periods. Groups who previously monopolised privileged kinds of education leading to guaranteed employment now face threats of status and employment competition with larger numbers who aspire or are coerced into more formal schooling and its assessments. In order to retain privileges, elite groups support the reconstitution of segregative policies and provisions. (Tomlinson, 2013, p. 5)

In Britain, it seems that in the long run educational systems will continue to serve the global economic power systems.

The educational system is changing, and so are the manifestations of social class in Britain, as Mike Savage and his team (2015) make clear in their Great British Class Survey (GBCS) which obtained surprisingly full accounts of many social, cultural and economic aspects of their lives from some 161,000 respondents who completed a media-sponsored internet survey in 2011. The data allowed Savage and colleagues to construct a seven-fold schema of social class, with the Elite at the top, and the precariously-living proletariat, mostly poor, often unemployed at the bottom of the scale: this “precarious proletariat” was dubbed (following Standing, 2011) the Precariat, and are estimated to number about 15 percent of Britain’s population. (Only one percent of the internet responders fell into this class, so the team led by Savage carried out direct sampling to get an accurate profile of this group). They are sneered at, derided, looked down on by many in the classes above them, and called Scum, Chavs and Yobs, in modern slang. On the three bases of social class grouping in Savage’s (2015) analysis: income and wealth; cultural capital; and social capital, the Precariat are at the bottom of the class system, blamed for their own poverty. These are the ‘reserve army of labour’, useful cheap labour for capitalism in times of boom, and useful scapegoats in times of bust. They occupy, in Savage’s sociology, “worlds of shame and stigma”:

… The rise in rents in the neighbourhood caused them great anxiety. Owning a home was not something they could even dare to imagine.
The devastating impact of the bedroom tax, benefit caps and austerity cuts to local community services have had on their families and themselves were and are, felt sharply and painfully. They raise their voices and shout and swear; they are angry with – and frightened by – these precarious times. (Savage, 2015, p. 342)

Savage and his team have surprisingly little to say about gender – how women conceptualise themselves within systems of material wealth and reward, cultural capital, and social interactions, and the differences which partnerships or marriage might make, nor about what being single or in gay partnership means in terms of class profiles. But they imply that in the Precariat, women dislike self-conceptions of class, citing earlier research: women tend to reject ideas of being “working class”. These young women “... invested in femininity and respectability in response to the (real or imagined) judgement of others – judgements based on the values and morals associated with the dominant class. Yet they did not possess the required sorts of capital – economic, cultural or social – to be anything other than working class women” (Savage, 2015, pp. 365–366, italics in original).

Moreover, drawing on the work of Skeggs (1997) Savage says that within the ‘emotional politics’ surrounding the identity of Precariat women there is “… fear, desire, resentment and humiliation” (Skeggs, 1997). It also reminds us that aspects of class identifiers are also shaped in particular ways by gender (along with race and sexuality) (Savage, 2015, p. 366).

Guy Standing (2011, 2014) divides the precariat (15% of the population, according to Savage) into two groups: at the bottom are the group he terms “the lumpen proletariat” whom the established order sees as “dangerous” in terms of their socially destructive anarchy, based on their psychological, social and political disarray, their dangerously figurative and literal fire-setting of the property and ideas of the respectable economic classes. Following Marx, Standing – Professor of Development Studies at the University of London’s School of Oriental and African Studies – echoes Marx and Engels in writing a manifesto on behalf of the precariat whom he describes as a ‘trans-European, bastard child of global capitalism’ (Standing, 2011, 2014). They are, he says, a true class created by capitalism, following the economic logic of Marx’s historical analyses.

Where do ethnic minorities cluster within Savage’s class systems? Certainly not randomly. They are over-represented in two class groups: Technical Middle Class; and Emerging Service Workers. And they are under-represented amongst the Precariat. However, Savage is not very specific about types of ethnic minority within the class groupings, and this is
obviously a field for further research. It seems likely that ethnic minorities will maximise their educational opportunities, their reserves of cultural and social capital, and will increasingly move out of the lowest status groupings into the better paid technical sectors, even though they are more than a generation away from achieving parity in the Elite and Established Middle Class groups described by Savage (2015). Heath (2014) uses census and labour force survey data to show how ethnic minorities in Britain are slowly climbing occupational and status ladders, despite the factors that there continues to be a significant amount of racial discrimination in employment (Bagley & Abubaker, 2017). In this latter research we showed that the ethnic minority candidate for employment has to apply for twice the number of jobs as the ‘white’ candidate, before even being offered an interview.

Educational sociologists, following Standing’s, and Savage’s class analyses, have coined the term “precarity”, in discussing the fate of some school leavers. Dovermark and Beach (2016) in referring to the classic study by Willis (1978) on working class boys “learning to labour”, title their article: “From learning to labour to learning for precarity.” They observed: “A demand on national economies in the 1970s [during the Thatcher era] was that they should begin to increase their labour market flexibility, which came to mean transferring risks of insecurity on to workers. Education was one way to prepare future workers for Precarity ...” (p. 174) Their analysis concerns not only Britain, but the whole of Europe. Batsleer (2016) in an incisive ethnographic study of young NEETS in Manchester show that living off food bank handouts was (for the capitalist class) a useful way by which low-achieving youth were ritually subjugated at a very basic level (nutrition) into membership of the underclass.

Tomlinson (2013) addresses the interesting issue of how middle class parents may cope with the potentially downward mobility of their children who are not particularly successful in school: it is crucially important for middle class parents that their children should not join the ranks of “the ignorant yobs”, of the precariat, who in British society are usually blamed for their own failure. Middle class parents can maximise wealth and social capital by gaining either private education, or a favoured state school (through choice of where they live), private tuition and psychological help, and if necessary getting special educational status for their children (e.g. getting extra help because of dyslexia). The social capital of the middle and upper classes helps them to access the best routes in further education and training, and in using social influences to gain employment for children who would in consequence be able to escape joining the ranks of the precariat.
From her international survey Tomlinson points to the case of Finland, in which high scores on international tests of achievement (e.g. PISA) are gained by teaching which effectively truncates the standard deviation of the measures, so that that most pupils achieve close to the group’s high average marks. In Britain, the low educational achievers are often blamed for their own failures (Johnston, 2007): a chaotic and ever-changing system of educational initiatives for youth who are or who will become NEETS (Not in Education, Employment of Training), and the frequent failure of these programmes, often leads to denigration of the underachievers (Tomlinson, 2013, pp. 125–126).

Chronic poverty, the continuation of life in the underclass from one generation to the next, demeans the culture of life and its social meaning for up to 15 percent of England’s population. It diminishes health, it promotes family brokenness, individual malaise and despair, the neglect and maltreatment of children, the abuse of the body, the frequency of illness, and the prematurity of death (Marmot 2008, 2010, 2015). Healing poverty through initiatives such as a universal, living wage (Flaschel et al., 2012; Standing, 2014) could be hugely cost effective in public health terms (Bellis et al., 2014a).

But England is unlikely to adopt the policy of a living wage. Instead, policy researchers focus on absolute poverty and destitution in the land. The leading advocates in this field from the Rowntree Trust present considerable evidence from the research they have funded, that chronic poverty is demeaning, and eats away at the basis for mental and social health (Unwin, 2013). Pointing to the general economic structure, they argue that poverty is both unnecessary, and easy to solve through fiscal measures. But they fail to address the more fundamental political or value question: who benefits from the institution of poverty in Britain?

The same question: who benefits? Must be asked of Gender and Ethnic inequalities. It is certainly in men’s interests to have a class of humans who will satisfy their sexual needs, ensuring that their genetic prowess is transmitted through children, and to have women who will care for and socialise those children in satisfactory ways, cook and clean the dwelling place, and supplement household income through some kind of external labour. Feminism is clearly a threat to this comfortable male hegemony. The widespread sexual exploitation of girls and adolescent women, which we discuss at some length later in this book, is the crude expression of this male hegemony.

In the past, ethnic minority groups in Britain may have been trained to serve the dominant classes through special kinds of socialisation and control,
through which those of “inferior” colour, nationality or religion (Catholics and Muslims for example), were trained to accept the stereotypes placed upon them, but nevertheless had to become cheerful hewers of wood, and drawers of water. The Tottenham riots of 2011 finally consigned that model of socialization to the flames (Unwin, 2011, 2013; Standing, 2014).

In a fascinating account of the sociology of popular culture in Britain, Jones, (2011) analyses media and political accounts of *chavs*, an apparently flamboyant group sometimes with temporary wealth, but allegedly little taste, who are trying to rise out of the precariat, but who are sneered at and stigmatised for trying to cohere as a cultural group. The media-inspired campaign of denigration of this lower class group parallels the rise in income inequality in Britain, and the dismembering of the welfare state. According to Jones’ political analysis these events are connected, and the chavs are a group to be kicked around by respectable folk whose aspiration for cultural capital glances enviously at the class above them, without sympathy for the sneered-at class below. These chavs are the welfare recipients, the scroungers, the welfare cheats, the deceitful layabouts and criminals, ‘the feral underclass’. Middle Britain loves the class above them, and despises the class below. This mix of media and popular hatred is extremely functional for the capitalist social order. Chav-hate is, arguably, a greater problem than Islamophobia (Kundari, 2007; Fekete, 2009). Muslims have a solid ethical and spiritual tradition which assures them that they have moral surety in the face of hatred (Al-Refai & Bagley, 2008). Chavs, on the available evidence, have a much weaker identity formation (Jones, 2011).

**CONCLUSIONS**

The Chapters on self-esteem, identity and self-concept in ethnic minorities – the literature that we review and analyse, and our empirical reports of studies with children and adolescents – show that in this field, at least, there has been considerable, positive change. No longer do black and ethnic minority children and adolescents have an inferiorised self-concept thrust upon them. This is not however the situation for many females, especially white females.

Our argument will be that our greatest concern should not be merely, or primarily, with the cultural and social development of the self-concept of black and ethnic minority children. Our concern should not be only with ethnic minorities, but also with the “poor whites”, and their children who are making up the bulk of Britain’s ‘perpetual underclass’.

Furthermore, we want to know why in a recent WHO international comparison of 42 world nations of young people aged 11, 13 and 15 (Inchley
et al., 2016) the group with the poorest emotional health were 15-year-olds in Britain. British adolescent girls were also close to last in the nations surveyed in terms of physical health (measured by poor diet, exercise, obesity, sexual health, and alcohol and substance use). And why, in every nation and age-profile studied in the WHO survey, did females have poorer mental health than males? Is this connected with the prevalence and impact of child maltreatment, and sexual abuse experienced by females, which we explore in a later chapter?

Britain and America of all the developed nations have the most unequal distribution of wealth, as measured by the Gini coefficient (UN, 2005; Booth, 2008a). Do these two nations (which also come at the bottom of league tables for child and adolescent health indicators – Wilkinson, 2005; UNESCO, 2007; Currie et al., 2008; OECD, 2008; Friedli, 2009; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009) have integral or systemic links between inequality and the chronically poor health and adjustment in their underclass? Certainly, these two nations appear to be the most prominent of the developed nations in which global capitalism has imposed itself, and in which the situation of an underclass perpetuated by lack of social mobility is, among the developed nations, the most enduring (Sawyerr & Bagley, 2016).5

The underlying economic forces of neoliberalism underpin (“require”) these class-based differences in life chances, and informed the economic and social policies (recreated from earlier ideas of economists such as Adam Smith) of the Conservative government’s agenda in Britain in the period from 1979 to 1995. These policies were largely continued by a New Labour government attempting to occupy the ‘middle ground’ of politics. This neoliberalism, as defined by Saad-Filho and Johnston (2005),

... is the ideology of the market and private interests as opposed to state intervention. Although it is true that neoliberalism conveys an ideology and a propaganda of its own, it is fundamentally a new social order in which the power and income of the upper fractions of the ruling classes – the wealthiest persons – was re-established in the wake of a setback ... this upper capitalist class and the financial institutions through which its power is enforced is a hegemonic force. Although the conditions which accounted for the structural crisis were gradually superseded, most of the world economy remained plagued by slow growth and unemployment, and inequality increased. (p. 2)

This inequality, we argue, is most enduring in the neoliberal economies of the USA and the UK, and thrives on the lack of social mobility of the poorest social classes (Sawyerr & Bagley, 2016).
Finally: in leading the reader on this research journey we have needed to
tell “my story”, explaining how our own identities and research interests have
been formed; and how we have come to explore the research philosophy
of Critical Realism, which has allowed us to assert with some confidence
an underlying value premise which informs how we interpret all research
findings in the human sciences: the philosophy of Child-Centred Humanism.

NOTES

1 The term ‘I’ in this chapter refers to Alice Sawyerr.
2 Clearly, Bourdieu’s sociology is influential in Savage’s analysis: “… the thinking of
the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu [offers] the most perceptive approach to
unravelling the complexities of class today” (Savage, 2015, p. 19). That, concedes
Savage, is why the original research questions explored in detail ideas about
“cultural capital”, which may shroud (“mask” in Marxian terminology) the layers
of social class. The upper two classes inherit cultural capital; the other classes
gaze adoringly, with longing and admiration, over the invisible fence, or within
the pages in the popular organs of social control, at the dream world of their
masters.
3 A word derived from the Romany language, meaning “kid”.
4 For example, the *Mirror* newspaper of July 7th, 2016 gloated over the suicide
attempt of “the King of the Chavs” who squandered his £9.7 million lottery win
in 11 years, and is now “a penniless drug addict”.
5 Global capitalism’s negative ‘neo-liberal’ impact is greatest for the countries of
the *developing* world, as the relevant essays among the 30 chapters in Saad-Filho
and Johnston’s (2005) edited volume, show.