<div align="center">**Dialogue**</div>

Confronting 'Race' and Policy: 'How can you research something you say does not exist?'

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Introduction

We constantly have to remind ourselves that we are researching a concept whose validity we question, arguing that it is a spurious biological concept; hence the use of scare quotes around 'race' (Warmington 2012). We suggest here that there are persuasive, pragmatic reasons for engaging the notion of 'race' in researching policy in tourism, leisure and events. Our pragmatics also extend to the specific and strategic uses of ethnicity in these domains that require nuanced and critical applications to avoid assigning minoritised ethnic groups to the detrimental, one-dimensional category of the 'Other'. However, by considering some of the policy implications, we want to argue here that this is far from being simply an arcane academic debate of no consequence for the quality of people's lives.

We write from a UK perspective as one black and one white researcher and know from our own biographies the complexity and shortcomings of such categories. The black researcher is British born and bred, the son of Caribbean parents and married to the daughter of a northern European immigrant; and the white researcher has spent many years in the UK though was born in India and has since spent a period living abroad. Inevitably these backgrounds shape our ontologies, social realities and the way we approach and interpret our research and data. Both authors have engaged their research by centring racialised concerns (Long and Hylton 2002, Hylton and Chakrabarty 2012, Long and Hylton 2014). We acknowledge the racialisation of our own biographies and the everyday structuring properties of pervasive racialised processes.

Referring to 'race' rather than ethnicity offers no greater conceptual clarity but does serve to emphasise the racialisation of ethnicity and the everyday use of 'race'[1]. It can, however, be argued that ethnicity as a concept has a more recent resonance than 'race'. For example Jenkins (1999) states that ethnicity only came into popular use in the 1960s to reflect a movement in North American anthropology from 'race' to 'culture' to 'ethnicity'. Events deemed as racist seem to draw interchangeably on the registers of ethnicity, culture and nationality because of the way they become racialised and the targets thereby constructed are consigned to disempowering nomenclature, stereotypes and bigotry. Just as 'race' is socially constructed and not fixed, shifting within and across cultures and nations, geography and time, so too are ethnicities that have a history of pseudo-objective yet shifting categories. Because of this conceptual 'slipperiness' in how ethnicity and 'race' are defined even among social scientists, there is not always consensus; indeed, Mason (1995) feels compelled to describe ethnicity as 'situational'.

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In policy terms ethnicity is used to identify demographics as a catalyst for policy change and resource distribution (one element of the pragmatics referred to above). In practical terms this is implemented through ethnic monitoring as exemplified in the UK by the Census. These descriptors are designed to address the policy concerns of the day (see below), thereby underpinning hegemonic discourses. As such they are selected from a shared discourse that emerges from hegemonic policy domains and social circles, suggesting that ethnicity is no less a social construction than 'race'.

UK policymakers barely got used to the idea of addressing the needs of people from African-Caribbean and Asian communities from the Commonwealth when they were faced with what Vertovec (2007) described as 'superdiversity'. New migration facilitated by the expansion of the European Union into central and eastern Europe and large numbers fleeing poverty and persecution around the world has forced a reworking of terminology on ethnicity that demonstrates the power of language to structure social relations, civic engagement and policy interventions. Popular and official designations have major implications for new migrants by emphasising not only their inclusion into British society but also entitlements to available economic resources such as support for housing, language acquisition, employment and health services. However, this superdiversity brings additional challenges for under-funded services and facilities charged with providing for a super-multicultural nation, with no historical precedence. The ensuing debate about entitlement is set alongside concerns for integration and cohesion in circumstances which extend beyond the links of a colonial past. The provision of leisure, sport and cultural opportunities has been expected to contribute to overcoming ethnic groups living what Cantle (2001) labelled 'parallel lives' (e.g. Amara et al., 2005). Previously, legacies of a shared colonial history suggested to some an obligation to host migrants from the Commonwealth and gave the migrants cultural resources and identification to draw on in their new environment. The question now is whether the whiteness of many of the new migrants is sufficient to overcome the lack of such ties and language.

Categorisation and Adequacy of Data

In the UK the Census categories are a remarkable mix of 'race' (black, white), geographic (e.g. Caribbean), continental (African), national (Indian). With the Census itself there is the option of combining this measure with one for religion or country of birth or passport held (Office for National Statistics, 2013), but this is rarely the case with other survey data. There are 18 ethnic categories (plus 'other') supplemented by 8 religious categories in a separate variable. Some may protest that this puts people into boxes (and indeed the categories are pre-determined), but the Census does at least allow people to select the category that best fits them (and the opportunity to write in alternatives if the pre-determined ones do not fit) rather than being assigned one by the researcher.

However nuanced the categories used, the process of ethnic monitoring has been vexed. In an equal society policies should be devised and administered without recourse to considerations of ethnicity, but that condition will not be achieved without corrective action to remedy the current disadvantage of certain segments of society (van Sterkenburg, 2012). Such data are essential for bodies like the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and local authorities to track shifts in society and

the impact of policies, just as they are for those a further step removed from central government, like the Runnymede Trust, Race on the Agenda (ROTA), and the Institute for Race Relations (IRR). What Verma and Darby (1994:85) observed two decades ago is no less true today:

> The absence of routine and systematic data collection and analysis which would make it possible to identify low participation groups was a matter for concern. Without such information it is hard to see how leisure departments can know who they are reaching. Without that knowledge, planning to reach low participation groups cannot realistically be undertaken, nor is it possible to present a case for additional funding, either within the authority or from external sources, such as the Home Office.

Ethnic monitoring is necessary for informed practice and the compilation of an evidence base to assess the outcomes of policy interventions. Nonetheless, according to Pilkington (2009), although there is a tacit acknowledgement of the need to recognise significant social identities some see multicultural recognition as a form of social control. Further, the use and discourse of multiculturalism where there are turns to idealism, rhetoric and simplistic cultural awareness events can obscure more pressing everyday racisms and related inequalities. More recent debates have been concerned that this preoccupation is also an invitation for separate provision supporting separate lives rather than encouraging integration. This is particularly significant for us as an area in which leisure, sport and culture can make a significant contribution.

Matching / empathy

We have also previously challenged the very idea of race neutrality (Long and Hylton, 2014: 396)

> In protesting 'race' neutrality, it overlooks who does research and the ontologies they bring to it just as it promulgates apolitical epistemologies that disengage from social justice and social transformation and also tends to impose a process that is ahistorical as the effects of past inequalities and constraints become detached from current problematics.

Much is made in the research literature of the match between interviewers and participants and its significance for the credibility of the analysis. With a shortage of researchers from minoritised ethnic groups in the academy (at least in fields associated with sport, leisure, culture and tourism) there may be problems of 'understanding'. We can address this in part by ensuring that 'research participant' is not just a placatory term and involve people from the ethnic group(s) concerned as researchers contributing to research design, data gathering and interpretation. Even then the current appreciation of intersectionality reminds us that 'matching' will never be complete. We place no naive faith in *simpatico* as an analytical process; nonetheless, conducting research in ethnically varied teams can only enhance the analysis by productively challenging the cultural assumptions of colleagues. As we alluded to above, researching race as a cultural construction ought to oblige us to consider our own cultural constructions.

Legitimate knowledge

In research terms it is not only the (in)adequacy of categories that challenges the validity and usefulness of data. We have previously expressed our concern that what seem to be eminently sensible attempts by government to make best use of existing research may perversely damage rather than advance fields like this. It is our contention that many of the best insights are overlooked because quantitative data are afforded superior status in policymaking. Soundbite statistics are indeed very useful in political dogfights even if they are not the product of the vaunted scientific method. To try to ensure the quality of data entering the policy arena the Cochrane project has established rules for the inclusion/exclusion of research studies in their systematic reviews. However, following our own systematic review of literature on black and minority ethnic communities in sport and physical recreation (Long et al., 2009; Bi, 2011) we observed:

> The enthusiasm for systematic reviews is part of a search for certainty amidst a lack of conceptual consensus associated with contestations over what constitutes legitimate knowledge, one outcome of which might be interpreted as epistemological imperialism. (Long and Hylton, 2014: 389)

Qualitative research need not be susceptible to misleading anecdote, but can instead provide the insight necessary for effective policies. This is vital in a policy world where data are too easily mistaken for knowledge.

We might also note that apparently 'objective' statistics are open to (mis)interpretation. It is, of course, inescapable that different analysts will have different motivations in deploying (sometimes the same) data, whether that be an interest in eugenics, rights denied or the threat posed by the 'other'. Although the EHRC followed Cantle (2001) in expressing concern at the extent of segregation, Finney and Simpson (2009) have argued that a better analysis of official statistics challenges the extent of segregation and certainly the idea that there is minority self-segregation. At a much simpler level we (Long et al., 2009) have demonstrated the importance of disaggregating data in order to gain a proper understanding of ethnic participation levels in sport: the pattern is highly complex with great variation between and within minority ethnic groups. However, because we are concerned with 'minority groups', random samples, rather than quota samples, only allow this when the sample size is very large. With smaller samples the analysis may be restricted to comparing 'white' and 'non-white' sub-samples (e.g. Katz-Gerro, 2012) – or White British with Black and Minority Ethnic groups – thereby concealing great diversity. Without that appreciation of diversity it is difficult to imagine how the more nuanced policies that many (e.g. Burdsey and Randhawa, 2012) call for can be realised.

Being a problem

In policy research, minoritised ethnic groups are typically cast in terms of a problem that needs resolving, whether as people lacking resources or demanding services, as people who refuse to integrate or as the persecuted minority (even if it is other people subjecting them to racism). There are undoubtedly issues that need to be

addressed amongst those, but we also need more fundamental research that will introduce to the policy arena a proper understanding of the lives of people consigned to these categories. We must problematize ethnicity without using a deficit model. That might allow recognition of the cultural resources represented by this 'superdiversity'.

Sensitive issues

Just as they reputedly obstructed the investigation of the sexual exploitation of children by Pakistani men in Rotherham (UK), people's sensitivities can obstruct good quality research. For example, people may not be forthcoming because of what they have done infringing local norms (e.g. being an illegal migrant) or because of what they may be subjected to (e.g. racism). The very term 'racism' may inhibit communication because it is now generally recognised as a socially unacceptable act and invariably seen as a label to avoid. As a consequence it is that much harder for it to be debated openly and honestly in policy discussions; heated debate as people take offence can damage the formulation of policy. Yet it is clear from the findings of the MacPherson Inquiry (MacPherson, 1999) into the police investigation of the murder of Stephen Lawrence that intent is not necessary as racism can be enacted unwittingly. Further, Hylton and Totten (2013) state that organisations must understand that institutional processes can include and exclude. They go on to argue that policies and practices must be effective on a number of levels (personal, organisational, cultural), while at the same time broader structural racialised inequalities and factors must be taken into consideration.

Conclusion

Even without a biological base, people will construct representations of race and ethnicity that serve to racialise everyday experiences. The definitions used in policy research may be flawed, but perhaps insofar as they 'track' everyday concerns we should recognise that they have some use. The significance of these processes of racialisation and associated behaviours is such that it is imperative that steps are taken to continue to fill the gaps in an under-researched part of tourism, leisure and events. Hylton and Chakrabarty's (2011) special issue in this journal on 'race' and culture signalled the challenges and potential depth of research necessary on this topic.

For all its difficulties, research in this field has successfully disrupted the colour blindness of policy discourses and also encouraged an appreciation of the multiple forms of racism, emphasising, for example, that simply laying blame for racism in sport at the door of football hooligans is not only inadequate but mistakenly counterproductive. One of the consequences is that participants, providers, policymakers and researchers all need to recognise that racism is not just something that occurs 'over there' but may be uncomfortably closer to home. We all (researchers, practitioners and policymakers) need to address our own use of categories, concepts and models of the world.

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[1] We take 'race' to denote a concept that signifies and symbolizes sociopolitical conflicts and interests in reference to different types of human bodies. There is no biological basis for distinguishing human groups along the lines of 'race'. (Winant 2001: 317).

Ethnicity is not an immutable bundle of cultural traits which it is sufficient to enumerate in order to identify a person as an 'X' or a 'Y' or locate the boundary between ethnic collectivities. Rather, ethnicity is situationally defined, produced in the course of social transactions that occur at or across (and in the process help to constitute) the ethnic boundary in question (Jenkins 1994: 198).

Culture often refers to a shared way of life, values and ceremonies characteristic of a given group (Jarvie 2006: 5).

Nationality is commonly described as belonging to a nation and has a strong relationship to rights of citizenship.