THE RACIALISATION OF NAMES: NAMES AND THE PERSISTENCE OF RACISM IN THE UK

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What's in a name? –

There's lots in my name:

Three African syllables tossed in my name:

Many refugees fleeing gunshots in my name -

One father, to us long lost, in my name...

Some people frown when they jot down my name:

And often the spelling is botched of my name -

I forgive them. Its rhythm was born not on this plain

But one where the sun soothes the crops with its rays.

We have achieved lots with my name:

There are poets, musicians, doctors with my name:

A name some find odd, but I bear not with shame

But as proudly as some wear a cross on a chain.

(Musa Okwonga)

ABSTRACT

This thesis argues that despite claims that the UK is a post-racial society, (sur)names are understood in a racialised way. 31 semi-structured interviews and one survey-based interview were conducted. 29 of the 32 participants had changed their surname from one they perceived to be symbolically representative of their own embodied racial identity to one that they felt was not, or vice versa. This thesis claims that some (sur)names are socially constructed as invisible and normal, i.e. white British, whilst 'Other' names are deemed foreign and highly conspicuous. It is asserted that (sur)names inform stereotypes of a person's embodied racial appearance. The confusion and intense interest encountered by the name-changers in relation to a perceived disjuncture between their embodied racial identity and the racialised categorisation of their name, exposes processes of racialisation. Name, embodied racial appearance and accent interact in different ways and contexts in deciding how a person is racialised and what their access is to the privilege associated with the majority identity of white Britishness. It is suggested that names are racially hierarchized according to the racial and/or national identity that the name is seen to represent. The thesis uses literature on race, racism, whiteness, racial passing, inbetween people and nationalism, in order to explore the racist and nationalist undertones of many participants' encounters in regard to a racial disjuncture between name and body. Whilst supporting the point that race is a social construction rather than biological fact, the thesis nonetheless asserts that difference is conceived not just in terms of culture but in relation to embodied notions of race. Names should be acknowledged as being an important marker of biological conceptions of race. Race is still common currency in the UK, and this matters because power is differentially attributed within racialisation processes. Racism is not over.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT 2

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 3

TABLE OF CONTENTS 4

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCING THE RESEARCH 6
- **Introduction** 6
- **The End of Multiculturalism, the Introduction of Neo-Assimilationism and Refutations of Racism** 7
- **Names and Racialisation** 16
- **A History of Name-Changing** 18
- **Attitudes Towards Names as Expressed in the UK Media** 24
- **Research Questions** 27
- **My Terminology of Names** 30
- **The Thesis' Structure** 31

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW 34
- **Introduction** 34
- **The Socially Constructed Nature of Race and the Notion of Racial Hierarchies** 35
- **National Perpetrations of Race, Racism and Nationalism** 39
- **Cultural Racism** 44
- **The Notion that Racism has Ended** 48
- **Power: Why Race Matters, and Whiteness** 51
- **Inbetween People** 58
- **Racialisation Processes and Embodied Understandings of Race** 60
- **Identity and Racial Passing** 62
- **Linking the Above Existing Theories to Names: Correspondence Test Research and Other Research on Name Discrimination** 68

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN 73
- **Introduction** 73
- **Study Design** 73
- **Interpretivist Epistemology** 75
- **Influence of Feminist Epistemologies** 78
- **Sample, Method of Data Collection and Data Analysis** 79
  - Sample 79
  - Interviews 83
  - Data Analysis 88
- **Being Reflexive about my Research Approach** 91
- **Ethics** 97
- **Conclusion** 102

CHAPTER FOUR: THE EMBODIED AND DISEMBODIED RACIALISATION OF (SUR)NAMES 103
- **Introduction** 103
- **Racialised Disparity Between (Sur)names and Body** 104
- **Racialised Disparity Between (Sur)names and Accent** 115
- **Racialised Understanding of Inner Characteristics Based Upon (Sur)names** 118
- **Foreign Surnames Equated to Participant's Embodied Racial Identity Rather than to Marital Name-Change** 124
- **Extreme Reactions Towards a Disjuncture of Racialised (Sur)names and Body** 126
- **The Interaction of Accent, Body and (Sur)name in Determining Participants' Access (or Not) to White British Privilege: their Inbetween Status.** 134
- **Conclusion** 143

CHAPTER FIVE: NO END TO RACISM – (SUR)NAMES AND DISCRIMINATION 145
- **Introduction** 145

No End to Racism: Racist Incidents in Relation to (Sur)names..... 145
Family and Friends' Reactions..... 146
General Societal Responses 150
Employment/Work-Related Incidents..... 151
Education-Related Incidents 156
Disrespect for Foreign (Sur)names 159
Experiences of Invasive Questioning: Hostility Towards Foreign (Sur)names Leading to Uncertainty of Name-Bearer's Identity and/or Impacting Upon the Name-Changer's Decision-Making. 163
Avoiding (Sur)name Discrimination/Interrogation 172
The All-Pervasiveness of Racist/Problematic Attitudes Towards Foreign (Sur)names. 176
Fighting Discrimination/Racism through Name 182
Conclusion 185

CHAPTER SIX: 'WHAT WOULD IT BE REASONABLE FOR THE KID TO BE CALLED?' – NEGOTIATING THE RACIALISED ESSENTIALISM OF NAMES..... 187
Introduction..... 187
What is it 'Reasonable' for a Child to be Called? Balancing Fears of Discrimination with Desires to Reflect Children's Heritage. 189
Racial Hierarchy of Names 197
Using Name Choice to Help Children Racially Pass / Avoid Discrimination . 201
Using Name-Choice to Fight Discrimination and/or Promote Otherness. 216
Reactions to the Foreignness of Names 223
Conclusion 228

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS 231
Introduction..... 231
The Case Study Findings..... 233
Concluding Remarks..... 250

REFERENCES..... 259

APPENDIX ONE: (SELF-IDENTIFIED) PARTICIPANT INFORMATION..... 293

APPENDIX TWO: INTERVIEW GUIDE 295

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCING THE RESEARCH

Introduction

The core, empirical, aim of this project is to gain an insight into the everyday experiences of people who have borne what they perceive to be two racially[1] different surnames. The project is interview-based, and aspires to investigate the experiences of 32 people who have borne two different surnames they understand to be traditionally symbolic of different racial groupings. Alternatively, they have been married to someone with a surname they deem to differ in racial categorisation to their own. Specifically, one of these surnames is considered by the participants to be symbolically and commonly understood within the UK as white British or white English, whilst the other surname is understood not to be so.

The theoretical inspiration for this research idea came in two parts. Firstly, the project is a response and a challenge to a consistent and underlying rhetoric in the UK that race, and thereby racism, are no longer prevalent (Lentin, 2011b, 2012). The second stimulus for my research was a curiosity with past research (e.g. Wood *et al.*, 2009), which has indicated that names – as markers of race - are crucial in determining an individual's employment chances within the UK. It is important to firstly situate my discussion of the notion that racism has ended within the context of the UK's move away from multiculturalism and towards a more neo-assimilationist approach to dealing with perceived negative issues of diversity. This overview provides the context to the notion that race is no longer important and that racism in the UK is subsequently over. I then indicate that names are potentially used as metaphors of race and therefore that the concept of racism can be explored via the avenue of names. This discussion includes a brief outline of existing research into names and discrimination in the employment sector, and a subsequent discussion of the history of name-changing and attitudes towards names portrayed by the UK

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[1] Many social scholars put race in quotation marks (Lewis and Pheonix, 2004). For aesthetic reasons I have chosen against this option. This is no way detracts from my belief in the socially constructed nature of race, as I assert at length in Chapter Two.

media. This is so as to provide an introduction to why names in relation to the concepts of race and racism are an important topic of study. I then present my research questions, followed by a note on my use of terminology in regard to the racialised essentialisation of names. Finally, I describe the thesis' structure.

The End of Multiculturalism, the Introduction of Neo-Assimilationism and Refutations of Racism

Arguably, globalization along with its powerful twin sibling, capitalism, has consistently stirred the debates around racism (Macedo and Gounari, 2006). It has, in recent times, been a key driver of the global movement and interaction of peoples and cultures across the world (ibid.). Globalization consequently informs, shapes and changes the perception, construction and the understanding of racism in the immediate and most likely in the future. Moreover, McGhee (2005) suggests that globalization has led to a backlash of anti-migrant feeling in places such as the UK. Gilroy (2004, 2005) warns that race is often incorrectly considered to be a positive supplier of certainty, saving one from the negative postmodern attacks on the completeness and concreteness of one's identity. Globalization's perceived threats to the nation state has allowed racism to be more obviously connected to notions of sovereignty and nationhood. Those construed as being Other (Said, 2003) – for example, new migrants - are viewed as being external to the believed "homogenous national culture"' (Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo, 2005:12; also Stolcke, 1995). This state of affairs provides the context for Gilroy's (2004) argument that post-September 11th, 2001, the presence of racism and the history of colonialism have been dismissed angrily as being unimportant in the UK even by liberals (also see Lentin, 2008).

Indeed, Gilroy (2004) asserts that in response to the homogenizing affects of globalization, governments have intervened in issues of national identity and consciousness in an extensive manner. Britain has in recent years turned its back on its commitment to the multicultural policies (McGhee, 2008), which had been advocated by British governments between the approximate years of 1960 and 2000. Explanations for this change in policy have been embedded in discourse of the

continually ‘growing immigration flows and ethnic diversity’, as well as ‘the “war on terror”’ since September 11th 2001 (Cheong *et al.,* 2007:25-6; also Burnett and Whyte, 2004; Lentin, 2005). The concept of multiculturalism has been heavily criticized by the media and by politicians for supposedly leading to a growth of diversity (one can label this as ‘super-diversity’; Vertovec, 2006) and separatism (Però, Tenegra and Zontini, 2008b). For example, in relation to disturbances in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham of 2001 (Alexander, Edwards and Temple, 2007), the 7th July 2005 bombings in London, and the riots in several UK cities in August 2011. Lentin and Titley (2011a:3) convincingly argue that attacks on the concept of multiculturalism have provided a ‘discursive space for debating questions of race, culture, legitimacy and belonging’, since race in itself is a topic considered conversationally out of bounds. By asserting that multiculturalism has failed, this allows room to discuss more than ever, concerns around migration (ibid.).

A greater emphasis has subsequently been placed, in popular and political discourses, on notions of ‘cohesion’ and ‘solidarity’, and consequently upon ‘neo-assimilationism’, which can be defined as a backlash against diversity and a stronger identification with ‘British national values’ (Però, 2008a:5; also Grillo, 2005; Vasta, 2007; Alexander, Edwards and Temple, 2007). It is however, unclear what such values are (Johnson, 2002; Gamble and Wright, 2009). Illusions to an idea of ‘Britishness’/’a mythical cohesive past’ (Però, 2008a:7) have nonetheless become commonplace, and are promoted in opposition to the super-diversity of modern day Britain. This neo-assimilationist turn has coincided with a severe and sustained mainstream attack on minorities and immigrants (Però and Solomos, 2010). For example, the tabloid press frequently portrays migrants and refugees ‘as social and economic parasites unwilling to integrate, and whose values are incompatible with British values’ (Sveinsson, 2010:9).

The context of British super-diversity being in friction with the increasingly neo-assimilationist tones (that is, the emphasis on Britishness) in public and political discourses, has also led to government policies which are increasingly ever more unfavourable and ‘hostile’ towards migrants (Sveinsson, 2010:8, also Però, 2013). For

example, the recently introduced family reunification policy stipulates that a person who wishes to bring their foreign partner to reside with them in the UK has to have an income of at least £18,600 per year. This means that close to 50% of the UK working population would not be able to bring a partner from overseas to live in the UK (Grove-White, 2012), and equates to about 18,500 people who will now not be able to join their families in the UK. Grove-White asserts that this policy may aid the government in moving towards its target of lower net migration, but will be traumatic for those families who will be unable to live together (ibid.). Anti-immigration policies inevitably produce an ideological conflict between the immigration policy 'as a form of differential exclusion from the territory and hence society, and citizenship as a way of including people in civil society and the nation state' (Castles, 2000: 90).

In 2005 new naturalization rules were introduced in the UK. Consequently, migrants meeting Britain's residency (and other relevant) criteria are required to pass either an ESOL with British Citizenship Course, or a Life in the UK Test (*Life in the UK Test* website, 2012). These are 'tests of knowledge about life in the United Kingdom' (ibid.), which the previous, Labour, government stated were designed to encourage people 'who have decided to make their lives in Britain to learn more about our culture and institutions, and in many cases to improve their knowledge of our language' (Reid, 2007: Foreword; see Alexander, Edwards and Temple, 2007, for a discussion of language requirements in relation to national exclusion).

Once a person has passed either of the tests, they then have to attend a 'citizenship ceremony', which was created in order to 'celebrate the achievement of new Britons in becoming citizens' (Reid, 2007: Foreword). The language contained within the above extracts is particularly informative about the way the previous government viewed the distinction between immigration status and citizenship status: the new citizens are constantly Othered in the use of the word 'their'. This contrasts with those who already properly belong, and constitute the 'our'. Moreover, the pledge of allegiance to Britain, which new British citizens must make at the citizenship ceremonies, is a requirement that British-born citizens do not have to adhere to. Consequently, migrants have to 'provide evidence for their own worth above and

beyond what is required of British [-born] citizens' (Sveinsson, 2010:8). The responsibility for achieving an integrated society has been placed solely upon 'its outsiders' (Lentin, 2008:499).

In addition, the current government has revised the Life in the UK test. The migration minister, Mark Harper, stated that: '"The new book rightly focuses on values and principles at the heart of being British"..."Instead of telling people how to claim benefits it encourages participation in British life"' (quoted in Booth, 2013). Critics have likened the test to a public school entrance exam and have highlighted the way some more unsavoury episodes of British history go unmentioned in the syllabus (ibid.). Moreover, see Sales (2008) and Yuval-Davis, Anthias and Kofman (2005) for critiques of the Life in the UK Test as a means of making migrants fit in with a mythical way of living as a British person.

As Billig (2004) so rightly expresses, identities do not exist within a neutral vacuum, but are embedded within national/social structures of power - and accordingly within classification (Balibar, 2002) and hierarchies of inequality (Billig, 2004). As Van Dijk (1993:10) argues, it is elite members of society such as politicians who 'prepare' much of the prejudice that invokes popular racist views (also Però, 2013). Elite views arguably impact upon the life chances of racial minorities more than popular racist views (Van Dijk, 1993). Therefore, the kind of government 'us' and 'them' discourse echoed within such policies as the UK Citizenship Test arguably 'flags' (Billig, 2004) perceived justification of why Others are less worthy in terms of intelligence, ability and so on. Consequently it emphasises why the Other deserves less from the system with regards to housing, jobs, rights etcetera (Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo, 2005; Alexander, Edwards and Temple, 2007; Darder and Torres, 2004; Solomos, 2001). Furthermore, migrants have tended to be objectified by political elites, who have concentrated on how to 'manage, use, control and discipline migrants' in the best interests of the nation (Però and Solomos, 2010:7). Little attention has been given to the subjective personhood of migrants (ibid.). This managerialist style of governance (Enteman, 1993) suggests that as migrants' views

are not deemed important within UK society, they will therefore be ignored and buried under the government's neo-assimilationist rhetoric.

As Però (2013) asserts, there is little difference, and are many overlaps between racial minorities and migrants in terms of their vulnerability to being blamed by politicians for the nation's problems. Related to the backlash against multiculturalism, David Cameron (2011) announced an end to a tolerance, which he asserted has been taken advantage of by minorities (especially Muslim terrorists) in the UK. He heralded the dawn of a more assimilationist approach by the government, whereby '"certain values"' will be promoted by a '"more active, muscular liberalism"' rather than allowing citizens to live separate lives (ibid.). Cameron (2011) stated that there would be an end to state multiculturalism and to '"passive tolerance", with a message that what is "at stake is not just lives, it's our way of life"'. Just who 'our' is, or what 'our way of life' refers to is left unexplained. Lentin (2012) rightly argues that the anti-multiculturalism shift is in actuality an assertion that there is too much of Other cultures and not enough of 'our' culture. Alexander *et al.* (2007:787-8) eloquently encapsulate this point:

> …groups which are seen as placed beyond the pale of national inclusion – particularly "Muslim" groups, which have increasingly come to symbolise the limits of national belonging…Despite the nod to pluralistic versions of Britishness, the strong implication is that it is only through the dissolution of difference that ethnic minorities can become part of the nation – by becoming "people who think and behave like us"'.

Therefore I would argue that to call the tolerance practised by the UK 'passive' is inaccurate. As Holmes (1991:110) argues, Britain's proud history of tolerance is 'among the most distorting celebratory myths in recent British history' (also Clarke and Garner, 2009; Putnam, 2009; McKinnon, 2006; Wemyss, 2006). Furthermore, Cameron's implied scapegoating of Muslims fits with the current increase in the essentialisation of, and discrimination against, Muslims in the UK (Alexander, 2004, Alexander, Edwards and Temple, 2007; Chryssochoou, 2004; Clarke and Garner, 2009; Yuval-Davis, 2006). Indeed, as Younge (2011) points out, terrorism perpetrated

by British-born Muslims has been framed as a new phenomenon, despite the fact that the UK has been involved for the past 40 years in the terrorist conflict of Northern Ireland. The murders committed by white Norwegian, Anders Breivik on the 22nd July 2011, which have been praised by far right English groups because of Breivik's anti-multiculturalist stance (Townsend, 2012), underline the fact that terrorism is not a Muslim-specific problem.

The above discussion indicates that racial minorities and migrants currently tend to be framed in the UK as a problem, and even a threat, for society. As Però (2013) argues, it seems that migrants and minorities are used by the British government as a means of encouraging cohesion amongst the white majority population, through the scapegoating of what are actually vulnerable groups. The neo-assimilationist turn, with its vagueness and lack of definition with regards to just what values and culture those conceived as Other or different are supposed to assimilate into, also serves to hide, and even deny, the existence of racism. Indeed, as implied earlier, the construction of difference in terms of essentialised notions of culture means culture is used as a mask for race (Lentin, 2005; Lentin and Titley, 2011a).

Looking back to the 1990s, anti-racism was critiqued severely by the political Right, one of whose arguments was that racism was all in the imagination of the Left and of the 'race relations industry' (Solomos, 2003:187). In doing so, public attention was distracted from racism and instead directed towards black people and anti-racist campaigners who were perceived as somehow profiting from the idea that Britain is racist (ibid.). As Gilroy (1987) asserts, prejudice was held up as being historically cultural, and as an aspect of freedom of speech. Accusations of racism have often been described as a curbing of the white British majority's freedom of speech (ibid.). There are arguably echoes of such rhetoric in present-day attitudes towards notions of cultural difference, and therefore of race/racism.

As racial minorities and migrants are blamed (Bauman, 2006) for the problems within British society, they thereby have no right to complain about being victims of racism. The rhetoric suggests that any lack of their success within the UK is because of their unwillingness to integrate culturally into white British ways. Therefore,

the blame is laid at the feet of the cultural difference or Otherness of minorities and migrants, which in itself denies the possibility of white majority racism against minorities and migrants (I will discuss the 'new racism' that is based on notions of culture in Chapter Two). The prevalent discourse effectively implies that the white majority has been too passive and compassionate in allowing a multiculturalist approach, which is felt to have led to a lack of cohesiveness and even to terrorist acts, as described above. Consequently, whereas multiculturalism arguably recognised difference and tried to make a diverse society work, neo-assimilationism appears to demonise difference, drown out the voices/preferences of minorities and migrants in a sea of imposed rules and blame – thereby oppressing them within an already racially inequitable society (I highlight this racial unjustness in the following section). It is therefore not surprising that Lentin (2011b, 2012) goes so far as to assert that the UK is often portrayed as being post-racial. Race and racism are ignored due to the dominant preoccupation with culture, and specifically because of the prevailing notion that multiculturalism has failed, as discussed above. That is, there is a conceived understanding that migrant and minority cultures have failed to cohesively interact with the majority white British culture (whatever these cultures may be). This ignores the ways in which culture is itself arguably racialised (Lentin, 2012), as I will explore in Chapter Two.

An example of this outward emphasis on (an essentialised notion of) culture, rather than race, can be seen in *The Spectator* article written by Samir Shah, who was chair of the Runnymede Trust for ten years. The piece is entitled 'Race Is Not An Issue In The UK Anymore' (2009). He stated in this article that culture, rather than race, is to blame for differential levels of success between 'communities' in Britain (ibid.): 'The first impediment to progress is a community's determination to cling on to elements of their own cultural traditions and ways of life' (ibid.). Furthermore, he writes that 'Cultural cloning is…the main source of discrimination in Britain today' – that is, in the employment sector, there is a 'human tendency to recruit in one's own image' (ibid.) and that this consequently leads to white males being selected ahead of racial minorities. He also states that: 'Style, background, accent, dress sense, and cultural

(as opposed to ethnic) background and – most of all – your manner count just as much as your ethnicity in trying to land that job' (ibid.). He does not seem to consider that judging someone on such criteria as accent, dress and culture – which he appears throughout the article to use in an essentialised, rather than individualised, sense – could be said to be very racialising indeed.

I use the term racialisation in this thesis to refer to ways in which racial meanings are psychologically and socially attributed to specific individuals and/or issues, in the sense that race would seem to be integral to the manner in which those individuals/issues are understood (Murji and Solomos, 2004; Lewis and Phoenix, 2004). Shah also seems to ignore in his article how research (such as Wood *et al.*, 2009) has indicated that employer decisions regarding job applications tend to be heavily influenced by the racialised category accorded to someone's name, without that person's dress sense, accent, manner and culture (etcetera) being known. I will touch upon this research in the following section.

In a similar vein, the comments made by the Conservative MP, David Davies, who spoke in 2010 about the case of 14 year old Balan Khan, who raped and robbed a woman, are relevant. He said that: '"There do seem to be some people in some communities who don't respect women's rights at all, and who…without necessarily saying that this is the case on this occasion, who have imported into this country barbaric and medieval views about women'" (quoted in *BBC News*, 2010). He then said that he wished to say that his point was not relating to '"an Islamic issue…let me be quite clear, and it's not a racial issue"' (ibid.). As Saleem Kidwai of the All Wales Ethnic Minority Association responded at the time, Davies appears to be '"covering himself…by saying that….he's not referring to any ethnic community…it's obvious! Who is 'imported'?"' (ibid.). As Però (2013) argues, the views of politicians are important in the context of influencing the wider populace on attitudes towards minorities and migrants.

Furthermore, Michael Gove, the Secretary of State for Education, has recently introduced the Children and Families Bill, which has been heavily criticised in some quarters for denying the importance of race in determining who should be allowed to

adopt a child (Townsend, 2013). Barn (2013) asserts that it is important to consider whether or not potential adoptive parents have an understanding of racial discrimination and how this may impact on a child conceived as not being white. Furthermore, Muir (2012) writes that Gove's given reason for removing race as a criterion for adoption decisions is misguided. He quotes Ofsted as saying that there is '"little evidence"' that adoptions are delayed because social workers are looking for a perfect racial match between the child and adoptive parents (ibid.). Barn (2013) further argues that the Bill is a 'crusade' on the part of Gove, which is 'so perversely obsessed with the elimination of ethnicity that it cannot stomach any reference to the importance of this in an adopted child's life'. Townsend (2013) quotes John Simmonds of the British Association for Adoption and Fostering as saying he is concerned that Gove's motivations for removing race from the agenda are grounded in David Cameron's announcement that multiculturalism is finished and his '"emphasis…on being British"'. This implies that no credence should be given to race, that there is no such thing as racism. That there is only the lack of cultural adaptation on the part of racial minorities, which does not apply to adopted non-white children, who can be socialised into white Britishness by white parents. The implication is that biological notions of race as based in the body are no longer important, it is all about culture.

I feel myself, from my own experiences of being in a 'mixed-race' relationship, that biological notions of race (that is, racialised categorisations on the basis of assumed biological differences between human beings, which can be seen in embodied skin colour etcetera) are still used as a powerful basis of categorisation within the UK. I also sense that notions of cultural difference are, underneath the rhetoric, racialised (Lentin, 2012) and that racism is still therefore persistent. I desire to explore this issue from a sociological perspective: to understand whether or not individuals are still commonly racialised in the UK, and whether or not racism is still prevalent. I will be discussing the history, and the socially constructed nature, of the concepts of race and racism (Alexander, 2006; Nayak, 2006) at length in Chapter Two.

Names and Racialisation

As mentioned above, I will explore, via the tool of names, if race and racism are still dominant in the UK. I will explain more extensively in Chapter Two how Wood *et al.*'s (2009) research indirectly asserted that names are used by employers as a device to distinguish between people in a racialised manner. Wood *et al.* assert that this racialisation led to higher chances of employment for those people conceived as white British, and lower chances for those regarded as Asian or African (ibid.). In this study, names were invented as quantitative proxies for different racial groupings. In contrast, I seek to understand actual people's lived experiences of living with a name, which may be racialised and/or conceived as foreign within the British context. I aim to look at whether or not the UK is a post-racial society from the angle of names: do racialisation processes exist, and if so, what part(s) do names play within them?

A further recent report by the Runnymede Trust (2012) is also of interest in this regard. It qualitatively investigated the reasons behind the low unemployment rate for black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in the UK. It estimated that 25% of the ethnic minority unemployment figure in the UK could be explained by the discrimination faced by ethnic minorities (ibid.). One facet of discrimination that the report highlighted was in relation to names (ibid.). Many of the project's participants identified with the findings of Wood *et al.*'s (2009) report (The Runnymede Trust, 2012). Some of the participants indicated that they had altered their names in order to make them appear 'more traditionally British' (The Runnymede Trust, 2012:12). Indeed, one publication aimed at Human Resource professionals related the report's findings under the heading of: 'Want a job? Get a "whitened" name' (*People Management*, January 2013). The report goes on to urge that the government should promote the use of blank name application forms in the employment sector (The Runnymede Trust, 2012). Such a strategy was seen as a possible means of decreasing discrimination in the process of shortlisting applicants for jobs (ibid.). Nonetheless, such research does not focus on names predominantly, nor upon names outside of the area of unemployment. This thesis aims to fill this gap in existing

research by providing data about the social interactional – as well as the socio-economic - experiences of my participants in relation to their names.

Furthermore, I aim to complicate the study of names and racialisation, in that most of my participants have experienced bearing one surname that they understood to reflect their embodied racial identity and one which did not. Thus these participants have been able to compare their experiences of bearing the two different surnames and the ways in which they interact with embodied features of their perceived racial identity, such as accent and skin colour. Consequently, I will explore in this thesis whether/how the participants' surnames have served as a racially categorising device. Moreover, I will aim to establish if their (sur)name is used alongside seemingly accepted nationalising and/or racialising typifiers. These markers can be said to include phenotypical features, skin colour, accent, and other information such as parentage and place of birth (Bond, 2006). Such indicators of race and/or nationhood are seemingly used in the act of making racialised and nationalised judgements about people, over which they may have little, or no, control. Such judgements can lead to feelings of inclusion or exclusion within a particular nation state, and of access to, or denial of, the privileges[2] accorded to the majority racial group within a nation (McCrone and Bechhofer, 2008). I will discuss these issues in the following chapter.

Lipski (1976) argues that names are representative of the individual to which they belong. For example, names tend to symbolise the main language of the geographical place from which they derive (ibid.). Consequently, they can often be said to also represent one's 'ethnic origins' (ibid.; also Kang, 1971; Lieberson, 1992). It is with this thought in mind that I will now discuss the quite extensive history of name-changing in the UK and the US. This history will have direct contextual relevance to my later explorations of my participants' decisions to change, or not to

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[2] I have used the term 'privilege', rather than 'entitlements', throughout my thesis. This is because I feel that the inequitable nature of the entitlements seemingly accorded to white people on the basis of their allocated race should be revealed and acknowledged, and the term 'privilege' implies this. Whiteness literature tends to have also used the term 'privilege' (e.g. Dyer, 1999).

change, their (sur)names (mainly prompted by the event of marriage). Furthermore, it speaks strongly of a history of racialising names and of discrimination linked to this practice. This invokes racism and national inclusion/exclusion theories, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

A History of Name-Changing

Surnames carry more meaning and value than a person usually admits (Titford, 2009). Their age typically means they are the oldest possession one has (ibid.), and they therefore reflect backwards towards one's ancestral roots (ibid.). There is, however, an extensive history of name-changing in the UK (and beyond). This is evidenced, for example, in the fact that despite the historically substantial amount of migration to the United Kingdom, the number of names that originate with these migrants are not found in current names in the UK today (Weekley, 1928). Indeed, during the Middle Ages, immigration only had a small impact upon the collection of surnames being used in Britain, as many immigrants' names were completely Anglicised. This was either because they did not have surnames at all upon arrival and were thus given new names, or because their names were literally translated into English upon arrival (McKinley, 1990).

This pattern of Anglicising immigrants' names changed somewhat after about 1500 (ibid.), which can be explained by the fact that some immigrants were more educated and kept their names, or modified them only slightly (ibid.). Nevertheless, the majority of immigrants were still largely unskilled and illiterate, which as Weekley (1928) argues, explains the astonishing disappearance between 1500 and 1700 of the names of thousands of French migrants to the UK. Moreover, whilst some of these immigrants' names were literally translated into English, such as 'Poisson' to 'Fish' (ibid.), in most instances the names were randomly replaced by officials.

In reference to a list of migrants created in 1618 in London, Weekley (1928) describes how migrants' name-alteration depended upon the specific official's preference. The first name was transposed into an English one, whereas the surname was either altered into a presumably English-sounding arrangement, or warped

entirely (ibid.). For example, one constable chose to create a surname out of the person's country of origin, thus referencing one man as: 'Cristofer Switcher, born at Swerick (Zurich) in Switcherland' (ibid.:52). Alternatively, other officials appeared to have little creativeness or patience and subsequently swapped foreign names with 'plain English' ones (ibid.). Such attitudes towards names deemed foreign indicate both a certain lack of respect for those migrants' original names, and the ease with which a name could be Anglicised for them, apparently without their consent.

In addition, in the American context, some African slaves were forced to adopt Anglicised names by their white American slave masters in the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries (Kohli and Solórzano, 2012). Having their name Anglicised was a sign of ownership (ibid.). Moreover, indigenous American people's names were also often forcibly Anglicised/Christianised until the 1920s (ibid.). Kohli and Solórzano (2012) argue that such practices have meant that names deemed not white are to this day felt to be an undesirable problem or nuisance in American society. Furthermore, names, as I described at the beginning of this section, tend to be viewed as personal possessions and individual identity markers. This described history of name-changing, however, suggests that names can also be viewed as a collective identity marker. Names can be viewed as foreign or as acceptably English/British (in the UK setting). Foreignness has seemingly been viewed as inferior in the UK context and consequently as something to be neutralized – for example by the enforced Anglicisation of names.

Nonetheless, name-changing has also been something many individuals, in more recent times, have chosen to do. There are those who alter/change their names so as to avoid embarrassment. A 2008 study found that 'Surnames with rude or unfortunate connotations including 'Shufflebottom' and 'Daft' have fallen by as much as 75 per cent' in terms of usage in the UK since 1881 (Jamieson, 2009). Others have changed their names in an attempt to psychologically distance themselves from painful events or relationships, or because they especially dislike their name (ibid.). For example, a recent television programme explored the immense emotional difficulties for the descendants of high-ranking Nazi officials (Cronin, 2012). Bearing

their ancestors' surname was deemed to be a major part of the trauma felt by these descendants (ibid). Some chose to alter their surnames and/or be sterilised so that the name and/or genes belonging to their ancestors would die out (ibid.). Either way, for name-changers their name is regarded as being so important as to be worthy of going through the administrative hassle and often emotional consequences of changing it (Pearce, 1990).

The Anglicisation of names has notably occurred in relation to Jewish names of German extraction (ibid.). For instance, 'Meyer is transformed into Myers, Goldschmid into Goldsmith, Kohn into Cowan…and so on' (ibid.:54; also *BBC News Magazine,* 2007). Furthermore, this has also been the case outside of Britain. Wilson (1998) asserts that unusually, rather than name-changing because of divorce, Jewish people have tended to do so because of a desire to improve their social status. This meant they felt the need to disassociate themselves from names, which were felt to hold negative associations in the eyes of wider society (ibid.). Indeed, Wilson (1998) argues that it is now difficult to identify Jewish people by their names in the USA. This suggests that such individuals reacted to perceived discrimination/racism by trying to mask their foreignness through changing their names. Consequently, although one can say that the people made the decision to change their names, the sheer scale of the name-changing suggests that perhaps they felt somewhat compelled to do so.

Thus we can perceive that throughout history particular names have been regarded as negatively symbolic of certain racialised identities – such as the anti-semitism associated with Jewish names. It can be argued that such names have been conceived as stigmatic, which has led the bearers to significantly alter, or to change, their names (Schettler, 1942). It is not that the names themselves were necessarily viewed by their bearers as being somehow grotesque, but rather it is that these names told others around them something about themselves that was not to be viewed positively: in this case their Jewishness, their foreignness to majority tastes within the USA. Furthermore, Wilson (1998) notes that numerous prosperous Jewish Britons had Anglicised their names, which then led to those new names being subjected to the same anti-Semitic discrimination as their former names.

Consequently, we can observe that it was not the new names adopted by these Jewish Britons which were stigmatic. Rather the Jewish people were themselves viewed as bringing something negative to these names in adopting them. What is more, their name-change did not sufficiently neutralise their foreignness. There were seemingly other perceived racial markers that prevented their total assimilation into the respective nation-state.

A further example of a desire to bear a name that would blend in with the majority, can be seen in the British royal family's decision to change its name overnight in 1917 (Rohrer, 2007). This choice was made upon a wave of public anti-German sentiment in Britain during the First World War (ibid.). Consequently, the family's surname was changed from Saxe-Coburg-Gotha - deemed to be overly-German-sounding - to Windsor - conceived as stereotypically English-sounding (ibid.). It appears that the Royal Family's other racial markers and/or its position of social power within the UK meant that the name-change neutralised its foreignness. This contrasts with the Jewish name-changers' afore-mentioned imperfect removal of their foreignness.

A related example to that of Jewish name-changing, is that of those African slaves in North America who had not had their names forcibly Anglicised. Upon gaining freedom many tended to abandon their African names, as they viewed them as 'ethnic epithets of a pejorative kind' (Wilson, 1998:310). Thus for such ex-slaves, taking a new name was emblematic of freedom (ibid.). Consequently they tended to alter their first name and choose a surname that would fit in with where they lived, thereby disassociating their name from their former life as a slave (ibid.). Such actions imply the desire to assimilate, and to move away from names perceived to be stigmatic. This is, though, perhaps surprising in light of the practice mentioned above of many slaves having their names forcibly Anglicised as a sign of ownership. Thus history indicates views towards the connotations of particular names do change according to context and over time.

Indeed, Malcolm X[3] (1963) argued that, in contrast to those African slaves in North America who abandoned their African names because of their negative connotations, in his own lifetime African names gained more respect from white Americans than did a black American's Anglicised name. Malcolm X (1963) contrasted his negative experiences of being treated as a black American with the positive attitudes he perceived upon giving out his Islamic name, Malik Shabazz. Thus, Malcolm X (1963) asserted that African-Americans were at this time still associated with something negative (seemingly slavery), even though they often bore Anglicised names. In contrast, Africans (distinguishable by their African names) were the free-born, the landowners, to be respected more than African-Americans (ibid.).

In bearing Anglicised names, ex-slaves – similarly to the afore-mentioned Jewish Britons - had seemingly brought a stigma to them. Or, alternatively, perhaps the historic practice of slaves' names being forcibly Anglicised had led to notions that to be African American (seemingly categorised via skin colour etcetera) with an Anglicised name meant that person (or person's ancestor was) a slave. This may have then carried particular negative connotations for them. Again, as I mentioned earlier, it seems that racial markers (other than name) are used in order to decide if a person belongs or does not belong to the in-group within a nation-state. Indeed, those who feel that their name is the 'contaminated' part of their social identity (Goffman, 1990:19-20) may consequently react with an attempt to amend this 'failing' (ibid.), by changing their name (Bursell, 2012). Yet this does not necessarily help them to achieve 'normal status' (Goffman, 1990:20), but rather changes them into someone who obviously carried a specific stigma into someone who has a history of having 'corrected a particular blemish' (ibid.). A person's name is only one aspect of their identity, and it can seemingly interact with the other indicators of their social standing such as skin colour, accent and place of birth. Anglicising a person's name apparently

[3] The X symbolised Malcolm X's African ancestral surname, which had been Anglicised during times of slavery.

removes one social barrier towards acceptance within the nation's in-group, but there may be others that remain.

Moreover, perhaps a person still carries the emotional weight of that history of name-changing and the foreignness or Otherness that the name-change may have hidden. As I will consider in Chapter Two, the UNESCO statements were written in the aftermath of shock at how the race idea had led to the murders of so many innocent people during World War Two, purely on the basis of their supposed race (Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo, 2005). France reacted to its guilt at having deported 76,000 Jewish people during the Second World War to concentration camps by vehemently encouraging French Jews to make their names sound more French (Samuel, 2010). Nonetheless, the descendants of many of those people who did change their surname have found that they are legally unable to revert back to their ancestors' name and have mounted a legal challenge to the French civil code in this regard (ibid.; *La Force du Nom* website, 2012). This code allows surnames conceived as foreign to be made more French-sounding, but surnames deemed French cannot be changed to foreign ones (Samuel, 2010). This example also implies a resistance towards an increase in foreign names within a particular nation-state by those in power. The acknowledged and legal preference within France and some other European nations (as I will explore in Chapter Two) is for their citizens to bear names deemed to be representative of the respective majority national/racial identities.

In the UK context, *UK Deed Poll*, a company specialising in helping people to change or alter their names in the UK, suggests that many migrants to the UK who bear names considered foreign or difficult in the UK setting, decide to change their names 'to something that is more common and easier for British people to use' (*UK Deed Poll*, 2010). As I will discuss further in Chapter Six, the insinuation from the company's website is that the person with a name considered difficult for 'British people to use' is somehow at fault and should alter their name. This harks back to the afore-mentioned attitude of officials in the Middle Ages, who apparently felt that names conceived as foreign should just be replaced by good, solid 'English/British' names.

Attitudes Towards Names as Expressed in the UK Media

One can perceive from the history of name-changing I presented above that names have long been viewed as particularly meaningful. Not only to the bearer, but also to others with whom the individual comes into contact, and even to those in power within particular nation-states. Especially when a person moves to, or lives within, a society where their name is not seen to originate, they seemingly can become increasingly aware of the connotations that name has, both to themselves and to others. Names appear to reflect geographical locations, religions, even an individual's supposed race. Yet is this not a misleading signifier of a person's identity/identities?

Although Singh appears to have originated in India (*British Surnames* website, 2012), there were 17 people with the name Singh listed in the UK census of 1881 (ibid.; also *The Telegraph*, 2009). Singh and Patel now rank alongside traditionally common surnames in the UK such as Smith and Jones, in terms of the number of people who bear the names in the UK (*The Telegraph*, 2009). However, are these two surnames considered British? *The Telegraph*'s (2009) write up would suggest not: 'A century of immigration has seen the nation's dictionary of names drastically altered to include a host of *foreign* ones' (my emphasis). A name that has existed in the UK since at least 1881 is apparently foreign. The name-changing history I discussed above suggests that this may be because the surnames are stigmatized in some way. If one accepts the personal/individualised aspect to names – that a person's name somehow represents their identities – then the above description of Singh as being a foreign name implies that the bearers of that name are not conceived as truly British. This thereby alludes to their embodied racial and cultural heritage. It would seem, on the basis of Singh's lengthy history in the UK, that many bearers of the surname were born and raised in the UK and therefore it is their skin colour (amongst other things) that prompts their racialisation. Consequently their surnames are also seemingly racialised and understood as not being British but foreign. The name and other racial and national identity markers appear to be understood and/or assessed in relation to each other.

A recent Radio Four programme was entitled, 'The consequences of having a "foreign" name' (*BBC News Magazine*, 2012). It gave a brief insight into everyday difficulties of mispronunciation/misspelling that the presenter and her contributors had experienced in relation to bearing 'foreign names' in the UK (ibid.), both in social and work contexts. The programme's title vividly illustrates that bearing names not generally conceived as belonging to the in-group within particular nation-states is not insignificant, and therefore worthy of research. I will now briefly discuss some examples of how names deemed to be foreign are represented and viewed by the British media.

Gillingham Town's football manager, Martin Allen, reacted to the recent appointment of a new manager at Southampton Football Club with the following statement in his *Mail Online* column:

> Then look at Southampton, who sack the most successful manager in the history of the club and bring in a foreign manager. What the hell is all that about? I find it incredible. When I was told it was Mauricio Pochettino I said "I'm not looking for something off the takeaway menu, who's the new manager?" What's that about? I could not believe it.
> (Allen, 2013).

To Allen, it was acceptable not only to think the above statement but to publish it on a national website. For him a fellow manager's name can be mocked because to his ears it is laughably foreign. It is interesting to reflect on the world of sport when considering UK attitudes towards names. Arguably, unlike other employment sectors in the UK, it is regarded as a positive endorsement of the English Premier League's status that it can attract workers deemed foreign (the world's best football players). Consequently, football fans buy replica shirts with these players' names on. A recent survey showed that many Premier League clubs' top shirt sales bear the names of players originally from places/areas outside the UK, such as Nigeria, Japan, Holland, Benin, Italy and Eastern Europe (Cunningham, 2012).

Nonetheless, one can observe everyday incidents of mispronunciations or misreadings of names in the sports media, which I have perceived to be indicative of

disrespect towards names. As Deluzain (1996) asserts, people tend to dislike their name being mispronounced, perceiving such as a misrepresentation of their identity. If the mispronunciation is on purpose, the slight is much worse (ibid.). Although it is difficult to ascertain the intentionality of mispronunciation, one can infer at best a certain disregard for the importance of pronouncing names correctly in the incidents about to be described. For example, Joe Kinnear, the Director of Football for Newcastle FC, recently gave a radio interview during which he mispronounced many of the club's players' names: 'Shola Ameobi became "Amamobi"…Hatem Ben Arfa became both "Afra" and "Afri"…Yohan Cabaye…was referred to as "Yohan Kebabs"' (*BBC News Magazine Monitor,* 2013). Kinnear had previously, in 2009, called Newcastle player Charles N'Zogbia, '"insomnia"' repeatedly in an interview (ibid.). Gordon Taylor, the football players' union boss, referred to this latter mispronunciation as '"at best disrespectful and at worst deeply offensive, especially as insomnia is as difficult to pronounce as N'Zogbia"' (ibid.).

There are also several internet blogs that draw attention to sports' commentators lack of effort in terms of pronouncing names. Glenny (2013), for example, cites the mispronunciations by commentators of even champion tennis players' names. Other internet forums/articles discuss the unease with which many British newscasters attempt to say the names of both individuals and countries perceived as foreign (for example, *Digital Spy*, 2012; *NewsWatch*, 2005). It can be argued that it is the duty of newscasters and media figures to learn how to say names and place names in a manner that shows respect towards the person or country, respectively (*Pronounce It Right* website, 2013). This in turn encourages better pronunciation of names amongst the populace who listen to such commentaries (ibid.).

I conceive that there is little excuse for completely misreading a person's name if all of the syllables within the name are present in one's own mother tongue. Nonetheless, such internet articles and forums that I have just mentioned appear to have grown out of a frustration with the widespread mispronunciation of names, an acknowledgment that the correct pronunciation of names is important within social

interaction (*Hear Names* website, 2013), and that there needs to be more effort made to pronounce names correctly (*Pronounce It Right* website, 2013).

As enunciated earlier, this thesis is concerned with more than just the potential mispronunciation of my participants' names. It aims to explore whether or not names function as part of potential racialising processes in the UK. I have included these examples of media-based attitudes as an acknowledgment that the national media plays a powerful role in shaping the general populace's attitudes towards in-group, out-group conceptions (Van Dijk, 1993; Però, 2013), as I will consider in Chapter Two. My above discussion has suggested that the British media tends to conceive names to be either foreign or normal (that is, white British). Moreover, the lack of effort made by many sports commentators (and arguably newscasters) to pronounce names/places they view as foreign suggests that such attitudes may be propagated to, and accepted amongst, the wider British populace (Van Dijk, 1993). I will now turn to an overview of the research questions upon which my thesis is founded.

Research Questions

The main research questions that I want to explore through my case study are the following.

Are (sur)names racialised? If so, are some (sur)names consequently normalised in the UK context (for example, considered white British), and accorded more status than (sur)names deemed Other?

This is my main, overarching research question. It indicates my desire to explore how names are viewed within the UK context (according to my participants' everyday experiences). In accordance with my above discussion about how common discourse in the UK suggests that notions of biologically-based race and racism are defunct, I aim to understand if this is indeed the case, by using (sur)names. I wish to consider if (sur)names are understood to be holistically symbolic or representative of racial identities. By focusing on the experiences of those who bear a (sur)name that they understand to not be stereotypically related to their own embodied racial identity,

I conceive that I can explore if (sur)names are understood in racial terms. For example, does bearing a (sur)name potentially considered to be white British lead to general assumptions that the name bearer is white British in an embodied sense?

Furthermore, I will discuss whiteness literature in Chapter Two, which indicates that whiteness (at least to white people) has an unnoticed, unraced, invisible quality in an embodied sense (Dyer, 1999; Garner, 2007). White people are apparently seen as individuals, not representative of a particular race, whereas Others are always representatives of their race, are always visible, all of their deeds are referred back to this race, and are seen (by white people) to be typical of, or originating from, that race (Dyer, 1999). Thus I am interested to explore if such concepts also apply to (sur)names. Specifically, if (sur)names potentially deemed white British, are conceived as invisible. Conversely, are (sur)names potentially conceived as non-white/non-British all too visible, and indicative of a person's race rather than their individuality?

In addition, in Chapter Two I will discuss the concept of a racial hierarchy (Dyer, 1999; Ratcliffe, 2004). I seek to understand if the same notion applies to (sur)names. That is, do different (sur)names appear to elicit different responses and/or access to privileges in accordance to the racial identity they are deemed to represent? For example, are some (sur)names considered closer to the seeming privileges of white Britishness than others?

Should a person's (sur)name be considered alongside well-known indicators of racial classification such as skin colour and accent?

The questions I have raised in the previous section also tie in with a desire to explore the relationships (if any) between (sur)names and more established tools of racial categorisation in skin colour and accent (Herring, Keith and Horton, 2004; Klonoff and Landrine, 2000; Fernando, 1984; Hing, 2002; Singh and Dooley, 2006). I therefore want to understand if a person's (sur)name evokes differing responses when they are visually and/or audibly present: both when their name is, and is not, known.

Does bearing a (sur)name, which is stereotypically taken to be from a different racial/national origin to a person's former (sur)name have an impact on their everyday experiences/quality of life: for example, in the social and employment contexts?

Unlike the existing research on names and employment discrimination (which I will discuss further in Chapter Two), my interest is explicitly related to the impact of (sur)names, in themselves, upon people's everyday lives. This is in terms of experiences with names in respect of employment and work environments, professional relationships, and social relationships (such as familial relationships and friendships). I am keen to qualitatively understand the potential impacts of (sur)names in their fullness and complexity.

What experiences are related to bearing a (sur)name that is not (potentially) considered to represent a person's embodied racial identity? And what impact do such experiences have upon those people's personal and/or outward identities?

I will assess in Chapter Two how racism in relation to skin colour has been said to 'terrorise' those considered not to be white (hooks, 1997:171). I aim to understand if those who bear (sur)names that potentially are not commonly understood to symbolise their embodied racial identity, experience such racism and personal trauma. If so, do such experiences impact upon these people's feelings around their personal and/or social identities? (I will discuss some existing theory on identity and race in Chapter Two).

If people who bear (sur)names considered foreign encounter negative experiences in this regard, do they develop coping strategies?

I am interested in discovering if those who bear (sur)names that are potentially considered different to their embodied racial identity develop any coping strategies in order to counter any negative experiences they may have had in relation to their (sur)names/name-changes. For example, strategies aimed at avoiding such experiences, or challenging such discourse (Wemyss, 2009). Indeed, my earlier discussion suggests that name-changing has throughout history been used as a

strategy in order to avoid discrimination. I desire to understand if this approach is still used: if racism remains prevalent in the UK and if this is reflected in attitudes towards (sur)names, what do those people who bear (sur)names deemed foreign/Other/non-white British do to resist and/or avoid such discrimination?

My Terminology of Names

It is important to note that I do not believe there are, in actuality, such things as British/English/white/foreign/non-British names (etcetera). They are social constructions. Indeed, as I mentioned earlier in relation to Singh and Patel, there are many British citizens who bear names originating from all geographical regions of the world. Moreover, colonisation saw to it that people living in all areas of the globe similarly bear names originating from Britain, and names that are common in the UK in themselves have been constructed from what can be conceived as French, Latin, Scandinavian words/names and more over time. I am concerned in this thesis with whether or not (according to my interview data) there is a pervasive notion within the UK that names are racially coded/understood as being foreign/Other (visible), and British/English/white (invisible). This invokes similar difficulties with regards to defining what an ethnic or racial group is. They are social constructions, but as they are concepts that are in use and treated as though they are ways of grouping people, one can say that a person is a member of an ethnic/racial group because they believe (and others accept) that they are so (Eriksen, 2002), or because others believe a person to be so regardless of whether or not they accept it.

In addition, as I mentioned in the previous section, I am interested in whether or not there are social constructions of what (sur)names represent beyond them just being a referent to a particular individual. That is, whether or not (sur)names are seen to represent a person's understood embodied racial identity. I am consequently not interested in essentialising particular names as being racial or national, but rather in trying to explore the potential forces of whiteness and racism behind attitudes towards names – to reveal the possible processes of name racialisation. Moreover, the experiences of my interviewees will be presented in this thesis so as to complicate the

notion of racial categorisation and to challenge the immortality of whiteness (that is, its all-pervasive, everlasting nature) as a construction. I therefore in no way intend for my thesis to add credence to the notion of there actually being 'white British' or 'foreign' names. Indeed, I will assert that race and other nationalised notions of difference are social, rather than biological inventions. Rather, I aim to explore the ways in which – according to my participants' experiences – names may be commonly understood in racialised, and perhaps nationalised ways, just as bodies and accents may be commonly perceived in racialised, and nationalised, ways.

The Thesis' Structure

In Chapter Two I introduce the key literature and theory in which this thesis is situated and through which lenses my subsequent data analyses will be viewed. Throughout the chapter, I locate my project's interests within the theoretical discussions. Firstly, I provide an overview of the socially constructed nature of race and the concept of racial hierarchies. Secondly, I discuss national perpetrations of the race concept, and of racism. Thirdly, I consider cultural racism and some ways in which race is often reconceptualised and disguised in terms of culture (among other things). This leads on to an outline of the notion that race and racism have ended. In the subsequent section I look at why it can be argued that the concept of race still matters, which encapsulates a discussion of power and whiteness literature. I then outline the inbetween people thesis and how this concept indicates the fuzzy nature of racial categorisation and of the attainment of racial privilege – in spite of their inflexible appearances. I then consider racialisation processes and embodied understandings of race. I consequently move onto an overview of identity in relation to race and particularly of racial passing. Finally, I link the above discussions of theory more explicitly to names, with an overview of Correspondence Test research (Wood *et al.*, 2009) and other research pertaining to name discrimination.

In Chapter Three I detail the specificities of my research approach and methodology. I explain how I deemed qualitative research to be most appropriate in respect of my research questions. I subsequently depict my own research standpoint.

I also describe my data collection, participant sample, ethical factors and data analysis, including some of the complexities and obstacles encountered during the project. I also reflexively consider my own motivations for conducting, and my impact upon, the research.

Chapter Four is the first of three data analysis chapters, based upon the data collected from 32 participants. In Chapter Four I explore whether there is a racialised disparity between my participants' surnames and their self-defined embodied racial identities. I achieve this by presenting and analysing the participants' reported experiences of the everyday interactions of their surnames with their embodied appearances. I also consider the ways in which the participants asserted that their surnames interacted with their accents.

In Chapter Five I address my participants' experiences in relation to the concept of racism. I particularly analyse some of my name-changers' familial, social, educational and employment experiences in this vein. I discuss how my participants' experiences may have affected their personal sense of identity. I also consider how they have responded to any negative responses to their surnames, in terms of potential strategies for avoiding, or fighting it. Finally, I discuss how some participants' own attitudes towards the ways in which their surnames and their own embodied racial identities interact, may be problematic.

Chapter Six is the final data chapter and in it I explore the topic of naming children in relation to race and racism. This was not a topic I had extensively considered prior to starting my research, although I did have a question about it in my research schedule. It is, though, an example of the ways in which themes can emerge that differ from a researcher's initial focus, particularly when an inductive approach to research is taken (Braun and Clarke, 2006). It was clear at the interview stage that it was a matter of key importance to many of the participants. I consequently analyse in this chapter the notion of racial passing in relation to parental choice of name, in terms of gaining access to white British privilege versus attempts to fight racism. I also consider whether or not it can be argued that there is a racial hierarchy of name.

Chapter Seven is the concluding chapter. In it I draw together my findings and analyses from the three data chapters in relation to my initial consideration of whether or not the UK can be viewed as a post-racial society. I therefore present the more theoretical and abstract contributions of the thesis, whilst also considering the shortcomings of my research and how the research can be extended in the future.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In this chapter I provide an overview of the theoretical concepts upon which my study is grounded, as well as indicating the ways in which my research fits within existing literature. My project is located predominantly within the theoretical frameworks of race, racism and whiteness. I firstly discuss the socially constructed nature of race. This is a key concept in relation to my desire to explore the notion of names as a potential factor in those racialisation processes that I have suggested in Chapter One may still be prevalent in the UK. It has long been acknowledged that race is a social, rather than a biological/scientific, means of categorising humans (Nayak, 2006). I consider how it originated, was developed and gained such societal importance. I consequently discuss the concept of racial hierarchies, because if I find that names are racialised it may then follow that they are hierarchised. Historically, individuals have been hierarchically categorised in terms of embodied indicators of race.

I then follow this discussion with an exploration of the interrelated concept of racism. In Chapter One I introduced the notion that dominant discourses in the UK suggest that racism is no longer a problem. I questioned if this is the case and explained that my thesis looks at the potential racialisation of name in order to understand how important (or not) race is within the UK context. Racism is an integral concept in considering the consequences of any racialisation of names my participants may report. In this vein, I then discuss national manifestations of the race concept, and of racism. This is in order to understand the ways in which such concepts are developed and understood within a national context. I then discuss cultural racism and how the UK society's reliance on race is seemingly disguised in terms of culture.

Subsequently, I consider, in more detail than in Chapter One, the notion that race and racism have ended. In the next section I address why I perceive that race continues to matter, and this includes a discussion of power and whiteness literature.

This explains why my research may be important, as existing literature indicates that race and therefore racism have significant impacts upon individuals' life chances. Following this, I provide an overview of the inbetween people thesis and how this concept reveals the hazy, rather than clear-cut natures of racial categorisation and the attainment of racial privilege. I include this discussion, as I feel that my participants may be constructed as being in such an inbetween racial position because of their name-change. I then look at existing theory regarding racialisation processes and embodied understandings of race, in order to understand how this may extend to a potentially disembodied racial indicator in name. I follow this by outlining the notion of identity in relation to race and of racial passing. It may be that the name-change has impacted upon my participants' own feelings of identity, especially if they have been positioned as racially passing because of their name-change. Finally, I link the above discussions of theory even more explicitly to names, with an overview of Correspondence Test research and other research pertaining to name discrimination. I indicate how my research may build upon existing studies in relation to the racialisation of names.

The Socially Constructed Nature of Race and the Notion of Racial Hierarchies

> "Race" is a fiction that we turn into a social reality every day of our lives. It lies at the heart of the complex, historical and multifaceted sets of social relationships to which we attach the label "racism". This is a historical process, a set of ideas and a set of outcomes (benefits for some, disadvantages for others).
> (Garner, 2010:ix).

Race is a socially constructed concept, a discredited and inaccurate notion (Alexander, 2006; Nayak, 2006). Indeed, 'the division of mankind into races is an invention not of Nature but of Man' (Watson, 1970:xiii). The history of race is complex and has become deeply embedded in social and political discourse. Moreover, race is seemingly the only major concept of the social arena that remains so important in general thought processes in spite of it having no scientific validity (Ratcliffe, 2004).

Consequently, one must ask what race is, how it originated and came into popular usage and consciousness (ibid.). Furthermore, one should consider why there is the need for such a concept in describing the social importance attached to difference (ibid.; Gilroy, 1993).

In the Western context, the original meaning of the word race was 'familial lineage' (Ratcliffe, 2004:16) or 'a line of descent' (Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo, 2005:8). Race was not originally comprehended as having a scientific basis (ibid.). Differences in colour were apparently understood in the 15th and 16th centuries either in respect of the impact of the sun, or in religious terms (blackness as 'a curse of God'; Bonnett, 2008:1038; Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo, 2005:8). With the expansion of the transatlantic slave trade in the 17th and 18th centuries, notions of supremacy and subservience emerged in regards to the domination of white Europeans over black Africans (Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo, 2005). However, it was not until the mid-eighteenth century (the Enlightenment) that race came into common parlance (Bulmer and Solomos, 1999), when it took a scientific meaning, indicating biologically differentiated groups (Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo, 2005). During the Enlightenment, many philosophers began to consider that the social world could be studied using scientific/rationalist methods (Ratcliffe, 2004).

Indeed, it became pertinent to some Western thinkers of the time to try to scientifically compare human beings from different geographical parts of the world, in an attempt to justify the transatlantic slave trade. For example, the 'Great Chain of Being' concept argued that all of the earth's creatures were linked together in a hierarchy (Dyer, 1999:22). Black people were conceived to be valued as only just above the apes, and white people were considered as the pinnacle of all beings, closest to the angels and thereby to God. White people were genealogically understood to be the best and purest of all humans (ibid.; Lentin, 2008). Furthermore, Cuvier argued in 1805 that humans were divided into three racial divisions, namely white, yellow and black (Ratcliffe, 2004). He also ranked the categories, with white the highest, and black the lowest (ibid.). Race was thereby conceptualised as being the only way of understanding the world and the way that it was organised (ibid.).

In the nineteenth century, the Social Darwinists interpreted Charles Darwin's '*The Origin of Species*' in terms of the idea of human race, by arguing that 'inclusive fitness' and 'survival of the fittest' provided an explanation or even a justification for the dominance of one race of humans over another (ibid.). They omitted an important tenet of Darwin's book: that all humans have the same genetic origin (ibid). Furthermore, Darwin (1901; quoted in St Louis, 2005) asserted that because there is such variation between the external appearance of different humans/races, these variations cannot be overly integral, otherwise certain features would have been either retained and cemented, or discarded.

Nonetheless, the Social Darwinists used Darwin's work in order to promote the notion of a racialised gap between cognitive and physical ability (St Louis, 2005). Furthermore, their argument included a hierarchy of races concept, which drew upon assertions that groups of people had different origins and that such distinguishing features of races were culturally and socially significant (Bulmer and Solomos, 1999). Thus, the notion of race had evolved beyond the idea of different groupings of people in terms of biological origins into one where groups of people had different cultural and intellectual standards/abilities. Moreover, Social Darwinism promoted a belief that races should be kept apart, unmixed/unpolluted, especially the European white race (Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo, 2005).

Ideas of the hierarchy of race were also reflected in the field of Eugenics (Ratcliffe, 2004), of which the holocaust was a chilling example. Extreme conceptions of race resulted in Jewish and Gypsy peoples being labelled as threats to the German nation: thereby legitimizing the attempted extinction of them (Darder and Torres, 2004). A compelling need therefore arose for academics, scientists and social activists to devise a convincing rebuttal of the manner in which race had been used in Nazi Germany (Lentin, 2011b; Miles, 1999). Concurrently there was also an increase in scientific research that denied the naturalised and concrete notion of race as a means of categorising people (Miles, 1999).

UNESCO's statements in the 1950s and 1960s further underlined the lack of biological legitimacy to the concept of race and its socially constructed nature

(Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo, 2005). Gilroy (2005) asserts that such statements made the fight against race real and present, and indeed he harkens back to such ideals. Unfortunately, the established understanding of race as having biological meaning still has influence to this day, largely because of its initial scientific label and due to the lasting heritage of slavery/colonialism (Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo, 2005). The continuing significance of biological race can be seen in relatively recent 'racist pseudoscience' literature (ibid.:9), which argues that IQ scores are racially differentiated: that African-Americans have lower IQ scores than people of other races (e.g. Herrnstein and Murray, 1996).

When one considers the afore-mentioned history of the concept of race, it is striking how a scientifically inaccurate notion could have become such a vivid part of everyday thought and language. Physical features cannot be measured or understood in a racialised sense (Salkeld, 2011), despite attempts made in Nazi Germany and during South African Apartheid. Race should perhaps therefore only be a marginal concept (Washburn, 1970). Yet in race being a social invention, rather than a natural finding (Garner, 2010), definitions or understandings of it are consequently very much context and time specific. There is no one meaning of race, no permanency of its conception. In the past couple of centuries, understandings of race have varied according to national context (Bulmer and Solomos, 1999). For instance, historically, being perceived to have one drop of black blood has been enough to define an American as black (Chryssochoou, 2004).

I note the socially constructed nature of race, whilst also recognising its deep historical roots and suspecting its sustained and current importance in common societal understanding in the West (Lentin, 2008; Ratcliffe, 2004). As I discussed in Chapter One, one of my main research questions is to understand if names are understood in a racialised way: e.g. as Asian, African, or European. Should this be the case, in light of the literature above, which indicates that there are hierarchized understandings of race, I aim to explore whether or not the same concept applies to names. For instance, regarding names constructed as European, would Eastern European names be understood as being lower down the British hierarchy of

belongingness than French or Scandinavian names at this current moment in time? I will explore these issues in Chapter Six.

National Perpetrations of Race, Racism and Nationalism

Race is a commonly used term in the UK and is essentialised in, and given authority by, formal discourse such as the Race Relations Act (Ratcliffe, 2004). UK Census forms also make official such categories as '"Pakistanis", "Indians", "Black Africans"', giving them an aura of naturalness and universality (Ahmad and Sheldon, 1994:129). Such official usage can result in sustaining racialised notions of the requirements, actions and demands of people so categorized, as if they were homogenous entities (ibid.). Indeed, race appears permanent and unchangeable, despite its lack of definition – barring some alleged characteristics of the body (Ratcliffe, 2004). It is important to continually analyse and critique the concept of race, because of its role within society of dividing, omitting and marginalising people (Alexander and Knowles, 2005). In this vein, I will now reflect upon the related term of racism.

Despite its wide usage in everyday, social, and academic dialogue, racism is a relatively new term (Miles, 1999; Bulmer and Solomos, 1999). Its creation in the 1930s was a consequence of the paradigmatic shift in academic discourse against biological/scientific notions of race, particularly in response to the horrors of the Nazi Germany 'race idea'. It was the scientific/biological notion of race that became known as racism (Miles, 1999). As Chryssochoou (2004) outlines, racism is a form of discrimination that relies on the imagined concreteness, and consequently the justified nature, of racial variation. Thus race itself is considered a self-apparent tool of categorisation, found in the act of discriminating, which is itself subject to the specific context in which it is perpetrated (ibid.). In the British context, the UK's current Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg asserted that the '"war on inequality" has "barely even begun" on the front of "economic opportunity"' (Stevenson, 2011). (Also see The Runnymede Trust Report, 2012; EHRC, 2010; Ramesh, 2010; Macedo and Gounari, 2006; Chryssochoou, 2004, for further discussions of racial inequality within the UK).

Notwithstanding the influential notion that globalisation would see the end of nationhood, this prospect is not at all likely (Anderson, 2003). Indeed, Birch (1989:3) calls nationalism 'the most successful political ideology in human history'. Anderson (2003) describes how the nation is a modern concept, yet it holds a strong essence of antiquity. The British nation state only came into existence in the modern era, after the Anglo-Scottish Union of 1707, and so whilst 'Britishness' as an identity may seem 'authentic and old' it can be asserted that it is 'fabricated and new', that such notions as the eternal history of 'British nationhood' are really a 'self-deception' (Uberoi and McLean, 2009:43; also Anderson, 2003). Wallerstein (2002:78) writes of this notion of 'pastness' that members are socialised into and which is crucial to the continuation of national cohesion.

Indeed, Winder (2004:1) describes this idea of the ease with which people can believe in a non-evidenced history:

> We do not always think of Britain as a country settled at a deep level by immigrants. We prefer to construct mythologies of the national character as something stable, as a still and virtuous point in an often unruly world. Even the most authoritative histories see it as a durable set of genes, ideas and habits, a white page to which, in the last few decades, a few multicoloured flourishes have been added…The arrival of migrants from our former empire is categorized as one of the "problems" or "challenges" faced by postwar society. But the long and steady movement of people to these shores before the modern era is forgotten altogether.

This quotation makes the point that it is easy to believe that it is only in modern times that the solidity of life has been 'liquidized', made much less certain (Bauman, 2005), but there has always been migration, and there have been Britons considered not white for hundreds of years. Histories tend to be remembered in a fragmented and inaccurate fashion. Subsequently, in an interlinked way, a national identity can be constructed in opposition to notions of difference and foreignness, which may in actuality have been in existence within that nation for ages past. As Patterson (1982:19) expresses: 'In all societies of course, there is a distinction between what is actually going on and the mental structures that attempt to define and explain the

reality'. Nationalism has little theoretical/philosophical coherence (Anderson, 2003), it is imagined (ibid.; Balibar, 2002), yet one cannot doubt its political power (Anderson, 2003).

Balibar (2002) notes that conceptions of race and nation are closely related. Modern ideas of racism 'attempt to fix human social groups in terms of *natural* properties of belonging within particular political and geographical contexts' (Solomos and Back, 2000:23; original emphasis). For something to be conceived as natural is for it to be something beyond one's control (Anderson, 2003). Similarly, 'nation-ness is assimilated to skin-colour, gender, parentage and birth-era – all those things one can not help' (ibid.:143). As Birch (1989) writes, most nations have ethnic minorities who are not completely integrated within them. Indeed Eriksen (2002:123) argues that it is not the choice of an ethnic minority to assimilate into a nation: in 'minority-majority relations' the ethnic minority is accorded an ethnic/racial classification even if they do not support it (also Lentin, 2005, 2008).

In addition, Bond's (2006) analysis of national belonging using data from the 2003 Scottish Social Attitudes Survey, looked at potential markers of Scottishness such as ancestry, birthplace, parent's birthplace and ethnicity. Although Bond (2006:623) asserted that identities are likely to be the result of 'interactions' between majority and minority views, he nonetheless stressed that minority identities can be destabilized by majority views. For example, in relation to his research findings Bond (2006:623) announced himself to be concerned about 'the relative reluctance [of the white Scottish majority] to whole-heartedly accept the Scottishness of those from "visible" minority ethnic groups, even when they have other identity markers (such as residence and accent) important to being Scottish'. The data Bond examined apparently did not include name as a potential marker of Scottishness. However it does provide an intriguing insight into the role that others play in a person's own classification of their Scottishness and the potential for an internal limiter in terms of national identity.

As McCrone and Bechhofer (2008:1262) state, 'Who we think "we" are, and who "we" are not, may matter, or may come to matter, not in terms of causal and often

unthinking prejudice, but in terms of social and political action'. Markers of what or who we think we and/or others are, seemingly feed into and are fed by the gatekeepers, such as the state, 'who decide who is or is not a "national", whether they are entitled to benefits and opportunities as befits "one of us"' (ibid.). My project desires to understand if having a (sur)name potentially seen as not British means that a person is Othered, that they cannot be part of the in group.

The concept of citizenship is extremely important for politicians, as, according to Smith (1998:xii) they are: '…persons who hope to govern certain populations. Hence they very much want those populations to believe that they constitute a political community, a "people", and a people who are governed properly by those self-same politicians'. However, citizenship is by its nature exclusionary, as for some to belong to a particular nation state, necessarily others are excluded (Castles, 2000; Goldberg, 2002). As Anderson (2003) explains, no nation claims to be infinite in its population: exclusion is what makes it a nation.

Anti-migrant rhetoric is founded upon notions of exclusion: that there are those who belong to the 'us' group(s) and those who belong to the 'them' group(s), whereby 'them' is universally seen in a negative light (Macedo and Gounari, 2006; Stolcke, 1995; Van Dijk, 1993). Wemyss (2006:223) frames this in terms of a 'hierarchy of belonging' within Britain. As Bauman (2006) states, blaming immigrants for all social problems and especially for feelings of uncertainty heralded by globalization, has become a worldwide custom. Yuval-Davis (2006:204) explains that the 'politics of belonging' is altogether concerned with an imagined 'boundary line of the nation' and the decisions made by the majority group of who belongs to the in-group and who does not (also Goldberg, 2002). Yuval-Davis (2006:204) calls this a '"dirty business"', and so it is.

> …the Germans blame the Poles, the Poles blame the Ukrainians, the Ukrainians blame the Kirghiz and Uzbeks – while countries too poor to attract any neighbors desperately seeking a livelihood, like Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary or Slovakia, turn their wrath against the usual suspects and standby culprits: the local but drifting, fixed-address shunning, and therefore "newcomers" and outsiders, always and everywhere – the Gypsies.

(Grabbe, quoted in Bauman, 2006:38).

This quotation highlights the perceived hierarchies of power within nations: there is always a race or nationality of people to exclude or discriminate against.

Calhoun (2007:53) argues that 'Nationalism is anything but a thing of the past, and even the newest claims to nationalism are often rooted in a rhetoric of pre-existing ethnicity'. This point also suggests why there may be negative attitudes towards names perceived as foreign. I mentioned above how the literature suggests that races have long been considered as fixed: that certain people have particular physical characteristics, which correlate to their social characteristics and/or intelligence and/or culture. Goldberg (2000) asserts that the underlying power of this reification rests in the silencing of those who are perceived as Other, in terms of denying them individuality, social benefits and representation in the political arena. Order, once defined, has to be looked after and strengthened, consequently the Other is created and labelled, thereby increasing dominion over them (ibid.).

Furthermore, for racism to be significant within a particular nation, there must be a substantial number of people who perpetrate it and/or believe in it (Van Dijk, 1993). Ferber (1999) asserts that there could be no extreme right without racism being prevalent within the mainstream: extremists are not detached from society but are created by the system(s) in which they grow up. Indeed Ferber (ibid.) argues that there tends to be an emphasis placed on the leaders of a particular extremist (racist) group, and an interest in the specific characteristics of a person who joins such an organisation. However, according to Ferber (ibid.), racism is inherent within white societies and cultures in their entireties, and every member is shaped by it. To consider white supremacy as being unusually vociferous in its racism can have the effect of excusing wider society of its own racism, whereby racist supremacists are considered to be outside of the allegedly normal, egalitarian society (ibid.; Ware and Back, 2002). Indeed, Ferber (1999) writes that supremacist groups regenerate and redistribute discourses once from the mainstream: these discourses appear to be common-sense knowledge because they have historically been a major part of wider white societal beliefs. It is during times when such discourse is critiqued/threatened,

that some people will seek solidity and comfort in holding onto these 'once taken for granted Truths' (ibid.:150). These 'truths' can be said to be an old 'regime of truth', if one uses Foucault's (1972; as quoted in Reed, 2005:80-1) notion of certain knowledge being perpetuated as 'truth' by outlets such as the media. Lentin (2005), meanwhile, argues that race and racism are a modernist creation of European nation-states, that they are bound up in this development, rather than being only temporary peculiarities in the forms of slavery, colonialism and the Holocaust (also Goldberg, 2002). Moreover, that they are not just attributable to the 'pathological or ignorant individuals' but that they are institutionalised and politically founded (Lentin, 2005:381).

Indeed, I am interested in exploring if names are used as a way of establishing the Otherness of an individual. Furthermore, I aim to investigate whether or not those with names perhaps associated with immigration flows to the UK - such as the recent migration from Eastern Europe, and the more established migration from India, Pakistan, and African countries - are perceived in a particularly negative light. Additionally, I desire to understand if (sur)names are considered in racial and nationalistic terms: for instance with labels such as white, black, African or Asian. I will discuss these issues throughout the three data chapters. Also, in alluding to the afore-mentioned idea of racial hierarchies, is there also a hierarchy of names? If this were the case, then within such a construct, is there a notion of white British names (the ingroup) and Other names (the outgroup(s))? I will particularly explore this concept in Chapter Six.

Cultural Racism

Ratcliffe (2004:22) asserts that race is entrenched in everyday discourse, as it means many things to many people, in many contexts, invoking aspects of colour, 'biology, culture, religion and nation'. The complex and interwoven history of race has led to its seemingly irreplaceable, yet utterly problematic, position in discourse. It has aided the obsession of locating differences between human beings, both in individual and social relationships, and at the 'interface between people and structures'

(Alexander and Knowles, 2005:2). As Gilroy (2004) argues, racism does not originate specifically from a notion called race, but rather is the outcome of the desire to discriminate. Despite this flexibility of the concept of race, it is seemingly often used unconsciously and unthinkingly, as though its meaning is fixed. I desire to explore if this is also the case with names. Not only do I aim to know if my participants consider names in terms of race (as mentioned above) but also if they will raise the constructed nature of such concepts or if they accept such notions uncritically. I will discuss this in Chapter Five.

Furthermore, Lentin (2008) notes that the word race itself is not vital and could be replaced by another. Ratcliffe (2004) asserts that race is often used interchangeably with the term ethnicity, which just like race is used very freely to indicate similarities between people of language, religion, nationality and identity. Indeed, Solomos and Back (2000) write that racism is often not framed using the term race: difference and culture are frequently used instead so as to avoid accusations of racism (also Brah, 1999) - arguably ethnicity is also used in a similar vein. The UNESCO statement of 1967 widened the concept of racism to be an ideology not just necessarily based upon biological assumptions of race, but also (or instead) to be reliant on cultural differences (Lentin, 2005), or differences in terms of education, or some other dogma which would continue to perpetuate hidden racist notions (Miles, 1999).

Ideas of race and racism have therefore become ever more complex in the sense that, to some extent, they have moved away from overtly enunciating bias in terms of skin colour (or other physical features), biological inferiority or the notion of a racial hierarchy (Miles, 1999). Thus Chryssochoou (2004:52) asserts that 'a discourse of the Other' (that is, someone considered by those in power to be omitted from an exclusive social group, a foreigner (Said, 2003) continually perpetuates with new 'ideological contents' (Miles, 1999:354). The meanings of race vary and are socially constructed throughout the making/course of 'history, culture and social relationships' (Alexander and Knowles, 2005:1; also Gilroy, 1993).

In the same vein, this cultural racism, which emerged in the late 1970s (Stolcke, 1995; Lentin and Titley, 2011a:), became known as a new racism (Solomos and Back, 2000). Its focus is as a defence of the imaginary "British/English way of life" in the face of challenges posed by the incursion of "foreign influences"' (ibid.:20; also Stolcke, 1995). Lentin and Titley (2011a) assert that the central idea of cultural racism is that race is unchangeable whereas culture can be altered. Consequently to say that the Other's culture is not compatible with 'our' own, has been seen to be acceptable, non-racist discourse. However, cultural characteristics can come to be essentialised just as much as embodied ones, and are consequently as racialising (Lentin and Titley, 2011a; Lentin, 2005) and exclusionary (Stevenson, 2001) as ever. Indeed, Gilroy (1993:57) asserts that as culture has become more important in UK debates about race, it has consequently become more reductive, almost equating to a 'biological term' because of its closeness to the notion of race. One could argue there is little 'new' about this racism (Brah, Hickman and Mac an Ghaill, 1999).

Moreover, Stolcke (1995) argues that despite using cultural, instead of racial referents, the motivation behind the discourse still remains as racist as it ever was (also Alexander and Alleyne, 2002a). This latter point is why I refer throughout this thesis to race rather than to ethnicity or to culture, as I understand such labels to be an attempt to mask the issues of race and racism that are hidden beneath (Lentin, 2008). As Lentin and Titley (2011a) write, cultural notions of difference may appear to be common-sense, but they essentially refer to the same, age-old notion of there being immutable differences between human beings (also Lentin, 2012). These must therefore be based on the entirely unsubstantiated, but nonetheless firmly rooted, belief that there is an essence to different groups of human beings which cannot be changed: that of biological race. Thus the fact that race is now almost entirely understood, both on the left and right wings of politics, through the concepts of culture and identity – so much so, that it is seen as 'common-sense' knowledge (Lentin, and Titley 2011a:57) - is a worrying development. It appears to hide the constructed or political nature of race (ibid.): we should 'not see culture [as] flowing into neat ethnic

parcels but as radically unfinished social processes of self-definition and transformation' (ibid.:61).

Solomos (2003) argues that there is an oppositional organisation of representation, which identifies and tries to secure the gap between those who belong and those who do not. This system is primarily achieved by thinking of oneself as being biologically, rather than culturally, produced (ibid.). Two interconnected points one can take from Solomos' argument are that racism is not always consciously framed in terms of culture, and that the importance of physical appearance and/or skin colour should not be forgotten when considering racism. This perhaps highlights the conception of the interrelated nature of the mind and the body, the belief in culture (and of the hierarchies of cultures; Lentin, 2012) and its relation to an acceptance of the concrete nature of appearance, of bodies. As Ahmed and Stacey (2001) note, a concept that does not allow an emphasis of cognitive function over bodily appearance, is also one that is rooted in the naturalness and fixed notion of difference. Their assertion touches upon the notion that bodies are in themselves viewed in a constructed way, they are produced in a particular time and place in relation to Other bodies: both those bodies that are perceived to be familiar and those considered foreign (ibid.).

Consequently, this notion of an essentialising association of culture with race, means that culture is still linked to physical appearance. The idea is that someone is identified as being part of a particular group by the way they look (Garner, 2010). Membership of that group implies specific expected behaviours (ibid.) and thus allocates worth (or not) to them (Dyer, 1999). Clarke (2012) writes that although race does not have biological or scientific validity, nonetheless it is still essentially based within the body (also Solomos, 2001). Alexander and Knowles (2005) note that in current discourse and in the past, bodily difference is/has been equated to particular internal features such as abilities and beliefs, which are themselves perceived to be forever secured within notions of white supremacy and black inadequacy. I will explore in Chapter Five this rooted biological notion of race, particularly in regard to if names and bodily appearance are related. I aim to understand whether or not people

read/hear a name, understand it in a racial way and consequently expect someone to look and/or sound a particular way, and vice versa. In addition, I approach racism from the perspective that it does apply to more than just biological notions of race, and that it encapsulates exclusionary/discriminatory attitudes regarding culture, religion (for instance Islamophobia) and even nationality (for example in regard to anti-Eastern European rhetoric in the UK in recent times). As I discussed above, seemingly racism is subject to time and context in the sense that the object(s) of exclusion vary, but the desire to discriminate always remains present.

The Notion that Racism has Ended

Arguably part of the power play of racism is the oft-heard claim that racism has ended. As I mentioned in Chapter One, in the 1990s anti-racism was criticised rigorously by Right-wing politicians, who argued that racism was an invention of the Left (Solomos, 2003). This critique implied that racial minorities somehow benefitted from promoting the idea that Britain is racist (ibid.). Furthermore, anti-racism was alleged to curb the free-speech of the white British majority, and of therefore being tyrannical (Gilroy, 1987). This is not, though, as Lentin (2012) points out, a coherent argument as UK ethnic minorities do not have the societal influence needed to dictate in such a manner. Berger (1999:35) asserts that such attitudes also serve to encourage the 'dangerous' and bogus notion that racism is not as bad as it used to be.

Moreover, Ratcliffe (2004:24) writes that the tendency by those on the Right to equate racism to political correctness has had the further impact of limiting the candour with which "'we"' discuss "'them"'. Ratcliffe (ibid.) asserts that this has resulted in the conception that the Other cannot become part of the 'we' group. Lentin (2008) notes that this indicates the seeming hypocrisy of the argument: how can racism/discrimination be mere political correctness if there is such a distinction being made at the same moment between an 'us' and a 'them'?. Furthermore, Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo (2005) assert that this denunciation, and denial, of racism can further ingrain it within societal psyches. This can also make it difficult for someone to

complain about discrimination they have suffered (Lentin and Titley, 2011a). Indeed, such a backlash against racism ignores its historical longevity, the actual reality of racism. It thereby is 'ideological manipulation' (Macedo and Gounari, 2006) and racist behaviour in itself (ibid.; Lentin and Titley, 2011a; Lentin, 2012).

In addition, Said (2003) argues that the West has created dominant depictions of the Orient (the Other) that have consequently been adopted by 'Orientals' themselves. He asserted that no dialogue of exchange exists, that there is merely a Western monologue (ibid.). Said's argument perhaps underestimates the ability of the Other to resist such discourse/representation. Once the power-balances within racism are visible or exposed to those who are being discriminated against, this does not mean that those considered Other cannot attempt to resist, re-appropriate or subvert racist ideas and actions (Alexander and Knowles, 2005). Nonetheless, Said's (2003) argument is valuable: as Macedo and Gounari (2006) urge, there is a need to avoid moving into a position where even some racial minorities claim that racism is not so terrible as it was. Similarly, assertions that the USA is post-race because of Obama's election miss the point that if the country was over race, then race would not be the term used for discussing his election in the first place (Lentin and Titley, 2011a). Also, attempts to frame Obama as a Muslim, or as a foreigner who was not born in the USA merely serve to mask racial-thinking/accusations of Otherness (ibid.; also Hughey, 2012).

Furthermore, Delaney (1970:4) asserts that 'the psychodynamics of white racism' are quite obscure, which adds to the falsehood that white people are not complicit with racism – that it is the problem solely of black people - despite the fact that they invented it. Additionally, Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo (2005) write that there is a trend amongst British liberals for racism to be viewed as behaviour outside of societal norms, committed by individual deviants (also Lentin, 2005). Thus, racism is not viewed for what it is: something collective and institutionalised within British systems and cultures (Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo, 2005). According to Van Dijk (1993:6):

> Many of both the subtly and the blatantly racist events that define the system of everyday racism are enacted, controlled, or condoned by white elites, that is, by leading politicians, professors, editors, judges, officials, bureaucrats, and managers. If whites are not themselves actively involved in these modern forms of segregation, exclusion, aggression, inferiorization, or marginalization, then their involvement in the problem of racism consists in their passivity, their acquiescence, their ignorance, and their indifference regarding ethnic or racial inequality.

Indeed, Van Dijk (ibid.) argues that there is often a deep subtlety to the racism entrenched in societal structures. Lentin (2011b) maintains that the relativist alignment of racism with other forms of 'difference', such as religion and sexuality, has further obscured and belittled racist structures and episodes. Furthermore, Beeman (2007) states that the increasing subtlety of racism is what allows people to assert that racism does not exist. It was with such a thought in mind that I decided to choose people who have changed their name as my sample group for this project. I felt that any experiences of discrimination/being Othered may be more obvious for those who have experienced life with both what are potentially understood to be a foreign surname and a white British surname, than for someone who had only ever experienced bearing one kind of (potentially) racialised name.

An example of what Beeman (2007) asserts is the problematic relationship between race and popular culture can be seen in the recent outcry about a British television programme called 'Midsomer Murders'. The director of the show stated:

> We don't have ethnic minorities involved. Because it wouldn't be the English village with them. It just wouldn't work. Suddenly we might be in Slough… And if you went in to Slough you wouldn't see a white face there. We're the last bastion of Englishness and I want to keep it that way…I'm trying to make something that appeals to a certain audience, which seems to succeed…And I don't want to change it.
> (True-May, quoted in Jones, 2011).

In the aftermath of these comments, ITV (the television company that airs the programme) stated that: 'We are shocked and appalled at these personal comments

by Brian True-May, which are absolutely not shared by anyone at ITV' (Jones, 2011). True-May was subsequently suspended from his job. Why, though, during the 14 years or so that the programme was shown, did no one from ITV or from its viewers seemingly demand to know why there were no characters conceived as not white on the show? Was it so difficult to perceive? Or was it just that nobody was bothered or offended? If the latter is the case, then why is there such a public outcry once the director has admitted that it is a deliberate policy not to cast characters deemed black? This example indicates the hypocrisy and subtlety of racism in action. It should not be surprising then that True-May argued that he had been 'victimised' and that the reaction to his comments had been 'hysterical' (Revoir and Fernandez, 2011). Goldberg's (2005:218) words seem especially relevant here: 'Race matters…even as its matter and reach are ignored, denied, repressed, erased'.

Relatedly, the Runnymede Trust's Report (2012:9) has called for an end to the UK government's '"colour-blind" approach to race equality. The authors assert that it is a matter of concern that this was the first ever parliamentary report about the unemployment of British black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women and that this is the result of the government's desire not to assess employment in terms of race/ethnicity, but rather in terms of individuality (ibid.). The report states that the government consequently has not even been prepared to look at the large over-representation of ethnic minorities in unemployment figures (ibid.) in terms of ethnicity/race. This would suggest that the government thereby is denying that racism in the UK employment sector exists, or, alternatively, it is aware of it and chooses not to act.

In Chapter Five I will explore race and racism in relation to names. Specifically if (and how) names are related to these concepts and will discuss the notion that race/racism is over in relation to my participants' experiences of their name-change.

Power: Why Race Matters, and Whiteness

Garner (2010) asserts that because racism is a social construction, it must always be lived/known in unequal situations of power: for instance, that some people have easier access to resources than others (also Goldberg, 2005). Chryssochoou

(2004) notes that it is power, which determined race should become the dominant way of socially dividing humankind, and that thereby created racism (also Darder and Torres, 2004). Chryssochoou (2004:50) states that: 'racism equals power plus prejudice…Reification, essentialization, and discrimination work together to maintain a particular vision of the world, a world characterized by racial difference'. Moreover, Garner (2010) argues that the discourse of racism is about more than unequal relationships between individuals – the social inheritances of slavery cannot be changed by an individual. To belong, or to be allocated, to a particular race is seemingly about more than just one's individual opinion: all the perceived meanings of that race are allocated to one, whether one desires this or not (Eriksen, 2002). It appears then that racism has developed via a mixture of 'social and psychological power' (Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo, 2005:150).

Indeed, I wonder if in modern times racism, rather than merely being a justification of slavery (as suggested earlier), is now conceived as a derivative or a legacy of the transatlantic slave trade. Although the physical aspect of this slavery was abolished on paper, in principle the substance (and psychological essence) of slavery has perhaps lived on in the system and become (re-)institutionalised as racism. Indeed, Gilroy (1987) writes that because the UK does not truly acknowledge the history of slavery, and hides its impact, its psychological repercussions live on in current-day racism (also Casciani, 2007; Roediger, 2003).

Garner (2010) notes that within the construct of race, no two races can ever be seen as equal. Races have always historically been viewed in hierarchies, which change according to time and context (ibid.). As I mentioned above, I will explore in Chapter Six if there are also racialised hierarchies of names. In the UK, a white majority nation, it would appear integral when considering the meanings and power of race and racism to consider the power of the notion of whiteness. As Garner (2007) states, one cannot discuss whiteness without acknowledging the power behind it, for then its entire history of subordinating the Other is forgotten.

It is only since the mid-1990s that academics in the UK and particularly in the USA (Ware and Back, 2002) have moved anti-racist work away from ethnic minority

behaviours and towards white racism: the core concern of the racial past and present (Bonnet, 2000). Moreover, it has been common for the term race to be understood as indicating anyone except white people. Aanerud (1997) suggests that Western white people often point out the raced blackness of their associates, but do not indicate the race of their white acquaintances (also Babb, 1998; Dyer, 1999). I desire to uncover whether or not the same also applies to names. I purpose to explore if some names are unmarked (potentially 'white British') from a white person's perspective, and if some are perceived as foreign/Other and raced. I will discuss this concept extensively throughout the thesis, and particularly in Chapter Four.

European-origin versions of the whiteness concept (Bonnet, 2008) have always situated white people on the 'positive side of all the binaries used to attach value and meaning to groups of people' (Garner, 2007:175), such as: 'cleanliness/dirt; purity/impurity; restraint/excess; backwardness/modernity' (ibid.). Seemingly the essential symbolism of whiteness is that whiteness is good and blackness/the Other is bad (Dyer, 1999; Neal, 1999). Apparently such opposing constructs are needed, for what is 'civilisation without barbarity', 'freedom without slavery', or indeed, 'whiteness without blackness'? (Garner, 2007:51). Thus it seems whiteness is created by constantly adapting itself to be the exact opposite of what it considers blackness to be (ibid.; Babb, 1998; Neal, 1999). Garner (2007:43) argues that whiteness is about what it is not, rather than what it is, and that it therefore has an impression of 'invisibility': despite appearing not to exist, it has presence – and power (Neal, 1999). '[T]he unmarked nature' of whiteness originates from its centrality, its power to judge the Other by placing itself in binary opposition to it (Garner, 2007:43.; also Babb, 1998).

Consequently, whiteness appears to symbolise 'normality, dominance and control' (Garner, 2007:9; also Ware and Back, 2002), and therefore to hold dominion over blackness - so much so that whiteness seems natural and merely human (Garner, 2007). This demonstrates how power has the ability to seem invisible and unchallengeable (ibid.). To be understood as simply human is a status of utmost power and normativity (Dyer, 1999). Indeed, Bonnet (2000) asserts that the desirable standing of whiteness is seemingly indisputable, never considered, never mind

challenged: its origins and history are actively hidden. I am interested in exploring if this notion also applies to names. If my participants report that some names are generally viewed as white British, are those names therefore conceived as being normal, accepted, familiar and unnoticed? It is impossible to unproblematically determine what a white British name is, just as it is to define someone's race. Nonetheless it appears that to be categorised as racially white is a position of power, because of the trust, and consequently advantage, that it garners. Bush (2011) indicates that whiteness universally dominates and simultaneously denies it has structured the world in its own vision: that white people have designed their own progress at the expense of the Other's demise (also Dyer, 1999; Lipsitz, 2006).

One of the apparent purposes of whiteness is to promote a covert sense of unity amongst white people that causes them to temporarily forget about differences in class, gender and personal beliefs and to feel as one, separate from the Other, perceived according to racial, embodied ideas hidden within cultural rhetoric (Garner, 2007). I would add that this is perhaps especially the case within a nation. As I mentioned earlier, the nation is designed to make the majority of its population feel a kinship even though they will never meet (Anderson, 2003). Accordingly, whiteness is seemingly used as a social identity that coerces the majority of white people – within a nation - into thinking they are particularly alike, in perfect opposition to the Other, purely because they are not black or migrants (ibid.). Indeed, Dyer (1999:19) argues that: 'Whiteness has been extensively and frighteningly successful in uniting white people across lines of difference'. Goldberg (2002) asserts that whiteness is not just a racial identity, but it is the national one. Similarly to my earlier discussion of how nationalism is an exclusionary device, Dyer (1999) writes that white people (regardless of their internal differences e.g. gender, social class) believe they should be favoured by their particular nation state over racially minority groups.

Moreover, since the 1980s in the UK and USA there has been a popular discourse about how privilege has moved away from white people towards racial minorities. For example, in the USA the advent of affirmative action has been framed as (unjustly) damaging white people's chances (Hannah-Jones, 2013). Although

affirmative action may not be a European phenomenon, there is an increasingly widespread notion of white Europeans as a neglected and undefended group that is being unjustly marginalised in a social hierarchy switch, whereby working and lower middle class white Europeans are allegedly being replaced by non-white Others (Garner, 2007; Clarke and Garner, 2009).

The support of such ideas could be seen in the commissioning of a 'White Season' series by the BBC (2008). Unfortunately, such programmes appear to give voice to this notion of discrimination against white people. This concept can also seemingly be seen in the current spate of racially abusive public rants by several white British women (see Nelson, 2012; The Voice, 2013). They have argued that they and their families have paid taxes and that black/Asian Britons and/or migrants have not and instead claim benefits (Nelson, 2012). As the women have approached people randomly on the basis of their skin colour without knowing their individual circumstances, this implies that their abuse connects to the white backlash concept.

Garner (2007) asserts that it is important to investigate why white people are feeling they have been dispossessed of privilege and that this notion indicates a combination of egotism and anxiety. Bonnet (2000) claims that the privileges of the British welfare and social system have long been framed as belonging to the white majority, and that this has become an important part of their identity. The assertion is that people not classified as white do not deserve these benefits and are taking too much from white people, or white people have given too much away (ibid.).

Yet such rhetoric risks drawing too much attention away from racism towards the intricacies of white identities (Garner, 2007). Indeed, Dyer (1999) writes that it is integral not to consider white people as victims: the motivation for critiquing whiteness has been to knock its power, not to reaffirm and celebrate it (also Ferber, 1999). Bonnet (2000) writes that male power did not need re-promoting due to the challenge of feminism, and nor does the power of white people, who are not in a socially or economically inferior position to the Other.

Dyer (1999:1-2) argues that the power and privilege of whiteness is reborn continually and in its wake it spreads 'inequalities, oppression, privileges and

sufferings', all the while reducing the platform from which those who are not perceived as white can speak against it. Indeed, despite all of the UK's equality laws, racism apparently remains difficult to prove. For instance, John Terry, a prominent Chelsea footballer and former England captain, was recently filmed by television cameras shouting a racial slur at an opposition footballer, Anton Ferdinand, during a football match (Davies, 2012). He was nonetheless found not guilty of racial abuse in a court of law (ibid.). Berger (1999) writes that it is testament to the hold of racism upon the thoughts of the West that whiteness had been largely ignored, or unseen, for so long (and still is). Consequently, Berger (ibid.) states that racism is often perceived by white people as being a problem overcome, as now existing only in black people's imaginations. However, Dyer (1999) notes that this attitude is only possible because white people do not tend to acknowledge that their high societal position is because of their whiteness rather than just their own merit. Garner (2007) asserts that, in contrast, black people cannot but consider their colour due to their daily encounters with racism.

Ferber (1999) writes that white privilege is only possible because of the subjugation of the Other (Ferber, 1999). As Macedo and Gounari (2006) describe, in the West there has been a limited but highly publicised liberal drive against explicit racism and discrimination, but this can distract away from how common white, Western, supremacy is, and this structural whiteness still remains largely unchallenged. Bonnet (2000) highlights the paradox of, on the one hand, the need for the immense structural and societal power of whiteness to be seen and critiqued, yet – on the other hand – for whiteness to be simultaneously revealed as the racist production that it is. It is important that whiteness should not be reified as truthful (ibid.), nor as an identity to be claimed and re-asserted. Dyer (1999) argues that this white power is not necessarily pursued with mal-intent by all white people - because, as touched upon previously, white people are not homogenous (Lam and Smith, 2009) and are subject to power differences, such as those structured around social class and gender. Nevertheless, Garner (2007) asserts that all white people are complicit within the system of whiteness, because it is social, therefore no one can be

immune to it, no white individual can entirely remove their privilege. Garner (2007) and Goldberg (2002) consequently state that despite differences in class and gender, 'being white per se is a relatively free ride'.

Subsequently, it appears that whiteness does terrorise (hooks, 1997) those constructed as non-white, as it rules the world according to its own benefit. This can be seen in the fact that black people have lower life expectancies, and live in societies where they are still held back by their skin colour and so are less likely to achieve according to their ability, which is essentially racialised (Garner, 2007). Moreover, the apparently ingrained notion in white cultures of the invisibility of whiteness, this idea that 'white people are just people' (Dyer, 1999:2; also Aanerud, 1997), is not far removed from questioning the humanness of non-whites (Dyer, 1999). Indeed, Solomos and Back (2000:21) assert that whiteness 'colonises' the idea of being 'normal'. They also criticise the tendency for sociology to ignore those who commit racism, instead focusing only on the victims of it (ibid.). Frankenberg (2000) outlines that it is important to acknowledge the raced status of white people, alongside that of black people in our societal imaginations (also Dyer, 1999). Whiteness provides those considered white with a privileged position within societal structures, which is also the place from where Others are judged (Frankenberg, 2000).

Consequently, it seems that those not considered white generally live beneath 'the shadow of social death' (ibid.:447). The idea is that those constructed as not white should strive/desire to be so, but at the same time, the structures of inequality will inform them that this will never come to pass: they can never be part of the in-group (idea adapted from Treacher Kabesh, 2009). Berger (1999) notes that whiteness exists by denying that the Other can have talents or positive attributes and instead only acknowledges the strengths of white people (ibid.). In addition, Clarke and Garner (2009) write that within the structure of whiteness, white people are perceived as non-racialised *individuals*, in contrast to those not considered white (also Morrison, 1992). McIntosh (1988:5, quoted in Dyer, 1999:8), a writer who perceived herself to be white, states: '"I can swear, or dress in second-hand clothes, or not

answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty or the illiteracy of my race"' (also see Garner, 2007).

I aim to explore if names are involved within this homogenising or individualising process: if names are racialised, have my participants noted any changes in the ways in which they themselves are perceived racially? Have those white participants who have taken a name, which may be viewed as Other (and vice versa) noticed any differences in their everyday access to privileges? As I discussed in Chapter One, those Jewish migrants and ex-slaves in the US who historically Anglicised their surnames, seemingly brought a stigma to these surnames. This can be likened to the changeable hierarchy of whiteness I discussed earlier, whereby whiteness presents itself as desirable and seemingly achievable, but in reality it may not be so, and some people remain whiter than others. This may also be the case with names, in that some are also whiter than others, and some people who try to whiten their names perhaps merely transfer their Otherness to different names. Whereas other participants may be successful in being assimilated into the in-group, thereby attaining the privileges of white Britishness.

Inbetween People

As I considered earlier, the socially constructed nature of racial identities means they cannot be unproblematically defined. Likewise, Dyer (1999) writes that whiteness is a liquid concept, whose inner hierarchies are not clear-cut. Dyer (ibid.) argues that this flexibility helps make whiteness a desirable identity, because the fuzziness of its boundaries makes the privileges it promises enticing to those who have any opportunity to achieve it. Although whiteness may seem quite solid in its invisible (for white people), powerful nature – as I have outlined in the previous section - nevertheless it is a construction that is not altogether secure, and which, to a point, is a label of 'ascription' (ibid.:48). Dyer (1999) asserts that people are white only if they are deemed to be so by white people and that this puts white people within an incredibly dominating position.

Whiteness is therefore a hierarchy of those deemed white and those on the fringes who may be and/or could be white: all of which is ever subject, throughout history, to dispute and change. Seemingly racism's function is to create difference, which explains why it is that those who would usually fit into certain racial categories can be omitted from them: for example, Gypsies, Irish Travellers (Reed, 2005) and Jewish people who have been labelled white at times and not at others (Belluscio, 2006; Babb, 1998). Thus some people are seen as whiter than others even within the category of those considered physically white (Clarke and Garner, 2009; Dyer, 1999). Following such a (parallel) pattern, attitudes towards names seemingly also change according to time and context, as I described in Chapter One. Dyer (1999) writes that whiteness appears achievable, adding to its desirability, but not leading to any loss of power, as the ascription of whiteness remains at the whim of those at the top of the white hierarchy (Dyer, 1999; Clarke and Garner, 2009).

In relation to the seemingly ascribed nature of whiteness, it is important to consider the concept of the inbetween people. Roediger (2005:12) explains that Southern and Eastern immigrants to the USA in the nineteenth century were racialised as being not quite white, not quite black, but inbetween 'hard racism and full inclusion'. Roediger (2005) asserts that the experience of these migrants cannot be compared to the racism experienced by black people, but nevertheless they were racialised as non-white, in spite of their physical appearance. They were inbetween in the sense that they held an indistinct and indefinite status that was continually assessed (ibid.). Indeed, Roediger (ibid.) writes that by the late nineteenth century, Roosevelt did not dispute the new immigrants' legal standing as white people, but he did have to consider if they were worthy of taking citizenship and entering the American race. Thus, 'southern and eastern Europeans [were viewed] as objects of debate, their racial status on trial as they lived, poised between nonwhiteness and a white Americanism that was seen as a racial as well as a national category' (ibid.:64).

Garner (2007) asserts that the inbetween people were at times associated with black Americans, and consequently they held for some time the lower jobs and social positions (also Barrett and Roediger, 1997). Subsequently, they appeared white

but they were nonetheless 'ideologically and culturally…considered different and lesser "white races"' (Garner, 2007:66). However, Garner (2007) writes that the inbetween people were always closer to achieving whiteness than black Americans, South Americans, Asians and Native, Americans could ever be. Thus, these immigrants appeared to complicate notions of whiteness: their experience showed that phenotypically appearing white is not always enough to grant someone white status and privileges. In addition, they highlighted the capacity for racialisation to change, and this will be something I consider in the subsequent data chapters. In Chapter Four I will address the concept of an inbetween racial status in order to explore if the participants consider their name-change has impacted upon perceptions of their racial status(es).

Racialisation Processes and Embodied Understandings of Race

To understand race and racism it is vital to consider the importance of physical difference in the process of racial categorization/construction (Alexander and Knowles, 2005). Many academics have noted the deep links between racism and embodied indicators of race such as skin colour (for example, Herring, Keith and Horton, 2004; Klonoff and Landrine, 2000; Fernando, 1984) and, to a lesser extent perhaps, accent (Hing, 2002; Singh and Dooley, 2006). Indeed, the UK's Race Relations Act (1976) cites skin colour as a racial marker that is potentially used to perpetuate racial discrimination. Dyer (1999) asserts that notions of race all originated in the body, yet whilst black people have always tended to be equated only to their bodies (by white people), white people have always been professed (again, by white people) to be more than just their bodies. Dyer (ibid.) also notes that part of the desirability of whiteness rests in its beautiful and virtuous associations, in its positioning at the pinnacle of what it is to be human (also Babb, 1998). Perhaps this is also one of the reasons for historical (and current) disdain for miscegenation, in that it threatens the 'purity' of whiteness (Kennedy, 2004:18-9; Dyer, 1999). It seems then that blackness is used as the dual opposite of whiteness, in order to define what whiteness is not. Moreover, the lack of white racialisation (i.e. the tendency not to

consider white people as consciously and biologically racialised) seemingly contrasts with the notion that black people's identity is embodied (Dyer, 1999).

Dyer (ibid.) argues that since the twentieth century, tanning has often been prized by white people, as symbolising wealth (i.e. travel), healthiness, and as perhaps reflecting a secret desire to ingest the naturalness of the Other, who have traditionally tilled the land. Yet Ahmed (1998) argues that white people are using blackness as an accessory when tanning, and do not risk being contaminated by it or actually turning black. Dyer (1999) therefore asserts that tanning does not result in any loss of privilege, and even illustrates the white person's privilege of being flexible and individual. This supports the afore-mentioned notion that white people are more than just their skin colour, whereas black people are equated to the truth of their blackness, which remains a stigma that cannot be removed (ibid.). Ahmed (1998) writes that a black person cannot be conceived as disembodied: their bodies reflect who they really are, and so black skin symbolises their being – inside and out. Consequently, the idea is that black skin is permanently coloured, which symbolises colour as the indicator of racial difference (ibid.). However, Ahmed (1998), through her own personal experiences, questions the straightforwardness of such concepts by arguing that colour from tanning and racial colour can crossover/be mistaken for each other. Moreover, the notion that whiteness dwells in hidden, disembodied characteristics struggles with the idea that a white person's whiteness must be recognisable in order to attract the privilege associated with it (ibid.). Indeed, the colour white 'is both a colour and, at once, not a colour' (ibid.:44). This again underlines the socially constructed nature of racial identities and of the resulting accordance of privilege.

I will explore this ascribed notion of whiteness in Chapter Four, as - if my participants suggest that some names are racialised as white or white British - how is this racialisation process challenged or supported by the participants' own embodied racial identities? Again, if names are found to be racialised, I intend to address if the act of taking a name characterised as oppositional to a person's own perceived embodied race impacts upon their access to white privilege. As mentioned above,

theory suggests that white people can take on blackness through tanning as an adornment, which can be removed and which does not change their embodied racial identity. Moreover, that for black people lightening the skin arguably does not give them any access to white privilege. Can the same said be said for names? If a white person takes a name deemed Other, is this merely a playful exercise that does not affect their access to white privilege, and likewise, if a black person takes a name deemed white (British), does this make any difference in terms of their racial identity and/or access to white privilege? I will discuss this in Chapter Four.

Identity and Racial Passing

Alexander and Knowles (2005:13) assert that 'the ability of the individual to create even a semi-autonomous sense of self varies according to the relations of power, whether around gender, race, class, body, age and so on'. Ratcliffe (2004) further argues that a person's identity is created by their heritage, own sense of self and how they are viewed by others. It is the battle between these constructions, which creates what one is and is not (ibid.). Indeed, one can perceive this struggle for individual identity in relation to the forces of racism, in many writers' work. For example, Stuart (2005:172) writes:

> …by the age of four I had already learnt what Fanon had discovered decades earlier, that it was only through the gaze of others that I existed. The "others" are white men (Fanon 1967/1968). What they chose to see – a nigger – I hated.

Many writers put forward the idea of the duality of identity: that which a person is and that which they are not; what they are and what the Other is (Hall, 2000). Barrett (1999) wrote of how blackness is coupled with, in the sense that it is opposite to, value in the American cultural psyche. In addition, Du Bois (1999) wrote eloquently of doubleness, of a world where there was no real understanding of oneself except through an understanding of the Other. He termed this: 'double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others…One ever feels his

twoness…two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder' (ibid.:126).

Furthermore, identity is a fluid concept in itself, and is important to how we think of ourselves. Hall (2000) asserts that one's identity relies on the idea of there being an essential, genuine 'self' inside of one, which is living amongst the Other, fictitious selves that one shows to the outside world. Hall (1996:v) writes that our cultural identities are the product of telling ourselves our own story, producing the 'cultural self', and thereby a sense of belonging. Hall (1996) notes that one's story is often created as an afterthought, so as to produce a convincing identity and history for oneself. As Hall (2000) writes of his own history of being raised in the Caribbean where there was no black but only brown, and where no one considered themselves as being foreign to the United Kingdom, but as citizens, one can see the painfulness of his learning what became his 'true' identification in Britain as a migrant.

Alexander and Knowles (2005) assert that the creation of identities is so multifaceted that they serve to challenge the notion of a black/white opposition/dualism and instead reveal the mixed nature of such categories. As I have discussed earlier, what does it mean to be black or white? What is race anyway? Yet despite this recognition that racial identities are constructed, a person's physical features, the colour of their skin still seem to matter. In Chapter Five I will analyse if changing their name appeared to impact upon my participants' self-attributed (racial) identities and/or the way in which they felt others had ascribed their (racial) identities. I will also explore in Chapter Four if the participants' lived, everyday, experiences challenge neat binaries of racial categorisation/identity.

In this vein, it is also important to consider the implications of identity in relation to race passing.

> …passing is about identities: their creation or imposition, their adoption or rejection, their accompanying rewards or penalties. Passing is also about boundaries established between identity categories and about the individual

> and cultural anxieties induced by boundary crossing. Finally, passing is about specularity: the visible and the invisible, the seen and the unseen.
> (Ginsberg, 1996:2).

Sollos (1997) asserts that passing in American discourse has been associated with the notion that there are integral differences between racial groups. Belluscio (2006) notes that passing from a white perspective has tended to indicate black people trying to take a false white identity (also Kennedy, 2004; Sollos, 1997). The notion is that such a person illegally passed over a racial boundary in order to avoid discrimination associated with blackness, and to claim the benefits associated with whiteness (Ginsberg, 1996; Belluscio, 2006).

Consequently, the idea of passing challenges the truthfulness/reality of categories of identity and how they are created, in that it questions the essentialism of racial categories as rooted in the body (Ginsberg, 1996). If blackness is founded in the body, then how can a black person pass as white via their physical appearance? Ginsberg (1996) outlines that the desperate desire by white powers to cling to the idea of pure races can be perceived in their reaction to the long history of miscegenation that made some people appear physically white who nonetheless had some black African heritage. The powers that be argued this made them actually black (ibid.; Kennedy, 2004), actually slaves (Ginsberg, 1996; Clarke and Garner, 2009; Sollos, 1997). This created a problem in that those who were legally black could pass as white, free-born people. This led to the situation whereby well into the middle of the 20th century, some US states categorised a black person as someone who had just one black great-grandparent – in some states, one great-great-grandparent (Ginsberg, 1996).

There is little evidence about how much racial passing by people deemed legally black has actually occurred in the USA (ibid.). It is not really about the numbers, though, but more about the way in which racial passing has been an incarnation of the fears and irrationalities of a society that placed so much importance on race. Passing challenged the fixity of whiteness, both within society generally, and for the individual (ibid.). I will discuss this notion particularly in Chapter Four, in

relation to whether or not my participants' experiences also pose questions regarding the presumed fixity of racial categories.

Kennedy (2004) asserts that a black person who is racially passing would probably conceive this as a way of trying to rise up the racial hierarchy. Whereas from a white perspective, passing can be conceived as fraudulent (ibid.; Sollors, 1997) and a deceitful way of trying to gain rights to which one is not eligible (Ginsberg, 1996). Garner (2007) elucidates that Jewish and Traveller people, for example, could take certain steps in order to pass as white, such as stopping religious practices and changing names that identify them as Other. Garner (2007) asserts that this ability to pass, and thereby to disobey the laws of whiteness that stipulate a person's racial/cultural stigma should be made clear, renders such people transformative: how can whiteness function properly when a person's Otherness is so falsely hidden?

In addition, Piper (1996) movingly tells of her own struggle as someone with black heritage but with a phenotypically white appearance. Piper (ibid.) writes that she has often been charged with deceitfully white passing, and that her white accusers are actually upset because they have engaged in interactions with her that they would not consider if they knew her to be black (ibid.). Piper's testimony surely makes a mockery of racialisation: as Ginsberg (1996) argues, racial passing causes a crisis of categorisation that challenges the roots of white privilege.

Moreover, ironically in light of the dominant discourse of black people as being homogenous rather than individual, Pfeiffer (2003) writes that passing makes it possible to find room to be quite independent in one's identity choice. Passing enables someone to try out different (racial) identities, and attempt to move into more advantageous social and economic positions (Ginsberg, 1996; Belluscio, 2006). This seems an important point to consider in relation to the experiences of my participants. If names are racialised, if a black participant with a name deemed foreign changed it, would this help them to racially pass and perhaps gain white privileges (and vice versa for my white participants)? I will discuss this in Chapter Four. Moreover, in Chapter Six I will discuss the relevance of the racial passing concept in terms of how my participants chose to name their children.

Dreisinger (2008) writes about the reverse scenario to the common perception of racial passing: that of people deemed white passing as black. Dreisinger (2008) asserts that there are several avenues for passing: passing based on appreciation for, and identification with, black cultures, and accidental passing, such as by slaves who appeared white, but were nonetheless in the subjugated position of a black slave. Furthermore, arguably some passing is now of a more performative, than biological, nature. Dreisinger (2008) explores how white rappers such as Eminem outwardly identify with black cultures, but also avow their white privilege. They know that they cannot be phenotypically black, but believe they can be performatively (Belluscio, 2006). I am interested in the possibility that, should my white British participants suggest names are racialised, they may have found it difficult to decide whether to take their partner's foreign surname upon marriage - in the sense that they may have expected to encounter prejudice in relation to bearing a name considered Other. I will discuss this issue in Chapter Five.

In addition, Bonnet (2000) asserts that white identification with blackness, as seen in passing as black, can be perceived as a form of social anarchy, and that such disorderly and deviant forms of identity-crossing have a substantial history. Indeed, Dreisinger (2008) suggests that passing as black can be viewed as a challenging and positive act, and one that attacks whiteness. But it seemingly can only be so if one is continually 'self-reflexive', with a double-consciousness of how one perceives the world to be, and how one is perceived in the world (ibid.:149). Such reflexivity results in an investigation of race and the hierarchy of power within racial structures (ibid.). However, passing is not necessarily always a non-racist act (Bonnet, 2000): for instance, minstrelsy – white Americans blackening their faces for entertainment purposes (Pfeiffer, 2003) – has a problematic history. However, passing does have the potential to challenge the presumed concreteness and finality of whiteness (ibid.). For example, John Howard Griffin (2011), a white American, who decided to have treatment to darken his skin successfully managed to pass as a black American in order to understand what it is to be on the receiving end of racism. His reported

experiences raised many questions about the dominant notion of fixed racial categories.

Passing can also apparently have deep emotional consequences, not only for the one passing but also for their relatives, friends and community. Piper (1996) writes about finding it hard to accept that some of her relatives have made the decision to pass as white and thereby sever ties with their black roots and family. In addition, passing for white has most often been perceived as a denunciation of one's blackness, of 'self-hatred or disloyalty' (Pfeiffer, 2003:2). However, Piper (1996) is able to rationalize her family members' decision to pass in another way. Her rather unique position of being inbetween – that is appearing white but understanding herself to be black - has seemingly allowed Piper to ascertain at first hand the privileges gained by being white and what is taken away once one is known to be black (ibid.).

Piper (1996) subsequently seems to understand how a black person's feelings of injustice regarding discrimination could be so strong that they could not bear it. As she argued, if one is not politically gifted, passing may be perceived as the sole way of flouting the system of white privilege (ibid.). Passing can perhaps originate from a desire to be in charge of one's own destiny and identity, rather than have one's life decided by the whims of racialised categorization (Wald, 2000). In Chapter Six I will consider such issues in relation to the emotional aspects of the participants' decision-making in regard to choosing their children's names.

With such thoughts of passing in mind, I will now turn towards an overview of existing research, which suggests names are racialised. I will also explore research that claims those who bear names considered white may have better employment chances than those with names deemed Other. This is especially interesting in the light of my desire to understand the potential usage of names in a racialised sense. It also implies there are known strategies via name, on paper, for avoiding being classified as Other, and consequently for being accepted in the in-group.

Linking the Above Existing Theories to Names: Correspondence Test Research and Other Research on Name Discrimination

My discussion about the history of name-changing in Chapter One underlined the importance of names and of the associations that those names bear. It also suggested the notion that names are representative of more than just the individuals who use them: that perhaps names are raced (whether that be in terms of skin colour, religion and/or nationality). In this vein, it is important to examine the Correspondence Testing based research, which indicates that there is racial discrimination on the basis of name in the UK context.

The 'CV testing approach', or Correspondence Testing method, was developed by Jowell and Prescott-Clarke (1970). This approach is based on the principle of selecting names that are stereotypically linked to specific racial backgrounds and, using them to create fictional CVs. The created CVs are intended to be identical in terms of the person's qualifications and experiences, and only vary by the name presented and what this represents (the implied race of the candidate). The CVs are then used to apply to jobs, for each of which a CV with a name deemed white, and ones with names felt to represent other racial minorities (e.g. Black-African, Chinese and so on) are sent (Wood *et al.*, 2009).

Wood *et al.*'s (2009:32) research, which is UK-based, indicated that their 'white CVs' had a 68% success rate (in terms of the candidate being called for interview), whereas those CVs with 'non-white' names had a 39% success rate. This study was conducted within six major UK cities, including London, Birmingham and Liverpool, and there was found to be no statistical difference between the levels of discrimination between them (ibid.). The researchers assert that they could find no other reason to explain the differing experiences of their two groups of names other than racism, and they argue that the existence of an ethnic hierarchy within the British job market is 'a well-established fact' (ibid.:1). Moreover, they write that other research (for example, Heath and Cheung, 2006) has consistently found that second generation ethnic minorities encounter a similar level of discrimination in the job market to their parents (Wood *et al.*, 2009).

Wood *et al.*'s (2009) study concludes that name is a significant factor in one's employment chances (at the application stage) in Britain, as this is apparently the basis upon which race can be detected. That second generation 'migrants' are seemingly discriminated against to the same extent as those persons not born in the UK also highlights the key role that name appears to play in discrimination (ibid.). The Runnymede Trust Report (2012) also backed up the prior Wood *et al.* (2009) findings and called for the use of blank name application forms in order to mitigate against this stage of employment discrimination. There has also been Correspondence Test based research conducted in other countries, such as that by Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004) in the USA, Booth, Leigh and Varganova (2009) in Australia, Carlsson and Rooth (2007) in Sweden – all of which indicated preferences in the job market for 'white names', 'Anglo-Saxon sounding names', and Swedish names, respectively. Arai and Thoursie's (2009) report asserted that those individuals who had changed their names from Asian, African or Slavic sounding names to Swedish names had noticed a significant increase in their annual earnings after doing so. Other research (which is not based on the Correspondence Test method) has also found discrimination in the UK employment field against ethnic minorities (for example, Berthoud, 2000; Heath and Cheung, 2006).

Nevertheless, it is clear that in the Correspondence Tests, name is used only as a proxy for race, and not out of a desire to understand the impact of name in itself. As Levitt and Dubner (2007:170-1) assert, such research is interesting but at the same time restricted, as it does not answer why 'black-sounding names carry an economic penalty'. Moreover, it does not assess the actual experiences of real people (ibid.). My project thereby builds upon this previous research by trying to qualitatively understand my participants' everyday experiences in relation to bearing a name that is perhaps regarded as racially Other in comparison to their own embodied racial identity.

There have been a few more academic-based articles written on the topic of names and discrimination. Although these are centred outside of the UK, they are nevertheless informative to my project. According to Lipski (1976), names are

hierarchized within different geographical areas. This argument relates to the theory of hierarchized race that I mentioned earlier. Lipski (1976) also asserts that names deemed to be of a lower social standing are often changed by their bearers in order to try to gain an advantage. This concept has been suggested by the afore-mentioned literature on embodied racial passing, and by the history of name changing I presented in Chapter One. As Schettler (1942:176) writes:

> …name changes establish without question the fact that there is such a thing as name status; a social distance, a discrimination based upon name introductions. Some members of minority groups perceive that only a name stands between them and acceptance in the dominant group. Telling names of nationality and ancestry are displaced by names that have merit and prestige in the judgements of members of the majority group. It is almost literally true that the individual who changed his name, changes his character.

This may appear quite an extraordinary statement that a name change alters a person's 'character'. However, as I conveyed earlier, a person's designated race is seemingly often deemed to be representative of their inner abilities and characteristics. If names are symbolic of race, then they may also inform stereotypical assumptions of a person's abilities according to their racial designation. As Kim (2007:117) notes, 'One's given name is always social' (also Kang, 1971).

Indeed, Khosravi (2012:66) (writing in a Swedish context) argues that names are tied up with issues of inheritance and rights: they are signifiers of privilege and therefore have a 'commodity-like value'. This argument can be likened to Wood *et al.*'s (2009) research described above: that to have a name considered white British increases one's employment chances. Furthermore, it also reflects the earlier-mentioned notion that the closer a person is to whiteness, the more privilege they accordingly have access to. It is interesting to consider Khosravi's (2012) assertion that in Sweden an individual cannot adopt a Swedish surname unless they can prove blood ties with two generations of a family that has borne that name in the last century (also Bursell, 2012). Consequently, someone with a non-Swedish name in Sweden often must invent a new surname if they wish to alter theirs, but this surname must be

Swedish-sounding – or 'near white' (Khosravi, 2012:78). Thus that person can never take a traditionally white Swedish surname, can arguably never truly become part of the in-group where names are concerned (Bursell, 2012). Nevertheless Khosravi (2012) points out that this 'neutralisation' of their name (via a name-change) is still an attempt on the part of the name bearer to racially pass as white, or to 'perform whiteness' (ibid.:75), 'to cope with and manage stigmatisation and discrimination' (ibid.:66) - at least on paper (Bursell, 2012).

As the name-changing history I presented in Chapter One suggests, name changes are often not introduced by the name bearer themselves but by others (Lipski, 1976). Drury and McCarthy (1980) provide an interesting example of pressured name changing in Denmark. They note that it is not a customary social practice for one to be pressured into changing or altering one's name. They add that an exception to this concerns living in a culture where a language different to one's own dominates: 'a person may experience pressure to alter his or her mode of self-referral' (ibid.:311). The motivations for such name alterations on the part of others are difficult to determine. Lipski (1976:113) suggests that most 'ethnically stigmatized names' are unintentionally mispronounced. For example, he asserts that many Americans consider all Polish names to be unpronounceable and that they accordingly mispronounce them even if they are not difficult to pronounce (ibid.). Indeed, Lipski (ibid.) suggests that names, which are unusual in a particular area may be pronounced according to the phonetic structure of the area's dominant language.

Nonetheless, Lipski (1976:117) does consider that 'There appears to be an unconscious, or at least semiconscious, ethnolinguistic mechanism that automatically regulates pronunciation according to feelings'. This point implies that there are cases where names are deliberately mispronounced, with the motivations perhaps being to 'degrade, belittle, or ridicule members of minority ethnic groups' (ibid.:113). Such cases are perhaps more obvious when a particular name is misread, even though the name should be easy for the person to say correctly (ibid.). This ties in with the example I gave in Chapter One of Kinnear, Newcastle FC's Director of Football, who has repeatedly misread footballers' names in quite an extreme fashion. Kohli and

Solórzano (2012:443) suggest that such misreadings or mispronunciations of names are 'racial microagressions'. That is, they are understated everyday slurs that uphold a 'racial and cultural hierarchy of minority inferiority' (ibid.). They may not be overtly racist, but they cumulatively cause a similar effect upon those who suffer them (ibid.). In Chapter Five I will look at my participants' everyday experiences of names in relation to potential racism/discrimination.

Kohli and Solórzano's (2012) point also backs up a UK-based study by Edwards and Caballero (2008). Their qualitative research looked at parental name choices of couples with differing racial, ethnic and/or faith backgrounds. They claim that parents of mixed-race children often choose their children's names in a quite straightforward way. They assert that it is only over time that the parents sometimes regret or ponder their name choice in terms of whether or not it has left their child vulnerable to racism (ibid.). This is a valuable study in that there is very little research on the topic of how parents choose their children's names – especially with regards to considering racial/ethnic and/or religious aspects to decision making (ibid.). However, it does not focus on the topic of racism in relation to names, which I intend to explore. Therefore my study builds upon Edwards and Caballero's (2008) findings, and also takes into account some of the parents' own experiences of bearing a name deemed opposite to their own embodied racial and/or religious identity. I will explore this topic in Chapter Six.

In Chapter Three I will outline the methodological approach of this study, and subsequently provide a discussion of my research findings in relation to the literature and theory contained within this chapter, in the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN

Introduction

I begin this chapter by providing an explanation of the methodological standpoint I have taken for this study and of why I felt the chosen method is the best fit for the project. In addition, I will consider my participant sample, data collection and analysis, and provide a reflexive account of my own role within this research process. I will also discuss my project's ethical considerations. Finally I contemplate the ethical implications of changing my participants' names, which is an important contribution to methodological literature.

Study Design

Qualitative research attempts to analyse social acts, relationships and structures in terms of the meanings given to them by individuals (Greenhalgh, 2006; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). As my research topic has been under-explored outside of the employment sector (e.g. Wood *et al.*, 2009; The Runnymede Trust, 2012), I felt that my research approach needed to be exploratory (Dickson-Swift *et al.*, 2007). Consequently, I decided that a qualitative approach would be the best fit for exploring my participants' everyday experiences in relation to their names, in terms of the research questions I laid out in Chapter One. My qualitative approach is in contrast to the quantitative study on racial discrimination by Wood *et al.* (2009) I referred to in Chapter Two. Wood *et al.*'s study explored racial discrimination via name, rather than names in their own right. It also did not investigate the life experiences of real people in relation to name. My research is more in line with the qualitative approach taken by The Runnymede Trust (2012) project, which – as I also discussed in Chapter Two - touched in part upon name discrimination, although names were not the focus of study. Edwards and Caballero's (2008) project on mixed-race couples and their naming decisions for their children, which also briefly discussed name discrimination, also took a qualitative approach.

In addition, I have used a predominantly inductive approach to research. As Hammersley (1992:168) points out, no project can be entirely deductive or inductive,

because one is always moving between ‘ideas’ and ‘data’. Nonetheless my project has been conducted with the desire to create theory rather than to test hypotheses, to discover rather than to verify (Ambert *et al.*, 1995; Esterberg, 2002). Thus, whilst I began with the starting point of an interest in whether or not (sur)names were thought of in racialised terms, my findings go, and my analyses will go, far deeper than merely answering this question.

Ontologically, my research has taken a constructionist standpoint, which is often taken to be the antithesis of objectivism (Crotty, 2003; Bryman, 2004). Constructionism argues that social occurrences and the ways in which these are interpreted are constantly being undertaken by individuals within the social sphere (Silverman, 1993; Bryman, 2004). It also asserts that the meanings that individuals attach to social relationships between individuals, and between individuals and objects, should be at the centre of social research (Esterberg, 2002). All social meaning is perceived to be constructed by these individuals (ibid.; Crotty, 2003) through their experiences (Flick, 2004). These experiences are then evaluated according to the individuals’ constructed concepts and frameworks of understanding (ibid.).

According to Crotty (2003), constructionism can be said to be ontologically positioned between objectivity and subjectivity. Constructionism, in contrast to a subjective position holds that there are objects within the world within which to find meaning: that individuals do not have a blank sheet of paper (ibid.). Meanwhile, in contrast to objectivity, constructionism does not hold that there are essential truths to be found within the world and its contents: constructionism considers that there is no universal truth (ibid.). Nonetheless, as Flick (2004:90) argues, individuals can evaluate the quality of their constructed understanding, in whether or not it enables them to adequately locate themselves and ‘act in the world’. This evaluation is often aided through social interaction with others (ibid.).

This ontological position is arguably most visible in my thesis in relation to the ways in which I treat the terminology of my research area. For example, throughout my thesis I use terms such as race, whiteness, British and foreign, with an overt

awareness of their socially constructed nature, whilst also acknowledging that their existence means they have social meaning. Nayak (2006) has criticised social constructionist approaches for stating that race is a social construction but then continuing to use, and research into, the term. However, I feel that if race is not acknowledged as existing in the social world through the social study of its effects, then it will be even harder to critique, and move beyond, it. Alexander and Alleyne (2002a:548) assert that there is currently an inadequate amount of academic research conducted about racism, because the academy 'no longer believes in "race"', and that this has 'rendered racism invisible'. I aim to critically explore the constructed nature of race by highlighting any perceived lack of coherence I observe within my participants' experiences regarding the concept. Also, I do not treat my participants' descriptions of their experiences as a 'transparent window on their world' (Braun and Clarke, 2006:95). Rather, I seek to analyse them in relation to one another and theorise them in relation to my own understanding of 'sociocultural contexts and structural conditions' (ibid.:85). My epistemological approach has been interpretivist, with some feminist influences, as I will describe in the following two, respective, sections.

Interpretivist Epistemology

My project has taken an interpretivist epistemological approach, as I wanted to gain a deep understanding of whether or not, (and, if relevant, how) surnames are racialised. Interpretivism is based upon the idea that people cannot be considered the same as the objects researched in the field of natural sciences (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Bryman, 2004). Consequently, an interpretivist approach means that social scientists must embrace the subjectivity of social exploits (Williams, 2000). Thus an interpretivist approach aims to subjectively investigate 'the meanings and actions of actors according to their own subjective frame of reference' (ibid.:210). Also, it accepts that a researcher has their own values and subjective interpretations, which in themselves influence their research project in its entirety (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005).

Furthermore, sociologists working with an interpretivist outlook tend to assert that all meaning, and consequently research too, is the product of social interaction,

and must be understood as such (Gunaratnam, 2003; Esterberg, 2002). Indeed, the researcher is part of the production of research data/knowledge (Bowling, 1999). The intellectual origins of interpretivism are found in Weber's conception of Verstehen, in the history of hermeneutic-phenomenology and of symbolic interactionism (Bryman, 2004). Verstehen can be equated to 'understanding' (Benton and Craib, 2001:186), particularly in relation to the notion of an 'empathic understanding of human action rather than with the forces deemed to act on it' (Bryman, 2004:13). Symbolic interactionism, on the other hand, is understood to proffer the idea that individuals, when interacting with others, ever assess and interpret their surrounding environment in terms of symbolic meaning (Blumer, 1986; Bryman, 2004).

The phenomenological approach, meanwhile, advocates the use of a 'reduction' technique, whereby the researcher attempts to bracket out their own preconceived understanding of the participants' social environments, and consequently tries to discover and follow the practices through which the world is comprehended (Heap and Roth, 1973; Benton and Craib, 2001). Phenomenologists assert that the social world is made up of multifarious 'typifications', which are structured into a store of information/wisdom that is assumed to be self-evident and subsequently is to be imparted to others (Benton and Craib, 2001). This notion therefore avows that humans have a particular consciousness (Hughes and Sharrock, 2007), that our social environments are not existent/real aside from relations between people (Bowling, 1999). In other words, the interest is with the ways in which people find meaning within their social world (Ambert *et al.*, 1995), rather than in the social world itself (May, 2001). Consequently, phenomenology is concerned with analysing 'conscious human experience in everyday life' (Bowling, 1999: 112).

Meanwhile, hermeneutics began as an approach to investigating and interpreting the divine veracity of the bible (Palmer, 1969; Benton and Craib, 2001). Hans-George Gadamar's work is particularly important in the application of hermeneutics to sociology. Gadamar asserted that a segment (an individual) can only be understood in relation to its environs/context, the entirety of its history (Palmer, 1969; Benton and Craib, 2001). Consequently, hermeneutics can be said to focus on

uncovering deeper meanings 'beneath the manifest content' (Palmer, 1969:44). Although bearing similarities to phenomenological and symbolic interactionist philosophies (Benton and Craib, 2001), hermeneutics does diverge, in its argument that one's experiences are ever shaded by one's biases (Thompson, 1998). These biases may in themselves alter as one becomes cognisant of them as time/history/tradition marches on (Benton and Craib, 2001).

One can appreciate from this brief overview of interpretivism's intellectual origins that its premise is to try to understand those being studied instead of considering them to be objects that can be objectively observed. Thus, from an interpretivist point of view, subjectivity is part of the essence of research and is consequently not to be disparaged or condemned (Finlay, 2002). Indeed, the subjective nature of research can be observed within the act of choosing a research project, as a researcher tends to be influenced intrinsically by their preconceived biases, sympathies and/or identifications. It is arguably unusual for someone to research into something they do not have a special interest in, and such a curiosity is likely to originate from some kind of predetermined associations of thought.

The subjective influence contained in an interpretivist approach can also be viewed within the researcher's sample choice and interpretation of data (Bryman, 2004). The data are gathered by them in a subjective way, and analysed in relation to pre-existing concepts, contexts and literature (which the researcher has also interpreted) (ibid.). Indeed, data can be interpreted in different ways (Denzin, 1994:481). Additionally, the social researcher's own human status means that they are just as much a part of the society they are studying as their participants, and are thereby influenced by the same norms and values they are aiming to critically investigate and examine. Indeed, qualitative research in general has been critiqued by Positivistic schools of thought as being solipsistic and overly subjective (Goodwin and Horowitz, 2002). As I mentioned earlier, subjectivity conflicts with the aim of positivistic epistemologies, which hold up the notion of objectivity as the gold-standard of research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Crotty, 2003). Nonetheless, I share Crotty's

(2003) viewpoint that objectivity is not actually achievable within social research. This is reflected in my afore-mentioned constructionist ontological position.

Additionally, as I will discuss more extensively below, it is integral, from my point of view, that a researcher should openly acknowledge the subjective character of their research and be reflexive of their own role within the research process (Ambert *et al.*, 1995). This includes, for example, discussions of the researcher's philosophical standpoint(s), and consideration of their own position in relation to the research topic, and of any problems encountered with data collection, and/or with analysing the data. I appreciate that my understanding of the phenomenon being studied can never be complete or removed entirely from my own biased positions and beliefs (Thompson, 1998). In essence, it is vital that a researcher aims to be critically conscious of their methodological approach (Seale, 1999), and thereby I have tried to use interpretivism as a 'guide' rather than a rigid 'framework' (Bowling, 1999:106; also Seale, 2004; Cooper, 2003). In addition, I have conducted this research project in the belief that alongside pursuing the perceptions of my interviewees, I have also desired to analyse such perceptions in (academic) ways, which may be unfamiliar to some of those participants (Hammersley, 1992). This is part of viewing the individual experience within a wider social context: developing a 'sociological imagination' (Esterberg, 2002:4).

Influence of Feminist Epistemologies

Although I have not explicitly taken a feminist approach to research, my methodological approach has been influenced by the spirit of some feminist approaches, as I will now outline. Barbara McClintock's approach to botanical research on maize cobs – as described by Keller (1985) - struck a particular chord. McClintock advocated, through her tireless work (for which at the time Keller (1985) alleges that McClintock received little professional acknowledgement), the importance of taking notice of that which is different, the aberrations. In believing in this approach, and in taking notice of the anomalies in the maize cobs she worked on, she discovered important findings for genetics (ibid.). If one relates this to the social

sciences it highlights the need to research into the experiences of the minority, of the excluded, of those who perhaps deviate from the norm, even if this research may not be seen by others as particularly important at the time.

For this reason, the potentially political aims of research invoked by feminist standpoint theories (for example, Mies, 1994) have also resonated with me. I hope that my research will bring attention to any discriminatory and exclusionary practices within Britain that I may find. As Hammersley (2000) states, research originates from the desire to generate knowledge and consequently it cannot be politically impartial. Moreover, Haraway (1988) impressed upon me that knowledge is not always rounded and whole: we can benefit from the fragments we are able to find, from the angles we are able to view them from (also Thompson, 1998). In other words, knowledge is 'liquid' (especially that garnered from empirical research; Alexander, 2004) and it cannot be easily gathered or solidified into theories. I do not claim that this thesis is generalizable or representative. Nonetheless I do believe that the voices of my participants are worthy of consideration and that the findings of this study will contribute to the knowledge base and theorisation of concepts such as race, racialisation, racism and whiteness. That is, by hopefully stimulating further thoughts, discussions, analysis and research with regards to the racialisation of names topic.

Sample, Method of Data Collection and Data Analysis

Sample

My project uses the data of 31 semi-structured interviews and one written response to my semi-structured interview questions (see Appendix Two). I sourced the participants for these interviews via a snowball sample (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981; Merkens, 2004; Patton, 2002; Silverman, 2010). Consequently I found interviewees through various situations: advertisements on social media websites, a press release (which led to local radio coverage and a newspaper advert), a notice on my university's website, posters in shops, takeaways and community centres, e-mailed adverts to students at many UK universities, and finally through family

members, friends, neighbours and academic colleagues (Silverman, 2010; Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981).

Snowball samples have their theoretical downsides in that the makeup of such samples can be biased to the researcher's (or key informants', from whom the snowball is initiated) own characteristics, such as their gender, age and/or racial identity (Seale, 1999). Consequently, they can arguably lead to a very selective, restricted and unrepresentative group of participants (ibid.; Merkens, 2004). However, it can be difficult to reach one's research sample (Ambert *et al.*, 1995), especially when studying a delicate topic (Murphy and Dingwall, 2003). Additionally, in my case, I was trying to access a relatively inaccessible, hidden population of people (Pope, van Royen and Baker, 2002). It was a challenge to locate people according to the criteria I had laid out (that they should have experienced a name-change between one they themselves considered to be foreign and one they felt was stereotypically white British sounding).

Consequently, despite the afore-mentioned obvious limitations of snowball/opportunity samples in terms of generalisability and representativeness (Seale, 1999; Merkens, 2004), I used this sampling method for practical reasons. I felt it would be very unlikely that my participants could be accessed via random sampling, and I managed to gain access to several persons who matched my necessary criteria through personal links and relationships, which then led to other interviews. These interviews then supplemented those I had managed to procure through the various means described above.

As Rapley (2004) describes, finding interviewees is a rather laborious process, for which one is often reliant upon friends and acquaintances at the beginning and subsequently upon connections provided by people one has interviewed. Indeed, most social research is about finding the medium between what would be ideal and what is realistically achievable, and thus there are many projects for which the topic area, access to potential participants and/or other constrictions placed upon the researcher play a major role in sampling choices (Ambert *et al.*, 1995; Bryman, 2004).

It is also pertinent to add here that my sample ended up being female-dominated, with only three male participants. This was unfortunate as it was my intention to interview as many men as possible. This reason was in part why I interviewed one male participant (Naze Richardson) who had not changed his surname. He had, though, had an interesting experience in relation to a perceived racial disjuncture between his first and second names (I discuss this further in Chapter Four).

However, it is still the case in the UK that the vast majority of people who change their surname are female (Wilson, 2009). Furthermore, as I mentioned above, the snowball sampling method can lead to discrepancies of gender (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981). Consequently, despite my best efforts (including a local radio advertisement and advertisements in the local newspaper and via UK-wide university e-mail lists), it was difficult to find male participants. This would though be a significant line of enquiry to pursue in future research, as according to the *UK Deed Poll* company (2010), there is a trend for some migrants to Anglicise their names upon moving to the UK, and this presumably applies to both genders. In addition, the potential ways in which societal pressures upon women to change their surname upon marriage meet with their consideration of the surname itself, would be an intriguing path for further research (see Hamilton, Geist and Powell, 2011). This is especially interesting in light of the above suggestion that most people who change their names are female. For instance, as I will discuss in Chapter Five, some of my female participants who had a maiden name that was understood to be white British had a fear of being discriminated against (and/or of their children being discriminated against) because of taking a surname considered to be foreign. How are traditional female and child naming norms affected in this vein? In sum, I acknowledge that the sample group is skewed in terms of gender, despite my best efforts for it not to be, and I do believe it would be of interest to conduct further research in which male perspectives, on the issues this project has been concerned with, are more dominant.

My sample included people aged between 22 and 70, which is quite a wide age range. They lived in various parts of England and Scotland, and they held a

variety of jobs, including: academic/lecturer, accountant, teacher, nurse and chemist assistant. Some were students, others were retired or stay at home mothers. 27 participants described themselves as white British/European; the other five participants described themselves as either Black British/African, Chinese, or mixed-race/other. The participants' descriptions of the surnames that they bore/had borne are indicated in Appendix One. There was some variation between the participants' descriptions of those surnames they deemed not to be white British: for example, Zimbabwean, Armenian, Persian, Hebrew, Nigerian, Romanian and Polish. 19 of the participants considered themselves to be middle-class; eight as working class; and the rest described themselves as a combination between the two, with one exception who described herself as upper-middle-class. Furthermore, 17 participants held a bachelors degree or higher (three of these had a PhD). I provide further information about the sample in Appendix One.

It would be an important extension of my research to interview more people who do not consider themselves white in the future (as I will discuss in Chapter Seven). The same point also applies to other intersections of identity, such as social class and disability, which were beyond the scope of this project, but would be of equal interest for further research. Intersectionality mirrors the actuality of lived experience, in considering more than one aspect of a person's identity. An individual is affected environmentally and socially by their presumed gender, social class etcetera as well as their race (Shields, 2008; Davis, 2008).

I do not use an intersectional approach in this thesis and focus only on race in relation to names, as it has been such an under-researched topic and there was consequently more than enough new data to fill my thesis. As I discussed earlier, previous research has only focussed on name discrimination in relation to employment, leaving the other aspects of a person's experience in relation to bearing a name deemed foreign in the UK context, unexplored. I consequently felt that to explicitly concentrate on other aspects of the participants' identities (aside from race) would be beyond the scope of this project. However, I would like to take more of an intersectional approach in the future, now that I have an existing research base to

work with regarding the topic of names and race. Taking an intersectional approach to research would seemingly be a way in which further discoveries about a topic could be found: the ways in which unrealised links may be noticed, and their complexity may be appreciated, from the observation of different intersections (Davis, 2008). It would consequently be important to build the project from the beginning in this vein by looking for an appropriate sample and in designing the research questions accordingly (McCall, 2005).

Interviews

As a consequence of choosing a qualitative method/approach, I have explored the subjective points of view of my sample (one of the key features of qualitative research; Bryman, 1988). A main marker of quality research concerns how suitable the methods are for answering the research questions (Murphy and Dingwall, 2003). The following quotation eloquently describes the purpose and value of interviewing, which I decided was the method best suited to the nature of my research questions:

> We cannot observe feelings, thoughts and intentions…We cannot observe how people have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world – we have to ask people questions about these things. (Patton, 1980:196, in Murphy and Dingwall, 2003:93).

As such, I feel that interviews have allowed me to assess my own preconceptions of the topic in relation to the experiences of my participants (Murphy and Dingwall, 2003). Nonetheless, I acknowledge that interviews are a socially and contextually based construction (as all talk is) (Denzin, 2001; Murphy and Dingwall, 2003; Dingwall, 1997; Järvinen, 2000). Interviews provide a researcher with the participant's account of a particular recollection or thought (Rapley, 2004) in accordance with the particular temporal and spatial contexts in which they took place. Indeed, when describing an experience, a person is interpreting their thoughts into words: it was

lived before it was spoken of (Portelli, 1997), and words in themselves are living beings that impact upon people in many ways (Denzin, 2001).

Moreover, it may well be that some interviewees are more concerned about trying to present themselves in a positive light, as rational and ethical people, to the interviewer, than with answering the questions according to how they actually feel (Murphy and Dingwall, 2003). This point also highlights the ambivalent nature of much of our thinking. For example, it may well have been the case that my participants had not considered the topics about which I questioned them prior to being interviewed (ibid.). In addition, self-expression is an intricate coming together of many factors. Järvinen (2000) argues that interviewees may to differing extents tell their stories according to social and/or cultural scripts.

Nevertheless, no method can elicit ultimate truth because there is none: 'there is no real world…There are only interpretations and their performances' (Denzin, 2001:30; also Alexander, 2004). Thus all methods are imperfect. I identify with the way in which the interview method is based upon the notion that words and talk are crucial to our understanding of our social world (Mason, 2002). Furthermore, interviewing has been a valuable way of gaining an insight into how my participants have weighed up their own thoughts and experiences in relation to my topic of research (Murphy and Dingwall, 2003; DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). This may be why interviewing is now the dominant way that sociologists try to investigate research issues (Rapley, 2004; Denzin, 2001).

In light of the under-researched status of my research topic (as I described in Chapter One), I felt that a semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix Two) would help to elicit the responses of my participants in a way that was not too close-ended. I wanted the interviewees to be able to lead the discussion off in ways that they felt were important, and touch upon issues that I may not have considered or thought of (Longhurst, 2010). Consequently I tried to take a flexible approach during the interviews so as to encourage the participants to tell me what they wanted to say, and qualitative interviews are known for allowing such flexibility (Miller, 1995; Murphy and Dingwall, 2003; Longhurst, 2010; Hopf, 2004).

Furthermore, I did not want to conduct completely unstructured interviews as my time, resources, and allowed scope for the project were limited (Miller, 1995). Consequently, I felt that semi-structured interviews would give participants room to lead the conversation in ways they felt best (Creswell, 2007; Hopf, 2004:), and that this would hopefully prevent the themes from being too limited (Creswell, 2007). At the same time, I hoped the interviews would provide me with enough structure to compare and contrast my interviewees' data (Longhurst, 2010) within the said limited time-frame and with restricted resources (Miller, 1995).

In actuality I felt that the interview schedule worked well, perhaps because I had conducted a pilot interview, which enabled me to re-work and refine some questions (Sampson, 2004; Maxwell, 2005). Most participants were extensive in their responses to initial questions, which often meant that I did not need to ask all of the questions in my schedule. Moreover, many participants were prepared to elaborate on their points freely and to introduce new points at will. In one particular interview (with Dawn Legris) the participant took the lead right from the beginning of the interview and was happy to discuss how her name-change had impacted upon her with very little questioning.

Of the 31 oral interviews[4], eleven interviews were over an hour in length (the longest being 148 minutes long), with the rest lasting between half an hour and an hour, apart from three of the interviews, which were shorter than half an hour (see Appendix One). One of these interviews (with Mandy Mundra) lasted only eleven minutes, as the participant gave brief, almost yes/no, answers. As a result of this disappointing brevity (arguably semi-structured interviews tend to be at least 30 minutes long (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006), I altered my interview schedule slightly after this interview (ibid.). This was in order to ensure the questions were sufficiently open-ended. Subsequently I only had two other interviews that were quite short. Like Mandy Mundra's interview, I conducted these interviews at the beginning of

[4] I conducted 31 oral interviews and had one written response to my semi-structured interview questions.

my project. I think perhaps as I became more experienced and relaxed in my interview approach during the course of the project, this encouraged the participants to be more open and expansive in their disclosures (Corbin and Morse, 2003).

Furthermore, I felt that a few participants seemed to have a pre-conceived suspicion that I sought to prove a pre-held hypothesis that names are discriminated against. They accordingly repeatedly stated that they did not think they could be of much help to me. I maintained that I was interested in their experiences of their name-change in a holistic sense: that if they had not noticed any difference or if they had only had positive experiences then this would also be of significance. This assurance seemed to help the participants (aside from Mandy Mundra) to settle into the interviews and provide me with an overview of their experiences.

I felt that some of the interviewees had not thought about their (sur)names particularly extensively prior to the interview, with some of them saying words to that effect. This did not seem to especially matter though, as the interview gave them the opportunity to do so, and a few participants e-mailed me with further thoughts after their interview. Nonetheless, it is an indication of the constructed nature of interviews, as I discussed earlier, in that they illicit data/ideas that participants perhaps would not otherwise have thought of. This is arguably also an ethical issue, in that my project has in a sense intruded upon my participants' lives, and possibly left some of them with (perhaps long-term) thoughts and concerns, that they had not held prior to the interview (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004). As Corbin and Morse (2003:346) note, 'no one can predict what will be said in the course of an interview, the feelings it will provoke, or any long-lasting effects'. Nonetheless, the literature appears to suggest that long-term harm to participants as a result of qualitative interviews is not a common phenomenon (ibid.). I will discuss other ethical issues later in this chapter.

I audio recorded all of the interviews using an unobtrusive digital recording device. The participants were asked for their permission to record them (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006) and they all agreed to this, which made the transcription of the interviews a much easier and more complete task than if I had had to rely on writing notes (Seidman, 2006; Longhurst, 2010). The recording went relatively

smoothly apart from on one occasion during the interview with Marion Stavridis, when my Dictaphone would not work as its memory was full. I did not at that stage know how to delete data from it, but I was able to use my mobile phone as a backup recording device (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). I transferred this data onto my password-protected computer after the interview and deleted it from my mobile phone for security purposes (ibid.). I then did likewise for the data on my recorder. The data were subsequently backed up to CD and kept in a locked filing cabinet at my university.

In addition, some interviewees lived too far away for me to realistically be able to travel to them, and some people did not wish to have a face-to-face meeting, for example because of child care issues (Sturges and Hanrahan, 2004). Accordingly, I conducted 13 interviews over the telephone or via Skype (without video picture feed). Again, all of these interviews were recorded via Dictaphone with the consent of the interviewee. These tended to feel different to the face-to-face interviews because I could not read the interviewees' body language, or know if they were pausing or had finished speaking (Miller, 1995; Sturges and Hanrahan, 2004).

Consequently, I found that I interrupted some participants before they had finished speaking or I had to ask them if they had more to say or if they had finished making a particular point. Nonetheless, some of these interviews seemed the most relaxed that I had had, perhaps because the participants (and I) felt more anonymous and could better concentrate on discussing the topic (Sturges and Hanrahan, 2004). I was also able to pick up on verbal/non-verbal cues such as sighs and hesitation (ibid.). Furthermore Sturges and Hanrahan (2004), assert that although there has been little research conducted on the differences between the use of telephone and face-to-face interviews in qualitative studies, their research suggests that there is little difference in the quality and quantity of data collected (also Miller, 1995). They also make the point that researchers should make use of modern technologies and consider using them in order to make research participation easier (Sturges and Hanrahan, 2004).

I held the face-to-face interviews (of which there were 18) in various locations in Nottingham. These included my university library in a private room (and other more public places in my university); cafes in Nottingham city centre and in a neighbouring town; a Nottingham sports centre; the work place of one participant in a neighbouring city; a business office also in a neighbouring town; and the homes of two participants. At all times my partner was informed of where I was and how long I expected the interviews to last. I had my mobile phone with me and rang him when I arrived and when I had finished (Paterson, Gregory and Thorne, 1999). I only went to the homes of people I had already met and knew to a certain extent, although they were not friends.

One issue encountered with the interviews in public places (particularly those in cafes) was the loud background noise, which made the transcription more difficult (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006; Hatch, 2002) than for those that were in private rooms, and in a few instances obscured a few words in a particular interview (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). Some literature suggests that interviewees can feel reluctant to disclose when other persons are present at the interview venue (Hartmann, 1995; Hatch, 2002). However, I did not perceive this to be the case with those participants I interviewed in public places. Perhaps there is also some anonymity to be found in a noisy environment where it seems unlikely that one will be overheard. As Hatch (2002) describes, interview venue choice is frequently a matter of chance and practicality. Often the researcher has to work within an environment, which lacks privacy or is noisy and thus may not appear perfect for an interview (ibid.). Ultimately, though, I felt that my interviews were successful, in that they were the source of some very rich data. Also, the fact that several participants (from both private and public situated interviews) lined up further interviews for me suggests that they had felt comfortable with the interview process.

Data Analysis

All of my data were derived from the audio recordings of my interviews, apart from one interview with Lars Hardy-Mathiesen, who preferred to type up his responses

to my interview questions because of a lack of confidence in speaking English (his second language). I analysed my data throughout the research process, in that I transcribed interviews whilst still conducting others (Grbich, 2007; Silverman, 2005). This was in line with the flexible approach I mentioned above: I could thereby have an idea of any emerging themes (Pope, van Royen and Baker, 2002) and alter my interview schedule slightly if I felt some topics should be discussed in more depth (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). For example, after the first five or so interviews, in conjunction with my supervisors, it was decided that I should try to ask more about my female participants' reason(s) for changing or not changing their surname upon marriage. This was in terms of trying to explore if there were any underlying feminist convictions. As it happens, this approach did not elicit much more information in this regard, but it is an instance of how I tried to be responsive to emerging data throughout my data collection period.

I transcribed all of the data myself, so as to facilitate my understanding of emerging themes (Seidman, 2006), and I thematically analysed them (Grbich, 2007). Thematic analysis can be described as a method for 'identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data' (Braun and Clarke, 2006:79), with a concentration on what the participants say rather than how they say it (Bryman, 2004). I therefore intensively read the transcripts individually (Schmidt, 2004) to find 'patterns of meaning and issues of potential interest' (Braun and Clarke, 2006:86). I consequently transferred the extracts of interest into Microsoft Word documents according to the topic of interest. I then began to find thematic linkages between them (Seidman, 2006; Okely, 1994), and eventually reduced these into main over-arching themes and sub-themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Thus I intended for the data to take precedence (ibid.). As explained earlier, I took an inductive approach (Pope, van Royen and Baker, 2002), so rather than using pre-emptive themes, I searched the data for the themes (Grbich, 2007; Seidman, 2006). Due to the same desire to inductively approach my data, I decided not to make use of software such as NVivo to aid the analysis, as I felt comfortable in manually sorting through the transcripts so that my familiarity with the data was excellent and I could feel confident in making

claims on the basis of my participants' words (Seidman, 2006). As Okely (1994) expresses, a researcher is ultimately responsible, rather than a computer, for finding emerging themes as well as for the thought and analysis necessary for conducting research.

My data analysis was founded upon the notion of a close reading of my transcripts and my own judgment of what the main themes are (Seidman, 2006; Okely, 1994). As Esterberg (2002:16) eloquently argues, good quality interpretive research is based upon the 'diagnoses' of the researcher, whereby the researcher must convincingly help to explain the 'symptoms' rather than trying to 'predict' them (also Okely, 1994). I discussed earlier the constructed nature of interviews, that they are created by the interviewee and interviewer and are affected by the particular time and place in which they are produced. It consequently follows that interpretive research in its entirety is also 'a social production' (Esterberg, 2002:16) because of the humanness of the researcher.

Moreover, researchers begin with the projected understandings, explanations and meanings conveyed by the interviewees but they then interpret them in conjunction with one another (Esterberg, 2002). This in a sense is a kind of fictional narrative, in that the researcher can never know the 'truth' of social processes but rather can only ever interpret and explain their understanding of them (ibid.). Thus a researcher using thematic analysis from a constructionist viewpoint – as I do – interprets and theorises the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006) according to their own frameworks of understanding, rather than describing the data as though they contain 'truths'. Nonetheless, the researcher's analyses cannot be considered total fiction in the sense that they are embedded within the data given by the participants, they are not the researcher's abstract invention (Esterberg, 2002).

An important part of such an approach is to be transparent about the methodological approach, data sampling and collection, which I have been. This is in order to give my 'readers a vicarious experience of "being there" with me, so that they can use their human judgment to assess the likelihood of the same processes applying to other settings which they know' (Seale, 1999:118). Moreover, although my

findings are not generalisable in the sense that my sample is not representative, there has been a growing argument that with qualitative research generalisability refers to how well the context of a study matches that of another study (Merkens, 2004; Schofield, 1994). Hence it is important for a researcher to provide detailed information about their study so that such judgements can be made (Schofield, 1994; Pyett, 2003). Subsequently, I have endeavoured to provide sufficiently detailed information about my methodology. I will also strive to provide enough quotations from the interviews to substantiate my arguments throughout the rest of the thesis (Ambert *et al.*, 1995; Williams, 2000; Braun and Clarke, 2006). Furthermore, I have attempted to rigorously question my assumptions and my analysis, which is what Cooper (2003:12) calls 'reflexive enquiry'. I have taken the view that reflexivity is not a set of rigid principles that should be adhered to, but is rather a lens through which a researcher consistently views their decisions and interactions (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004; Pyett, 2003). Equally, reflexivity should not be concerned with the researcher's 'self-serving credentialism', or be 'purely descriptive' (Alexander, 2004:138). It is thus a flexible and adaptive approach suited to the intricacy and the importance of ethical decision-making within social research (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004).

Being Reflexive about my Research Approach

Recently I bumped into an old acquaintance, who kindly asked me how I was getting on. I told him that I was doing a PhD and left it at that, but he wanted to know what it was in, so I replied 'Sociology', which from his body language I could tell was not sufficient information. I proceeded to give a brief overview of my topic: 'It's about names and discrimination, so if you have a particular name does this affect your life chances and so on'. He smiled knowingly and said, 'Oh I see, that's interesting, it's about people who have a Scottish name and how they get treated in England etcetera'. 'Um, no', I said, 'it's actually about race and names, so for example if you have an African name…'. My acquaintance replied, 'Oh right…how did you become interested in *that*?'. I must confess I was a little taken aback: instead of him showing an interest, it seemed that the legitimacy of my choice of research was questionable.

Perhaps, though, it is not so surprising that he was startled about my interest in race and racism: after all, I would categorise myself as white, and my acquaintance's assumption was seemingly that I am not raced, and that he himself (as a white person) is also not raced (as I discussed in Chapter Two). But really the history behind my deep interest in racism does not matter: I firmly (and proudly) believe that my topic is worthy of interest in its own right, it does not need any caveats, any excuses made about it. Reflexivity has become synonymous with qualitative research (Finlay, 2002), and it has been my intent to be holistically reflective about my project and my part in that. However, it is also important not to overly reflect upon my position: reflexivity is not about telling my own story (Yip, 2008) at the expense of the stories of those whom the project is about (Portelli, 1997; Alexander, 2004). Consequently, being reflexive about my own position as a researcher is concerned not so much with telling my own story but with using my background in order to explain how it connects with the project generally (Cooper, 2003). Also, to discuss how it relates specifically to the methodology choices (ibid.), as has already been discussed above, and to the research participants (Finlay, 2002), as I will consider in this section.

I will, consequently, now give a *brief* overview of the origins of my research interest. Upon leaving school I worked for a UK-based company whose function was to aid students from Africa with their applications to universities in the UK and consequently with the visa process. Whilst working there I had a lot of interaction with Africans from many different countries, and often had to pronounce African names both over the telephone and in person. This led to me taking an interest in names and whether or not British people (such as myself) tend to make an effort in pronouncing names that could be considered not typically British sounding.

Furthermore, being in a 'mixed-race' relationship has meant my partner and I have had to work through countless discriminatory obstacles together. In addition, we have both perceived that his West-African surname has been a particular target of such discrimination. I started to perceive that there is perhaps a symbolism behind

names, that a person's name goes far beyond them as an individual and that people seem to make assumptions based upon it.

As implied earlier with the admission that I have been affected by the political nature of some feminist research, when I began this project I did so with the conviction that I was against any racism/discrimination, which I may or may not discover. I was therefore somewhat uncomfortable during one particular interview when my participant Ailsa Czerniak expressed what I felt were some rather parochial, discriminatory views. As Bott (2010) explained in relation to her own research project, it is difficult to develop a rapport in such circumstances. Indeed, it is as one talks to a participant that one invariably begins to 'identify/disidentify [with them], like/dislike, familiarize/otherize [them]' (ibid.:160). Rapport-building tends to be considered an important part of gaining the interviewee's trust and hence their willingness to disclose during the interview (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006; Dickson-Swift *et al.*, 2007; Corbin and Morse, 2003). I was however fortunate that it was only really in that one interview that I experienced particular feelings of dis-identification with, or dislike for, what a participant was saying. I did not challenge Ailsa's views. For example, when I asked her if she had encountered any discriminatory views in relation to her Polish married surname, she misinterpreted the question and felt it was related to whether she herself holds discriminatory views. I gently re-expressed my question.

On the other hand, 'unsuccessful' interviews can be helpful in the sense that they may make the researcher look at the research topic in a different light (Järvinen, 2000:388). For example, in Chapter Five I will discuss the way in which data such as that garnered from Ailsa's interview made me aware that some of my participants are complicit within racialised/racist thinking. It has, though, been quite difficult for me to write in a negative way about some of my participants as I feel grateful towards them that they agreed to take part in my project, without any obvious personal gain for themselves (Dickson-Swift *et al.*, 2007). However, I felt that regardless of how uncomfortable this may feel, it is integral that I should analyse in a free way, without inhibiting myself. As Pyett (2003) rightly states, it is the academic duty of the

researcher to subject our participants' submissions to scrutiny, in accordance with our own knowledge and understanding.

In a similar vein, I perceived that some participants (such as Ailsa Czerniak) perhaps felt comfortable in expressing anti-migrant/racist views because they felt that we shared a racial and national background (as Bott, 2010, describes) and that I would perhaps feel the same as them or would not object to such opinions. As a side point, I am uncertain whether or not those participants whom I interviewed over the telephone or via Skype (without video feed) were aware that I am 'white'. Nonetheless, they did have my name, which (according to the findings that I will present in this thesis) they would probably have interpreted as being white British. Also, if they had performed an internet search on my name, they would have seen my photograph on my university profile. Moreover, I did not notice any difference in how open these participants interacted with me in comparison to the face-to-face interviewees.

It does seem that if a researcher is deemed to have a comparable identity to their participant that this may aid the building up of trust and understanding between them, in that the participant may think that the researcher will especially understand their views and experiences (Yip, 2008). Presumably with those participants who identified as white British, and were all British born and raised, as am I, they would have felt a kind of affinity with me (Miller, 1995). However, to be an insider is not necessarily positive in that it can mean that some things are unsaid or unexplained by the participant because of assumed shared knowledge, or that some things are unnoticed/not interpreted by the researcher (ibid.; Yip, 2008; Ambert *et al.*, 1995; Twine, 2000). Furthermore, I do not think I was a 'complete insider or outsider' (Yip, 2008:6.4) – indeed, it is not possible to be so (ibid.; Twine, 2000). I shared the same gender as all but three participants (which in itself is important to acknowledge (Padfield and Procter, 1996). Also, if asked to identify myself by social class I would say middle-class, which (as I mentioned earlier) is the same identification as 19 of my participants. Furthermore, again despite the illogic nature of the race system (as I discussed in Chapter Two), I would say that I am white British, which is how all but five

of my participants identified themselves. However, arguably the key factor within the context of my research is that I had not experienced changing my surname as the vast majority of them had done. If I had conducted the interviews as a white person with a West-African surname perhaps my interest and, to some extent, my anti-racist views would have been self-evident. As it was, my connection to the research topic was not obvious and I think many participants were curious to know why I was conducting this particular project.

Consequently, prior to my interviews I was mindful about if I should disclose my personal circumstances to the participants. I felt that sometimes the participant may not seem to trust me or want to talk openly to me, and it may be valuable to acknowledge my circumstances as part of the rapport-building process (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006; Ambert *et al.*, 1995; Dickson-Swift *et al.*, 2007). On the other hand, I conceived that such a disclosure might take away the feeling of my being a stranger to them, which may thereby reduce their confidence in disclosing their feelings to me. That is, in the sense that some participants might feel I had an insight into their situation and was judging them. As Dickson-Swift *et al.* (2007) discuss, previous research has indicated that it is often the unfamiliarity of the researcher that encourages participants to disclose. I had also thought it might not be necessary to disclose my connection to the project, and may even be unhelpful to do so, as rather than talking about myself, my aim was primarily to hear their views (Ambert *et al.*, 1995). It is the case that such disclosures are difficult and challenging for both the researcher and the participant in terms of privacy issues, for example (Bott, 2010), and it is therefore the obligation of the researcher to dictate such a process (ibid.).

In actuality, I tended to let the participant take the lead (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). A few interviewees asked me what had led to my interest in the subject before the interview began and I told them about my partner etcetera. However, for most participants we held the interview without discussing my circumstances at all. It was then only at the end of the interview, if we had built up a good rapport, we would have an informal discussion once the recorder was turned off and I would often reveal more information about myself. Some participants treated the

interview as a more business-like process and did not ask me anything about myself and nor did they give any indication that they wanted to talk about my circumstances.

For a couple of participants, however, I think knowing about my relationship with a person originally from West-Africa helped them feel comfortable with discussing their experiences of racism with me. For example, my partner had helped to set up my interview with Kayla Brackenbury, so she was aware of my relationship before-hand. Consequently, I felt that Kayla talked in a particularly free manner with me, even at times using my relationship as a referent to her own during the interview. Nevertheless, largely I noticed little impact of my own background/identity in this context, and this also applied in relation to the gender issue. Maybe this was because none of the male participants had face-to-face interviews, or perhaps gender just did not have a significant impact in this regard.

With regards to my own political views on racism, this will – alongside my gender, presumed race, age, social class etcetera – have impacted upon the process of my research (Bott, 2010). This is simply because social – if not all – research is subjective (as I discussed earlier) and cannot be assessed in a detached manner by the researcher (Cooper, 2003). As Alexander (2004:147) asserts: 'No research on race and ethnicity is either accidental or apolitical in its inception, practice or dissemination, in its inclusions and exclusions, its invisibilities or its silences'. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge one's biases (Yip, 2008), or those of which one is aware, as this then increases the transparency of one's research and the belief that the reader can have in the quality of its findings (Murphy and Dingwall, 2003). In addition, as I mentioned above, I have tried to provide sufficient quotations from my interviews so that the reader can be confident that I have based my findings upon what was actually said by my participants.

Despite my attempts to demonstrate the reflexivity of my thinking, it is impossible to say if one has ever been reflexive enough (Murphy and Dingwall, 2003), and consequently it has been important for me to keep a notebook (ibid.) where I could write down my feelings throughout the project and be able to subsequently look

back upon the evolution of my thoughts and findings. My discussions with my supervisors have also been integral in this regard (ibid.).

Guillemin and Gillam (2004) argue that the link between reflexivity and ethics is not usually recognized and that understandings of reflexive thinking should include ethics. In agreement with this point I will now reflexively consider the ethical aspects of my research project.

Ethics

My project was conducted in accordance with the ethical procedures of my university's Sociology department (School of Sociology and Social Policy website - Code of Research Conduct, 2013) as is common practice (Silverman, 2010). Part of this process involved discussing ethical issues with my supervisors (ibid.) and completing an ethics checklist form. My department's ethics officer then assessed – on the basis of this form - if I had duly considered the potential ethical problems. The boxes I ticked in relation to the ethical risk for my project were all low-risk apart from one, which concerned the possibility of interviewing participants who have been the victims of discrimination/traumatic events.

I was aware that some of my interviewees may have had difficult experiences, which they could then potentially re-live in the course of their interview. As Murphy and Dingwall (2001) write, research respondents may feel anxious, stressed and/or guilty during their participation in the project. I aimed to be sensitive to such occurrences and to abide by my university's ethical guidelines. For example, I let my participants know that they could end the interview at any time. I also discussed this issue with my supervisors who were confident that I would handle the interviews sensitively. As it happens, no participant has requested for me not to use their data, nor did any interview finish prematurely. That is not to say that potentially distressing topics were not discussed, but I was careful not to push them to talk about issues that were particularly painful if they did not want to, and/or if they seemed distressed (Corbin and Morse, 2003; Silverman, 2010).

My project was consequently conducted in accordance with the ethical commitments I had made during the process of gaining ethical approval from my university. I also had completed several Masters-level modules about conducting sociological research (Cobin, 2003), and was also well aware of the ESRC's (2009) guidelines on ethical issues. I also familiarised myself with the ethical practice statement of the British Sociological Association (2002), which covers issues such as being aware of a potential difference in perceived power relations between researcher and participants; obtaining informed consent from my participants; ensuring participant confidentiality (as far as this is possible; Corbin and Morse, 2003); and making sure that participants are briefed and debriefed about my research and their rights to withdraw their data if they so wish. I also felt, however, that it was integral to imbibe an ethical spirit towards my research, above and beyond ethical guidelines (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004). I understood that a researcher's ethical responsibilities are intricate and multifaceted and cannot be achieved merely through referring to a catalogue of ethical regulations (Murphy and Dingwall, 2001). Thus I have tried to reflexively assess different issues and situations as and when they occurred within the practical stages of the research process (as considered at length by Guillemin and Gillam, 2004).

I verbally asked each participant for their consent before their interview (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006) and requested they filled out a participant consent form, which was either completed before or after the interview. For those participants who were interviewed over the phone, I e-mailed or posted the form to the participant along with the project information sheet. A few participants whom I had interviewed over the phone did not return the consent form, but all verbally agreed to the interview (which I recorded). Also all participants saw the project information sheet which contained details of the project including the confidentiality part. The information sheet invited the participant to contact me if they wanted further information. It also stated that if they had any concerns with the way I had handled the interview process they could contact my supervisors/university (contact details were provided). Indeed, for those interviewees who did not return the consent form I contacted them again by

e-mail to say that if they have any concerns they should let me know, or if they had changed their minds about me using their data they could choose to withdraw, but they did not indicate this was the case.

Furthermore, before each interview I discussed the project information sheet and asked the participant if they had any questions about the interview process. A few participants asked me to confirm my assurance of confidentiality and to check what the data would be used for, but very few participants asked any questions at all. Nonetheless, I was careful to verbally explain the main ethical issues I have mentioned above even after the participant had read the information sheet. This was because I felt it was important to try to prevent the participant from having a negative impression of research and to attempt to safeguard the participant from harm (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006), even when the participant appeared unconcerned about such issues (Murphy and Dingwall, 2001).

Several respondents requested that I should send them my thesis upon completion because they were interested to know what my other interviewees' experiences had been, and I am happy to do so in accordance with my university's proclamation that overall research findings should be made available to one's research participants (School of Sociology and Social Policy website - Research Ethics Checklist, 2013). However, this also has potential ethical complications in that the participants may feel some distress when reading the findings and/or may be upset at the way(s) in which I have interpreted their words (Bryman, 2012).

As mentioned earlier, interviews are a social process (Alexander, 2004) and encapsulated within that is the researcher's interpretation of what the participant has said and how this fits into the researcher's own frameworks of understanding (Ambert *et al.*, 1995; Pyett, 2003). Furthermore, readers may then re-interpret the researcher's story in other ways (Gudmundsdotter, 1996). As Barthes (1977) said, the author is dead: once the participant proffers up their words they, to some extent, lose ownership of them in that they cannot control how they are understood and analysed. In itself, this may be difficult for my participants to accept, and they may indeed disagree with what I have written (Pyett, 2003; Bryman, 2012). As Cotterill (1992:604)

asserts, this responsibility as a researcher is a weighty one, and all the researcher can do is write their interpretations as 'honestly' as they can. This is what I have striven to do. Additionally, it would seem that this risk of emotional harm to the participant must be weighed against the more positive notion of letting the interviewees be privy to the overall findings of a project to which they have given a significant amount of time and effort to. I do not think, therefore, that it would be ethical to deny my participants the opportunity to read my thesis, and I will take the participants' lead by only sending it to those who have requested it.

In a similar vein, the issue of the power relationship between researcher and participant (Miller, 1995) is something that I considered before, and throughout, my project. It has often been assumed that the participant holds less power in the research relationship than the researcher (Cotterill, 1992; Finlay, 2002). Whilst this may often be the case, it is not always so (Corbin and Morse, 2003; Hammersley, 2000). For example, during my project I interviewed several people who either had the same academic qualifications as myself, or better. Whilst qualifications do not necessarily mitigate power discrepancies on their own, they could be said to play a part.

Furthermore, as a researcher in my mid-twenties, I found that the vast majority of participants were much older than me, consequently there was often an (unsaid) implication that these interviewees had a greater level of life experience than myself. In addition, interviewees are able to assert power over the research process by withholding their thoughts in relation to questions etcetera (Cotterill, 1992; Hammersley, 2000). I felt this may have been the case in some interviews whereby the interviewee was guarded and reticent with their answers through the first half of the interview, but as time went on they would begin providing much more detailed, and personal, answers to my questions. Consequently, I did find the onus was upon myself to inspire the trust and confidence of the interviewee before they were prepared to freely disclose (Cotterill, 1992; Dickson-Swift *et al.*, 2007). Essentially the researcher regains the ultimate control over the research after the interview has ended and it is the researcher's interpretations, which stand (Cotterill, 1992).

Nevertheless, there did seem to be changes in the power balance throughout the research process (see Finlay, 2002).

Meanwhile, the confidentiality part of my agreement with my participants had an interesting side-effect. Usually in a project it is fairly straightforward to re-name one's participants. However, in my research the names of my interviewees were important in themselves in the sense of them being a window to understanding the participants' experiences and to being able to convey these in my thesis. In many respects, my participants' experiences appeared to be unique to their particular names and how they were taken by the people they came into contact with. For example, as I will explore in Chapter Four, Linda Abadjian (white British, Armenian married surname) explained how even though her married surname originates from a majority-white country, her surname is often perceived in the UK to be Asian sounding. I felt it was necessary to try to find pseudonym names for my participants, which would give the readers of my thesis an insight into the real names in question. It would be odd to have a thesis about names without being able to know what the names themselves read/sound like. Edwards and Caballero conducted a (2008) study on how parents of mixed racial, ethnic and/or religious backgrounds chose their children's names in the UK context. They briefly wrote about having found it difficult to create pseudonym names that would be adequate representations of their participants' actual names (ibid.). They also mentioned the importance of finding pseudonyms that would convey the 'intention and effect' of the actual names chosen, in light of trying to closely portray the parents' considerations around name choice to the reader (ibid.).

Similarly, I set out upon the rather onerous task of creating new (first and second, sometimes even middle) names for my participants. I did this by considering how the interviewee had identified their names' understood origins. For the names that participants had labelled as white British I was able to, out of my own familiarity with such a construct, find substitute names from my memory or by searching lists of names on the internet (e.g. *British Surnames* website, 2012). For the other names (e.g. Polish, Zimbabwean) I also searched appropriate (Polish, Zimbabwean etcetera)

lists of names on the internet. This task was difficult as I was naturally drawn to those names that sounded similar to the participants' real names, and had to go through my list of pseudonyms periodically to check that they were not too similar to the originals so as to ensure the confidentiality/anonymity of my participants was being respected.

The process of name anonymisation consequently took many hours and was a difficult test of my judgement. It has also, rather ironically, involved me within a process that I would usually avoid. That is, in writing a thesis on the racialised constructions of names, I have found myself adhering to such a system in choosing pseudonym names for my participants. Thus I openly admit to doing this, but I hope as you read this thesis you will appreciate that I have not done it out of a desire to propagate such racial thinking, but in order to illustrate my participants' experiences, which – I will be argue - appear to challenge such racial constructs.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have reflexively described the ways in which I have conducted my project. I began this with an acknowledgment of my epistemological standpoint, and went on to explain my chosen method, participant sample, and data analysis. Furthermore, I have described my own assumed racial and social background, and how this may have impacted upon my interactions with the participants. I have also acknowledged my anti-racist stance and that this will inevitably have affected my research project and analyses. This discussion included my ethical reflections about changing the participants' names to ensure confidentiality, which could be interpreted as practicing the racialisation of names myself. In doing all of the above, I hope that I have been open enough to earn my reader's trust that I have conducted this project and analysed the data in as honest a way as possible (Pyett, 2003).

CHAPTER FOUR: THE EMBODIED AND DISEMBODIED RACIALISATION OF (SUR)NAMES

Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the (dis)embodied impacts of racialised names. Many of my name-changer participants indicated that their names have been used in order to racially categorise them. That is, that their names have been understood as racial and consequently racialised. Although names are a disembodied identity in that they are used frequently without the name-bearer being bodily present, they also have embodied repercussions: they are used as a signifier of the body. This has been indicated by Correspondence Test research (Wood *et al.*, 2009), which provides evidence of racism based purely upon name in the initial stages of job applications (see Chapter Two). For such research, however, the connection between the racialised name and the racialised body was taken for granted and not investigated in its own right. In this chapter, however, I look more at how the name and body interact, the processes of name racialisation, and the everyday social, familial, educational – as well as employment – impacts that my participants indicated such racialisation has had for them.

I will assert in this chapter that in the event of a name being racialised, the name-changer to whom the name belongs is simultaneously racialised in an embodied sense. Name is considered to be a significant indicator of race, and thus of expected (raced) bodily appearance: it is used as a tool of racialisation. As I discussed in Chapter Two, despite the fact that race does not have any scientific validity (Ratcliffe, 2004), literature suggests that it is still conceptually based in the body (Clarke, 2012; Solomos: 2001), whereby bodily difference is aligned with internal characteristics including intelligence (St Louis, 2005). Seemingly these differences are themselves seen to be perpetually held within notions of white supremacy and black defectiveness (Alexander and Knowles, 2005). My data support this theory. Moreover, despite the common usage of racial categories (e.g. white, black) in everyday discourse, which could imply racialisation is a harmless, common-sense/natural

process (Ahmad and Sheldon, 1994), many of my participants' experiences testify that such a system can have serious impacts on the lives of those racialised as Other/foreign. Indeed, I will argue that the racialisation of name apparently aids the functioning of the system of whiteness in categorising people according to all readily available identities. Those of skin colour and accent have been acknowledged as being part of this racialisation process (for example, Herring, Keith and Horton, 2004; Klonoff and Landrine, 2000; Fernando, 1984; Hing, 2002; Singh and Dooley, 2006), but name has not – I will argue that it should be considered alongside them.

My participants reveal internal structures of whiteness by illuminating this racial categorisation through name via their own personal experiences. I will present in this chapter the participants' stories, which indicate that for them there has been a (sometimes extreme) level of disparity about how people had expected them to look and/or sound in relation to their name.

Racialised Disparity Between (Sur)names and Body

When I asked Jenny Legris (white British; Mauritian married surname[5]) if her married surname had impacted upon her own identity, she responded as follows.

> Yes, yes, I think it has…most definitely…I think it's perception isn't it?...it's external perception, I think for me, obviously knowing my husband, knowing his life, knowing Mauritius, nothing changed for me…I just moved to a different name, because…I'd married the man I loved…and I didn't really think then about how it looked to the outside world…but I think…as the years have gone on…it was a big deal, and other people…saw me as Mrs Legris and that was…an essentially white British person with an unusual sounding surname…and…I think, it has impacted, it's just always been that element of

[5] I have changed all names. Race (e.g. white/black), nationality (i.e. where participant was born and raised) and description of name origin (e.g. Mauritian) were all self-identified by the respective participant. (I will discuss the apparent internalisation of such name origin constructions in Chapter Six). If no name description is given, this indicates that the name was identified by the participant as white British (this is for stylistic convenience as all of the participants had borne a name they identified as white British).

> surprise…and then…sometimes when I've said to people, "Well I'm married to a Mauritian" - "Oh okay", but…there's always been that, "Can you justify why your name is Legris when you're so British looking?".

Interestingly this suggests Jenny's initial lack of awareness that her name-change would be perceived in a racial sense by others. She had apparently normalised the name within her own consciousness before getting married, she was wrapped up in her love for her husband and did not consider the importance of name as a tool of racialisation. As Jenny said, 'there was once or twice where I thought, "Oh gosh"…perhaps to other people it clearly is a different sounding surname'. Nevertheless, as mentioned in Jenny's quote above, it appears that she felt there was an expectation on the part of others that she should explain how her married surname related to her. Why, when she looks white British and sounds British does she have a name that is not so? Indeed, she said that people would:

> …almost be sort of willing me to say something about my name, without wanting to ask me…so I…just usually pre-empted that and said, "Oh yes, I'm married to a Mauritian", or, some people have actually said straight up, "That's an unusual sounding surname"…but sort of with the inference being, "What are you doing with a surname like that?".

Jenny made it clear that in her mind the reason for this questioning was concerned with her appearance:

> I mean perhaps even if I had a tan…or perhaps I was olivey skinned, I think…they wouldn't bat an eyelid, they just can't sometimes see what I'm doing almost with…a foreign sounding name…I mean…if I was a darker colour…and I don't mean necessarily Mauritian or anything, but I think it's just the name and me being so very fair, so very typically, you know, blonde hair…but…it's not the kind of name you expect me to come out with…when I think people expect me to say…"Oh yes, Mrs Smith" or whatever.

These anecdotes clearly imply that, for Jenny, her name has been racialised as foreign/non-white, and that this has become apparent to her because of others'

reactions to her own embodied white identity. Those she meets seemingly show surprise that she should bear the name of Legris. Jenny provided an example of where she asserted that she did not 'quite fit the name', which was when she went to a hospital for ante-natal check-ups and the staff members 'would just look up at you when you say your name…just, "Oh Legris…And you're a White British person"…there was definitely surprise on people's faces when I said my name'.

Jenny indicated that she did not perceive this surprise, however, whenever her husband was present with her, and she asserted that her husband and children have not experienced any reaction to their surname, because their looks have apparently 'matched' it more than hers: 'we'd say, "Oh it's Mr and Mrs Legris" and he often being with me didn't have…any impact…and when he's on his own as Mr Legris, it's absolutely fine. And the same for Edward and George [her sons] because they're slightly darker, but for me it's like the name didn't quite match'. She explained that her husband had 'Asian colouring so…the name is like, "Oh well there you go, yes"', whereas because she is 'typically British looking…it's like almost…"What are you doing with a name like Legris?"'. Indeed, she went on to say, 'If I was…a few shades darker, I don't think there'd be a problem, because…people always automatically…associate…an unusual sounding name with…a foreigner…perhaps not…British…so I think…it's just been my colouring has added to the intrigue of my name'. Even more explicitly: 'People see a white British person and they expect a white British name…and I do think that's…largely across the board'.

Linda Abadjian (white British; Armenian married surname) also asserted that she had had issues with her name being racialised as Other. Even though her married surname is Armenian, Linda said that people often think it is from India or Pakistan, because of the way it is spelt. This in itself 'annoyed' her, although she did not explain why. Potentially this could be because - in terms of the hierarchy of names that will be discussed further in Chapter Six - she perceives an Armenian name to be higher ranked than an Asian one. Although she did not deem the name to be white British, she indicated that it is a name associated with whiteness.

Linda did say, though, that 'the next thing which has always annoyed me [is]...when they see me face to face they don't associate me with that name...I can tell by the expression on their face…and I have stood there if they say the name, I could be stood in front of them, and they will look over my shoulder and repeat the name again…'. Linda spoke of how this used to irritate her, but now she 'expect[s] it' and thinks 'it makes them look silly, when they realise that I'm the person they're shouting for…say in a waiting room, stood right in front of them…'. Linda stated that she had never had any such issues with her maiden name: when she was in a waiting room with that name, 'they would look at me when I got up off my chair and say, "Well this is the person that I've shouted for"…I think they expect a white skinned person'.

Moreover, Linda talked of still having recently experienced 'that slight look of surprise that you can catch in someone's eyes', when people have expected 'a certain person and what they get is a surprise to them, because I'm blonde and blue eyed'. Indeed, Linda spoke of being an 'optimist' and that she has always thought: 'there's so many foreign sounding names now that…all [people will] be interested in is, "How do you spell that?"...but, no, you, still see it, on their faces…actually you're stood right next to them and they still don't think you're the person that they've shouted for, so…maybe I'm too much of an optimist, I don't know!'. This example in itself suggests the continuing prevalence of racialisation.

Suzanne Balester (white British; formerly had a Moroccan married surname) also noted similar reactions from people regarding when she answered to her former married name, which was Moroccan:

> I think people were…quite surprised when they realised I was English……I'm thinking about when I was pregnant more than anything, and you got a lot of appointments…and they'd be like, "Hmm…", and I knew…"Oh it's my turn"…and then when they call…your name in a group of women and I'd stand up they'd be like [pulls face]…they used to look at me quizzically, I think….

Furthermore, Sally Hasani (white British; Albanian married surname) reported comparable responses in relation to her Albanian surname and appearance: 'I think some people do react because I don't look like they would expect me to be…if I'm

going for an appointment somewhere and they just see my name, they come and call for me in the waiting room…"Mrs Hasani" and I'm like, "Me!" [chuckles], and I do…feel there's a look of surprise as if to say, "Ooh that's not who I expected!".

Indeed, Amy Jammeh (white British; Gambian married surname) asserted that: 'there is a level of interest I think in names that aren't usual, and I suspect that's…about me being standing in front of them and looking white British in terms of ethnic origin and having a name that doesn't match that appearance'. Rebecca Travers (white British; had a Polish surname during first marriage), suggested that her Polish surname also impacted upon people's expectations of her physical appearance:

> Rebecca: I went to a building society, because I needed to get a loan to buy a house, so I'd got an appointment, and they said…the person I needed to see…was upstairs, and she came down and then the woman I'd originally seen was like, "Oh that's her over there" and, "Oh that wasn't what I was expecting" kind of thing. I was like, "Well what…were you expecting?"
> Emily: Yeah…was that before she'd spoken to you? Just on what you looked like?
> Rebecca: Yeah, yeah…[chuckles] So she'd obviously got some pre-conceived idea of what a Polish woman would look like…I don't know, a bag of cabbages, or…I don't know what…I can't imagine….

Furthermore, Anna Aladeoja (white British; Nigerian married surname) described how she started a new job and one of her colleagues said to her some time later that, '"Oh we thought you were…we'd imagined a black lady coming…When we heard your name". Kayla Brackenbury (black British; born and raised in Zimbabwe) who had originally had a Zimbabwean surname (Manyika), spoke about being called up for more job interviews with her married surname, because: 'your name is not ringing bells to say, "this person…she's [not white]"'. Kayla said that when she subsequently arrived for the interviews, 'people are shocked to see…that you're black and you've got this English name'.

Charlotte Leary (black British; born and raised in Zimbabwe) who had given up her Zimbabwean surname (Manyika, like her sister, Kayla Brackenbury) upon

marriage, explained how since the name change she has been asked more frequently about where she is *from*, as with her maiden name she felt it was 'probably obvious that I'm from Zimbabwe', but with her 'Irish' married name, 'they will start asking me like, "Oh where are you from?"' or 'they just say, "Oh it's an Irish surname"…that's their way of asking me [chuckles]…they saw an African with an Irish surname, they just want to know how [she got the name]'. Her surname has apparently been related, in these incidents, to an expected racialised body image, which Charlotte was not understood to meet. Kayla Brackenbury described how, upon seeing her, people were 'confused' about her married surname: '"Where's this from? Are you from Jamaica?" or something like that because…most Jamaicans are black but they've got English names and English second names...'. Thus, upon seeing her appearance in relation to her name, some people have seemingly tried to rationalise how someone deemed black could have a white British name. Apparently Kayla's name goes against the racialised system of naming and consequently must be explained.

Additionally, Charlotte Leary provided a couple of examples of times where her name had apparently led to false impressions of her appearance:

> …sometimes…when I used to register with some of these agencies, I would probably e-mail my CV and maybe I'll just speak to them briefly on the phone and then I'll go to the place for the interview or something, and they'll…probably be expecting someone white to come in, they'll see me and they'll be like, "Oh, oh!"…they'll be shocked, but…you sort of know, "Oh they were actually expecting someone white, because of my name…they won't say it to your face but you can still tell that they've got a bit of a shock….

A further illustration Charlotte gave related to when she was at work and her car had broken down. She explained that she had called a car breakdown company to come and fix it and had given them her name. She went on to say that when the mechanic arrived she walked down to the reception to meet him and had to:

> …repeat…twice…"Are you waiting for Charlotte Leary?" and he just said "Yes", I said, "This is me" and he probably just thought, "Oh it's maybe somebody else", but like "Oh it's me, I'm here" and it took him a while to…say

> "Okay!"…But he was probably expecting somebody else, that's what I thought…maybe he was expecting somebody else …he was quite shocked!.

These anecdotes seemingly indicate a belief in the fixity of race and what names signify. The mechanic, for instance, was apparently unaware of the possibility that the person to whom that name belonged could be black in appearance. Charlotte has here described how she had to be persistent in telling the mechanic that she was the person he was looking for, and that consequently he was forced to break out of his racialised expectations.

Sophie Clarke (white British), whose maiden name (Madaffari) came from her Italian-born father, outlined that this surname was often taken to be Polish. Subsequently she explained how she felt people had expectations of someone petite with dark hair and olive skin, whereas Sophie described herself as blond and blue eyed. She asserted that her married name 'is probably what I look like…very British looking, blond…I do fit into the stereotype'. For Sophie, to stereotype what someone would look like based on their name was something quite normal that most people do, herself included (see Chapter Five for further discussion about this topic). When I asked if she believes that there is discrimination based on name, she described how 'when you see a name on a list you make a judgement…it might not even be good or bad, it might just be what they're going to look like…but you automatically think something when you see a name…so yeah, I think people do make judgements and I don't think it's necessarily a good thing'. She explained that she had had a negative experience of walking into a room and not meeting people's expectations of what she would look like: 'someone at university actually said they were disappointed because they thought I'd walk in and be like a dark beauty'. For her, this was 'not very nice…[when] people voice it or show you their disappointment for whatever reason'.

In addition, when I asked Jenny Legris whether or not she thought there was name discrimination in the UK, she said that she felt there is 'quite a lot' of meaning in a name, that at some schools where she had taught, 'if it's been a little black person, "Oh yeah, that's right, that's your surname, because you're that colour", do you know what I mean? As I say, not in any particularly horrible way' – in other words, the black

pupil's name is black so this matches the racialised system of naming. A person is apparently signified by what they are called, and thereby the cog of whiteness powers on, by fitting people into the boxes to which they are assigned and according them privilege or not (Dyer, 1999; see Chapter Two).

Jenny said that she did not perceive the surprise she has encountered in relation to the disjuncture between her own bodily appearance and her name to be racist. She expressed her belief that 'colour discrimination' was not prevalent anymore, 'well certainly in the world I've mixed in', and that, as such, if she had been 'Asian coloured, nobody would bat an eyelid' about her name. However, I do not think Jenny's argument that her experiences do not equate to racist thinking holds up to scrutiny. For people to think that someone should embody a particular racial identity in order to carry a certain racialised name means that this distinction is seen to be significant and to have purpose. As I discussed in Chapter Two, people are seemingly placed into categories in accordance with the structures of whiteness so as to differentiate and subsequently to discriminate against, or assign privilege to, them (Ginsberg, 1996).

Moreover, Nicola Zheung (white British; Chinese married surname) said that she has often been to the doctors and given her surname, spelt it out and then been told that her surname could not be found on the system. Nicola said that when she asked the administrators how they had spelt it, they repeated her name back either as 'Z-H-U-N-G' or as 'Y-O-U-N-G': 'quite often people substitute Zheung for an English sounding name…just because I think that's what they're expecting to hear. But I think we do stereotype a lot on what people look like, we assume what we're going to hear back…So basically it's around that'. Nicola's description is intriguing in that she has apparently said her correct surname and even spelt it, but another name has been invented in order to match her perceived embodied race. Marion Stamatis (white British; Greek married surname) also described how the children she has taught have often called her:

> Stav-a-vridis or Steve-ridis, lots of them made that mistake year after year so I think it is a pattern…the way that the English language works, that they're

> trying in the same way over and over to twist it into something English…But I never took that as racist, I always took it as fun really…with the children anyway, because to me it was a bit like Lego…you'd be moving the parts about, "How can we make this sound English?"…"We'll add an [E]", and that seemed quite honest…I think most people generally speaking are quite honest…they're surprised and they express that, but in an honest way....

Marion explained that such Anglicisation has been committed by adults as well, and that she would normally correct people who say 'Steve-ridis'. The apparent Anglicisation of these participants' names is reminiscent of the enforced name-changing, which I discussed in Chapter One: that historically officials often Anglicised migrants' names and thereby tried to neutralise their foreignness (Weekley, 1928).

The participants' anecdotes that I have presented in this chapter indicate that when they are perceived to be of a different embodied race to that which their name is seen to represent, this has caused surprise and misunderstanding in their everyday social encounters. It has even seemingly prompted attempts to correct their surname in order to match their embodied race (i.e. Nicola's and Marion's experiences of Anglicisation). All of these examples thus far indicate a disruption to the expected norm that (sur)names should equate to embodied race. That is, to the anticipated understanding that one's bodily appearance should match one's name (as has been previously argued by research such as Wood *et al.*'s (2009) study, which equated name to race in order to investigate racial discrimination in the UK job market; see Chapter Two). My participants' (sur)names have apparently been understood in a racialised way.

Some of the interviewees also related their children's experiences, which seemed to be connected to the relationship of the racially embodied appearance of the child and the child's name. Victoria Ravanbaksh (white British; Persian married surname), for example, who had given her children a Persian first name, an 'English' middle name and a Persian surname, spoke of how her daughter had '…had to cope with people thinking "what nationality is she…with that name?". And having to listen…when it's been read out in front of a group of people and everybody's like, "Who's that then, who's that?"'. For Victoria, this confusion appears to have derived

from her children's appearance not necessarily matching people's expectations of what someone with Persian names should look like: 'if they [her children] go out in the [summer] sun it [their skin tone] gets darker, and then people would sort of see where their name came from…but in the winter, they would look at them and wonder whether they were English or, there'd be a lot of confusion…[about] where they came from.' Victoria compares this to her own experience that 'people will look at me and they wouldn't associate that name with me at all' because she is white. Again, one can conceive that name is heavily associated here with embodied appearance. Within the racially categorising structures of whiteness, a person's name appears to be equated to who they are, to their race. As Victoria illustrated, if a person has a dark skin tone, this explains why they have a foreign name. This is the common-sense reasoning of racial categorisation that whiteness has seemingly promoted.

The same notion of puzzlement about the child's racial origins in relation to their name and appearance, seems to be borne out also in Suzanne Balester's (white British; formerly bore a Moroccan surname) interview. She asserted that her son (who has a Moroccan surname and first name, the latter of which Suzanne had shortened in order to appear 'English') has been questioned 'about where his name comes from and what's his ethnicity and things like that…'. In other words, it seems that to have a name, which apparently is not viewed as normal or usual (i.e. white British) in the UK context, is not something that goes without comment. As I discussed in Chapter Two, it seems that foreignness tends to be constructed as obvious, and whiteness as invisible (Dyer, 1999). Indeed, the following description by Linda Abadjian (white British; Armenian married surname) of her daughter's experience at primary school is a powerful example of how much some people apparently rely on (sur)names as a means of drawing up embodied, racialised, images. It is seemingly when the person in question does not fit the expected stereotype that such processes become most apparent.

Linda's children were given her husband's Armenian surname, along with 'Christian' first names, which Linda stated were common in both the UK and Armenia: '…the only thing that was foreign sounding was their surname'. What makes the

situation particularly interesting is that Linda said she felt that the Armenian surname had Asian-sounding associations, or that it was often taken by others to be an Asian name. Linda stated:

> Linda: [My daughter] would come home as a young child and tell me things…I can remember one [day], that…they were eating at lunch time and a child said, "Well your…daddy's got brown skin" – which he hasn't actually – but that's what they said to her, "He's got brown skin" and I thought, "Well obviously they've associated brown skin with the name"…and that wasn't a comment coming I don't think from some four, five year old, I think that was discussed in the household…The parents hadn't met us as parents, and just automatically assumed that he…had black or brown skin…
> Emily: But…your children…are they quite white in appearance?
> Linda: Yes, they are, yes
> Emily: So it's a bit strange…It's just literally from the name…
> Linda: She has blonde hair, they've all got blue eyes, yeah…
> Emily: That is very odd then that the parents would say that to their children…
> Linda: Well I think…what's happened is, maybe their child went home and mentioned my daughter's…full name, and they automatically made an association due to that…
> Emily: Mm…yeah that makes sense…was that something that concerned you then, or?
> Linda: It did concern me at the time…she wasn't upset about it, but I thought, "Are we going to have this throughout her school life and is it going to get worse?"…But that was a long time ago…I mean she's 27 now, but I do remember…that incident …
> Emily: …were there any other as they got older then…
> Linda: No, as they got older, no…maybe because they'd seen…myself and my husband, picking them up from school, maybe that made a difference….

This passage quite clearly implies an association between name and expected racial appearance. What is also interesting is Linda's reported concern that this kind of act of mistaken racial identity would continue throughout her children's schooling. As her daughter had not apparently been upset by the incident, it would seem that Linda's apprehension was that somehow this disparity between name and racial appearance - that is, to be thought of as Asian rather than white British - may have been detrimental for her children. Indeed, existing research suggests a big disparity between the life

chances of white Britons and their racial minority counterparts (e.g. The Runnymede Trust Report, 2012:9; EHRC, 2010; Ramesh, 2010; see Chapter Two).

The stories I have provided in this section have buttressed existing theory, which suggests that race is still conceptually based in the body (Clarke, 2012; Solomos, 2001), rather than in the cultural notions that have been asserted in common UK rhetoric (Solomos and Back, 2000; Brah, Hickman and Mac an Ghaill, 1999; see Chapters One and Two). Thus it would seem that despite the scientific refutation of the idea of biological race (Ratcliffe, 2004), this has not dismissed the everyday importance of the body in founding notions of difference and Otherness. I have asserted that name is used as a tool through which this embodied racialisation is practiced (as revealed by the disruption of this process in terms of the participant not bearing the expected name according to their embodied racial identification). In the following section, I suggest that accent is also used alongside name and body in the processes of racialisation.

Racialised Disparity Between (Sur)names and Accent

Some name-changers mentioned that it was not just their bodily appearance but also their accent, which was understood not to match their anticipated racial category by others. Marion Stamatis (white British; Greek married surname) noted the 'surprise' that had often accompanied her appearance in relation to her Greek married name. When I asked why she felt people were surprised, she replied: 'I suppose because they…think I'm obviously English…I think I've got a fairly working class accent…I think people read me as that and then to come out with a foreign sounding name…it contradicts the obvious…and I probably don't look foreign…so people are not expecting that really'.

Additionally, Stephanie AlAsadi (white British; Kuwaiti married surname) indicated that her maiden name had made it 'clear to people that I'm British'. However, after taking her Kuwaiti/Arabic surname she stated that when attending appointments at places like the bank, 'they have different expectations of…who I'm going to be…they think I'm foreign for example but I'm not, I'm still British, but they don't know

that…They kind of don't know until I speak to them…and they hear my accent'. Furthermore, Victoria Ravanbaksh (white British; Persian/Iranian married surname) spoke of her perception that some people who have telephoned her have been expecting someone with a foreign accent, and that when they have spoken to her, they have thought: '"Oh it's an English person, oh well that's fine then – how did you get a name like that?"…that's what they come out with, and you think, "yeah, 'cause you thought I couldn't speak English", and you can, it's not said, but there's a prejudice against it, I'm sure there is'.

It is interesting to note that the racialisation of the person and the name has seemed to happen in two directions. That is, when the participant gave their surname in the course of an encounter after they were already bodily present (as with Marion), and when they have given their name in a disembodied sense and arrived into the social interaction afterwards (as with Stephanie and Victoria). In both situations, the participant has still been understood as being - in body and in accent – racially oppositional to the racialised understanding of their surname.

Likewise, Marianne Watson (Asian; born and raised in the Philippines), who had had a Chinese surname (Wong) before marriage, but a white British first name, spoke of experiences she had encountered at work over the telephone. '...[P]eople at work start saying, "Can I speak to Mrs Watson?" and when they speak to you, they're like "Oh" and they realise that you're not [chuckles] *actually* Watson…I got people say that before, "You sound…Exotic" or something, "Asian", or something like that…'. Thus, the implication is that Marianne may have a white British surname but that it is not her real name, it is not reflective of who she really *is* in a racialised sense.

Marianne also mentioned how for her job she has had to ring up colleagues within the same building. She described situations where the colleague asked her at the end of the conversation about whom they should contact in the future. Marianne explained that she gave own name as the contact person, and the colleague then asked who that person was, with Marianne replying, '"It's me! You're speaking to this person"', and the colleague responded, '"Oh, oh I didn't expect this!"'. Marianne then said, '"Oh okay…I marry and I change my name, that's all"'. She explained that this

has not happened so much since people in the building have got to know of her. Nonetheless she described how she experiences times where because of her married surname: 'people hear me speaking or see when they meet this person and somebody walk up from the door [chuckles] that is not actually what they expect…I think that they would just think it's a normal, white skinned…Westerner English person'. In Marianne's case, then, it appears that her accent has raised expectations on behalf of the converser about what her name would be. Her name is expected to be indicative of her race: they expected to hear an Asian name, not Watson, a white British one.

Additionally, Kayla Brackenbury (black British; Zimbabwean born and raised, Zimbabwean maiden name) explained that people will question her about her race in 'a nice way…"Oh, your name is Brackenbury, that sounds lovely, but your accent, which part of London are you from, or…are you from up north of something?' – just trying to…find out where exactly are you from'. For Kayla this was a pretence, as 'they obviously know their own dialects here', and so she felt that they knew she was not originally *from* the UK, but that this is often how people ask her, in order to 'get to exactly…the bottom of the question, where they want to ask you where are you from originally'. Kayla said that such questioning has proceeded for a while on occasion, as she has wanted to toy with people's prejudices: 'Sometimes I just say to [the questioners] "originally I'm from Retford", they say, "oh no, originally", I say, "I'm from London"' etcetera, rather than tell them her country of birth. All of this questioning seemingly derives from a conception that Kayla should not have a white British surname, that it does not match her racial identity.

As I mentioned in Chapter Two, existing theory has suggested that accent plays a role in racialisation processes (Hing, 2002; Singh and Dooley, 2006). The participants' stories that I have presented in this section support this point. They also seemingly extend this theory by suggesting that name is used alongside accent (and skin colour) as a means of conceiving an individual's racial identity. I will discuss the interaction between these three apparent racial markers later on in this chapter.

Racialised Understanding of Inner Characteristics Based Upon (Sur)names

Some name-changers explained that their experiences went beyond people just being surprised that their surname was not (apparently) representative of their embodied race. Their encounters suggest that (sur)names are often deemed to indicate an individual's inner characteristics, knowledge or social habits/beliefs, as has been argued in existing theory regarding embodied race (Alexander and Knowles, 2005:10; St Louis, 2005:121; Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo, 2005:9). Nicola Zheung (white British; Chinese married name) stated, 'I do think there's a sense of…if you have a particular name I expect you to be or behave a particular way…And when blatantly you aren't Chinese…and I'm expecting you to be Chinese, I think that people find that a bit strange, whether they realise it or not…'. Rebecca Travers (white British; had a Polish surname during first marriage) also described an 'embarrassing' episode:

> I'd go into some area in an official capacity like when we [her and her husband] split up and I had to go and get…the mortgage put into just my name, and I'd still got…that [Polish] surname, and…the people in the building society were kind of sniggering about it and I…found that a bit peculiar really and…I think they expected me to not be able to speak English, so they were kind of saying things as if I didn't understand [chuckles]….

This above description implies that the people in question had directly equated Rebecca's surname to an embodied inability to speak English. Similarly, Abigail Koslacz (white British; Polish married surname) indicated that when she worked at her previous school, where she had borne both her former surname and subsequently her married name, she did not have any issues with her surname. However, since moving school, where she had only been known by her married surname, she said that:

> …there was this assumption at one point, when we had a Polish girl at school who arrived with very little English, that I would teach her some [chuckles]…[Polish] and work with her, and I did actually get her a GCSE in Polish but I only know twelve or maybe 20 words in Polish, I don't speak Polish! And that was quite funny, suddenly I had this talent that I didn't know about, just because I'd inherited a Polish surname…so, yeah, I do think

> people have this expectation that I'm maybe a little bit more exotic than I was….

It seems quite a leap, to go from hearing someone's surname to using that surname as a gauge for their abilities in a different language. Indeed, Abigail described how colleagues had been asking her where her surname was from, and that they had been able to remember it was Polish. Thus it is surprising that they apparently could not remember that she herself was not Polish. By changing her surname Abigail had seemingly moved from her position of undoubted white Britishness, when using her maiden name, into one of a certain Otherness, whereby she would magically have imbibed the ability to speak anOther language as a consequence of taking a foreign surname.

Jenny Legris (white British; Mauritian married surname) also said that her married surname meant that 'people have maybe…seen me as…sort of part of this Mauritian life really…it has had an impact socially'. This intriguingly implies that the racialisation of her name as Asian/Other has led to a change in expectations regarding her social identity. She has somehow aligned herself with Mauritianness by having a Mauritian surname and the (disembodied) identity of name has been equated to an internal (embodied) identity. This supports and extends the notion I described in Chapter Two that skin colour is equated to internal characteristics of the self (St Louis, 2005; Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo, 2005). The name – as a presumed marker of skin colour – is assumed to further represent the name bearer's inner qualities.

Jamal Hassan Hamdaoui (mixed-race British) had used an Anglicised alias throughout his childhood, but had subsequently decided to revert back to using his Arabic official name as an adult. He spoke of how he had booked a bed and breakfast in a remote part of Scotland and when he turned up the lady exclaimed, '"Ohhh!"' and indicated that, 'She [had] expected one of those Iraqi terrorists!' because of his name. He also said that, as a musician, sometimes when he performed a gig people had expected it to be, 'some sort of ethnic music...because of my name!', rather than the jazz set that he did perform. In addition, Jamal described how he had seen 'people puzzling over [his name]...especially the elderly', and he asserted his belief that 'at the

end of the day people are still conditioned enough to believe in their identity as being a, b or c...they still hold on to that'.

Jamal highlighted that such afore-mentioned incidents are perhaps representative of how when a person's name is written down, they have not defined themselves, but others are seemingly 'ascribing a certain definition to that name, before they've put it into context'. He pondered that this is something 'perhaps inevitable.....there's always going to be an ascription that's going to help reinforce people's individual sense of reality...And there's always going to be a projection of what people expect of a certain phenotype'. Indeed, he relayed how because of his name: 'a funny question I find myself being asked, is: "Do you like pork?", and it almost seems like, they're fishing…and it's like, you can just ask, "Are you a Muslim?" [chuckles] You don't have to do this walking on eggshells thing!'.

It seems that Jamal's physical appearance is not responsible for such comments/questions, as he described himself as Spanish looking, rather than having an appearance stereotypically related to predominantly Islamic countries, such as those in North Africa or Arabia. He also mentioned how when he has travelled abroad, South Americans and Israelis have often approached and spoken to him in Spanish/Hebrew, because of his appearance. Thus, to Jamal, his experiences have been 'purely because [people] know the name is Arabic, they're making that connection, Arab and Islam'. Jamal said that such incidents as presented above, have caused him to feel 'paranoid' about things such as handing in his work at university:

> …in first year for example my...Philosophy class was hundreds of people strong, so you're very much anonymous apart from this name so you hand in your work and you do sometimes think that…they are going to look at this and think of it as perhaps a different…point put from a different culture.

In other words, Jamal indicated that his name is being interpreted in terms of stereotypical notions of his inner beliefs and qualities. Moreover, he expressed that he himself did not think of names as being consequential, but others, more than he would perhaps like to admit, do.

> I think that it's going to be harder to break down the borders of expectations for people with a Muslim name in this country, I think there's enough misinformation kicking [around] about what it is to be Arab, what it is to be a Muslim, what it is to be...this, that and the next...that people do sort of automatically maybe think that he's a Muslim and he beats up his wife or...something ridiculous…and…yeah, I definitely would say that there's an issue in the UK with pre-conceptions attached to names, that is without a doubt.

For Jamal, such pre-conceptions about his name have been almost inevitably 'misleading', as he described himself as not being a Muslim (furthermore, the religious background of his father - from whom his surname came - is Catholic). Yet according to Jamal, 'there's definitely an ascription of Islam to [his] name...and I guess when people see me, you know, I've got tattoos and I'm [chuckles] whatever I am!' Thus, he felt their alleged pre-conception of him as a Muslim had been 'quickly quenched'. Consequently, the preconceptions associated with Jamal's name, in terms of his inner (religious) beliefs and race, are seemingly in some way rebuffed by his embodied appearance and accent.

Meanwhile Naze Edgerley (mixed-race British) had not changed his surname, but I included him in the sample because he provided an interesting example of the relationship between having a first name, which is commonly perceived as not being white British (even though it is an English place-name), and a surname, which is. Naze said that people have argued with him about where his first name originates from and have asserted that his first name is not 'English' but 'Arabic'. He talked about how this upsets him: 'it annoys me…it's like they're saying I'm not English…because of my name…it just winds me up. I can understand people saying, "Ah it doesn't sound English", but when they're saying, "Oh no it's not English, you're wrong", it's like "Okay…"'.

There is also the suggestion that Naze's appearance had influenced such claims. Naze had a Nigerian grandfather and described himself as lightly tanned (he defined all of his other family members as white). Thus Naze said that his appearance

in combination with his first name meant ‘a lot of people’ have thought he is ‘Asian or North African, Egyptian, Algerian’. What is more, he spoke of how people have often asked him, ‘“Are you Asian?”’, to which he replied:

> “No, my granddad was from Africa”…[and] that…changes their perspective…because now they’re talking to an African, not an Asian…and…an African is not a Muslim, most people find, even though my granddad himself was actually Muslim…so…in some people’s minds, it’s like, “Oh right, okay, that’s alright then”.

This is interesting in that it suggests those people, because of Naze’s name and appearance, had wanted to establish his race and especially his religious beliefs/background. It also implies that people have often openly attempted to racially categorise Naze, to tick the box of what he is or is not. To discover that his name was not Islamic apparently indicated to his conversers that Naze himself was not of the Islamic faith. Thereby his name was directly equated to his inner belief system.

Moreover, Suzanne Balester (white British; formally held a Moroccan married surname) conveyed how she ‘had one very big negative experience’ in relation to her name, which happened when she was pregnant, and went for her first scan at the hospital.

> I’d decided that I wanted to know the sex of the baby…I was there and my husband was there, and the midwife…was doing the scan, “Here’s the baby, here’s the photograph” and so on, and I said, “Actually, I’d like to know what sex the baby is” and she sort of hesitated and said, “Well…we don’t do that”, so I said, “Well other people get the sex of their babies” and…I said, “Well what, what’s the problem?”. I said, “A friend of mine has just found out the sex of her baby”. She said, “Oh no, we don’t, we don’t give out the sex, she must be at a different hospital”…I’m not naïve, I knew the reason for that…was obviously the ethnicity and the degree of boys are more important than females…But I definitely felt that that was a real discriminatory issue…and they never told me…and I asked a few times…the only inkling that I got that I was actually having a boy, was probably about a month before he was born, and I got this new midwife who was a coloured lady…and she was listening to the heartbeat and I said to her, “Oh I’ve heard that you can tell what sex

> the…baby is by the heartbeat", so she said, "Oh yeah they're different, a boy's heartbeat is different to a girl's", so I said, "Well can you tell what I'm having then?", so she said, 'Well, what, what do you actually want?'…I said, "Well I'd like a boy", and she said, "Well I don't think you'll be disappointed", you know and, she was telling me but…there was still a bit of hesitancy. I didn't believe it 'til he was born obviously, but I think it was the biggest thing that's ever got to me…this negativity around what they would consider possibly Asian people, the Muslim background and so on of…getting rid of girls, basically, so not telling what the sex is…Really bizarre.

Suzanne stated that the fact her husband (of North African appearance) was present with her the first time had contributed to the nurses acting in this manner, but that it was also about her surname. She said that she was really upset about this treatment and saw it as discriminatory. In essence, Suzanne's reported experience suggests that her surname had been racially categorised as Islamic, and that stereotyped views had accordingly surfaced regarding the beliefs that Suzanne would consequently hold regarding the supremacy of male children and potentially a desire to abort female children.

The quotations I have presented in this section have supported the theory that there is an equivalence made between embodied skin colour and internal abilities, and its tendency to be conceptualised in terms of white superiority and black lowliness (Alexander and Knowles, 2005), or - more specifically - there is the implication of Christianity (perceived as the religion of white British people) being conceived as superior to Islam (viewed as the religion of the Other, of non-white Britishness). For example, with regard to the equation of an Arabic name to terrorism, or to a desire to abort female children. These can be seen as examples of the effects of politically motivated Othering of Muslims that is prevalent in the UK currently (Alexander, 2002b, 2004; Alexander, Edwards and Temple, 2007; Però, 2013:6), as I discussed in Chapter One. Consequently, bearing a name that is racialised as Other apparently led to fixed notions not only of what my participants looked or sounded like but also of what their knowledge, abilities, beliefs and/or identifications might be.

Foreign Surnames Equated to Participant's Embodied Racial Identity Rather than to Marital Name-Change

Similarly to the previous section, several of the white name-changers stated that their foreign surname had often been taken to be indicative of their embodied race, notwithstanding the fact that they used the title of *Mrs*. This is despite the prevalent practice (over 90%) of women taking their husband's name upon marriage in the UK (Wilson, 2009). The question was raised by a few participants that if someone is married, should it be automatically assumed that their surname is their maiden name and thus apparently indicative of their embodied race? Anna Aladeoja (white British; Nigerian married surname) asserted that her surname 'easily identifies me as married to a Nigerian…when I meet especially Nigerians'. However, the example she used to support this claim was related to being at the train station ticket booth, where the person serving was Nigerian: 'he…looks at my season ticket name and like looked up at me, really confused, and then looked back and then looked up and then I said, "Oh, I'm married to a Yoruba"'. Thus, Anna apparently had to explicitly state here that she had taken the surname through marriage.

Furthermore, Natalie Mustapić (white British; Croatian married surname), spoke of how she initially started work as a lecturer before she had the title of *Doctor*, and she was thus known as *Mrs* Mustapić. Nonetheless, she said that she was still often assumed to be Eastern European herself, despite her assertions that she does not look as though she were from this region. Consequently Natalie asserted that these assumptions were made 'simply' because of her name: 'in terms of…looking at me, people would automatically assume that…I was…white Anglo-Saxon'. Also, Natalie relayed how she has been complimented several times on her 'good English' by her students, which is an indication of the ascription of Otherness to foreign surnames. It also, though, indicates that her title of Mrs was not enough for the surname to be considered an adornment. It was instead seemingly essentialised as being symbolic of her own racial identity – so much so, that her asserted white British appearance and British accent were ignored because of her surname. This, to some extent, goes against Ahmed's (1998) point, as I presented in Chapter Two, that white

people can use foreignness merely as an adornment through tanning, without it affecting their understood racial identity. It appears that because Natalie's married name is associated with whiteness (even though it is not British whiteness), it is not deemed to be specifically in opposition to her embodied racial identity.

Nonetheless, Nicola Zheung (white British; Chinese married surname) argued that her name had affected how people conceived her racial identity: 'for a lot of…people it causes them some confusion…I find that people expect me to look Chinese'. She explained that she does not look 'traditionally Chinese', but suggested that her 'slight astigmatism' may have prompted people to think she is 'half Chinese'. However, Nicola said that before she got married, she had 'a standard English name', and that nobody had: 'ever really noticed my surname before, or has questioned my ethnicity before…', which would imply that her appearance had little to do with conceptions of her as Chinese. Nicola asserted that 'It's like they're trying to find a reason why I've got the surname, other than just being married…', and stated that:

> I would have thought it [name through marriage] would be the first thing you'd think if you've got the name Mrs Zheung and…you don't look Chinese, in the stereotypical way, because it is quite a dominant set of characteristics, you normally have some very black hair and brown eyes and…and obviously…a slightly darker skin tone as well…so that always surprises me.

In addition, Rose Urzica (white British) said that one of the most common questions she had been asked in relation to her Romanian married surname was, '"How did you end up with that name?"'. She stated that she found this to be:

> …the most irritating one, because I would have thought that one was clear and obvious, that the simplest way I could acquire that name was marry someone with that name, who happens to come from a country where that name comes from, but they don't seem to rumble that, and I have to…say to them, "Well, my husband's name", "Ahhh!" And I think, "Well it's not rocket science really is it", but obviously and clearly for some people it is.

Rose said this questioning had occurred even when the people have known that she had Mrs in front of her name, and consequently is also a sign of the seemingly common, racialised assumptions made on the basis of one's (sur)name. The disembodied label becomes the embodied categorisation.

In this section I have further empirically buttressed the existing theoretical notion that conceptions of difference still appear to be located in racialised notions of the body, as I stated earlier. Names seem to be essentialised as having racialised meaning in the body - therefore the biological, rather than cultural, sense of race is still propagated, as I suggested in Chapters One and Two (e.g. Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo, 2005; Herrnstein and Murray, 1996).

Extreme Reactions Towards a Disjuncture of Racialised (Sur)names and Body

I discussed in Chapter Two the panic that the conception of racial (embodied) passing provoked amongst white North Americans despite there being no real evidence of how extensive (or not) such a practice was (Ginsberg, 1996). Similarly, my participants' experiences suggest that to interfere with the usual name racialisation process can cause quite extreme reactions, which in turn highlight the importance of the process of name racialisation within national understandings of race and whiteness. I suggested above that the concepts of whiteness and racism are all about categorising people in order to determine who will access privilege within a nation and who will not. Thus it seems inevitable that confusing this system will draw strong reactions. It appears that race is conceptualised and discussed as though it were irrefutable and natural, despite its inconsistent and unscientific basis (Ratcliffe, 2004), as will be demonstrated in the following examples.

Nicola Zheung (white British; Chinese married surname), described how although she 'quite like[s] having [her married surname]', She spoke of having 'had a few weird experiences':

> …people say, "I'm really sorry to have to ask, but are you actually Chinese?"…or, "Are you actually English?" because they're not quite sure…One occurrence a few months after I started [a job]…my boss, I

> remember her saying to me, I don't know how we got on the topic, but she said after my interview they had a discussion about whether or not I was actually Chinese, because they couldn't tell, which I find a very strange thing to say, because I've got green eyes…and brown hair.

This experience suggests that Nicola's name was initially considered to be a description of her embodied racial identity. She expressed her amazement that the panel should have been deliberating about her name/race following her interview – 'not my interview performance but "Is she Chinese?". So it makes me think there's something in people that they have to know, before they can get past that really…I got the job anyway so obviously…it wasn't a problem for them, but…I do find it curious…'. Nicola said that she found out about this conversation a few months after she had started working at the company through one of her work colleagues. She admitted to being 'surprised that they mentioned it', and she ponders why they did so:

> [I wonder] whether it was a bit of a confessional thing, you know, "Oh we weren't really sure", or...they felt like they ought to mention it, or whether, I don't know, perhaps it was a lesson to me maybe…that other people might question it…"it's not unreasonable that we did it", for example…But I'm not sure what the "reasonable" is [chuckles] there…But I mean I think it's very human the curiosity thing most of the time….

In addition, Nicola described another incident in relation to her name and perceived racial identity:

> Nicola: …I think the worst occasion…I was in a business meeting at work, it was myself and another agency…we were talking about partnership arrangements, and about 20…minutes into the conversation she started moving her head and sort of squinting at my face and…looking at me moving her head around…Eventually she said, "I'm really sorry to stop you, but I have to ask, "Are you Chinese?'" And…I said…"What has that got to do with our discussion?" and she said, "Oh well nothing, but I was just thinking about your name…" she said, "and I was looking at your eyes and I just can't tell". I said, "Really? What are you talking about? What has that got to do with absolutely anything at all?". I think it's probably the most rude thing I've encountered…

> Emily: …So…how did that make you feel when she…said that?
> Nicola: I was quite angry with her actually, because…I couldn't work out why it was so important to her…and…if you have to ask a question, why not wait until the end of the conversation, and why blatantly stare at somebody in an effort to determine…especially when you're on business as well, I mean it's…In a social situation someone would probably just come out and ask, but in a work situation you don't expect people to ask at all….

The questioner apparently 'had' to know Nicola's race, it was a matter of such importance that she was willing to step over the arguably usual social boundaries of a professional business relationship in order to question Nicola about her racial identity. This begs the question of what the questioner would do with such information. If Nicola was obviously racially foreign or Other in an embodied sense, her interlocutor perhaps would not have had such an overt reaction to her foreignness. They could instead have had a more subtle, discriminatory one, as for Nicola's converser race is apparently especially significant. This indicates the importance of my name-changers' experiences in revealing the processes of name racialisation. Alternatively, the desire to establish if Nicola has Chinese heritage could be due to the notion that to attempt to racially pass as white is in some way deceitful (Piper, 1996). That is, in North America, it has been suggested that when a person categorised as black attempts to racially pass as white, this is a dishonest means of them trying to gain access to white privileges (ibid.). This concept implies that the deceit should be uncovered so as to prevent a person deemed racially Other from claiming the privileges of whiteness that they are not conceived to be entitled to.

I asked Nicola how she thought her work colleagues perceived her married surname. She stated that she had thought that 'most people didn't notice it [her surname] anymore' until the following incident at her workplace.

> Nicola: I was in the office with my colleague and I was waiting for a trainer to arrive to do some work with us, and he came in and he saw my colleague first, so they…said hello and my colleague introduced me, gave my correct surname, and…the trainer said, "Ah this is you"…"It's okay"…"Don't worry"…"I've just met with your colleague in the lift and he told me you're not

Chinese", at which point I exploded! [chuckles]…I was so incredibly livid that somebody that I work with had thought that that was an important thing to tell a complete stranger, who was coming to meet with me for the first time…

Emily: Yeah…

Nicola: …I couldn't understand why that was of any relevance whatsoever, to any conversation I might be having with this man…

Emily: No…

Nicola: …and I told him that I was very unhappy that he had even considered saying such a thing to me…I made myself really clear on the subject, and then I went and spoke to the HR department, because I don't know who it was…

Emily: Right

Nicola: …I explained that I was incredibly unhappy that this had happened…I just wanted them to be aware of the fact that there's obviously people within our organisation who somehow think that your ethnicity is important enough to be divulging to strangers…

Emily: Yeah

Nicola: …on the basis of their own preconceptions even, never mind what the other person might be thinking, or not thinking…they obviously made the assumption that he was going to think I was Chinese and pre-empted his finding out that I wasn't, by telling him that I was English…So whether they thought that this would be a language problem that he was expecting, I don't know…but we'd been communicating in English for some time via e-mail, so I can't imagine why he would have thought language would be a problem…

As can be perceived from the dialogue above, Nicola still appeared upset about this incident in relation to her name, also saying that she 'can't just imagine why they ranked it as important enough in their internal consideration to say it…That's the…bit that I don't understand'.

That the visitor apparently felt free to say to Nicola that it was okay because he knew she was not Chinese, underlines the power of the idea of a racial hierarchy (Dyer, 1999; Ratcliffe, 2004). That is, seemingly the visitor did not need to hide the importance of Nicola's racial categorisation: for him it was of obvious significance. So much so, that he assumed Nicola would think likewise, as to be categorised as white is supposed to be the coveted identity (Dyer, 1999). Nicola stated that the aforementioned behaviour implied that 'because I'm English it won't bother me that someone says, "You're not Chinese"…'. As I highlighted previously in Chapter Two,

white supremacy is not separate from mainstream thinking, but grows from it and is maintained by it (Ferber, 1999). The pre-eminence of whiteness is presented as natural, unquestionable, common-sense (Macedo and Gounari, 2006).

As Nicola further described:

> …it's that total lack of understanding there about what ethnicity actually means…[To] some people, it's just a check box because they never thought about it, because they always check the number one box for white, the number one box for UK national, you know, the first option on all of them in the UK's…they meet that stereotype, so they've never thought…that there might be something good about being different maybe…I'm not sure that they think about it negatively that you can have a different surname to your ethnicity, but there's obviously something in them…that has warranted a comment, which suggests to me that they're not entirely comfortable with the idea of ethnicity generally….

The above quotation ties in with the notion of whiteness being invisible or unnoticed, as if somehow white people are not raced, are not part of the racial system (Dyer, 1999; see Chapter Two. To be raced is deemed within the system of whiteness, and arguably within the UK as a white majority nation, to be naturally inferior (ibid.). Additionally, it appeared that Nicola felt it was a personal betrayal that one of her colleagues should have such strong feelings about her racial identity that they would discuss it with somebody else behind her back. As Nicola said, 'there's obviously something in their mind that distinguishes my name from my ethnicity, and they felt the need to speak about it with a stranger…and that bothered me quite a lot…'.

Furthermore, Nicola asserted that the incident:

> …shows a certain ignorance…firstly of people…as beings with emotions and feelings and…the ability to think for themselves, and I think secondly because it shows a lack of understanding of what a person's name might mean to them, and how they identify with that and…how they might view themselves…It's almost as though you have to have them in a box, and if you think someone's got them in the wrong box, then you have to tell them, rather than allowing someone to make their own impression…you jumped in there and said that…And…you almost get a feeling of "do they think I'm

> masquerading as something I'm not, because my name and my face don't match?" I think those were my initial thoughts when I'd calmed down enough to not be quite so angry anymore….

This latter point is notable in that Nicola's experience suggests that her name had been essentialised as being Chinese, and the question was whether or not her embodied racial identity matched this, and if not, why not? Nicola described how there was often 'relief' for others if she confirmed that she fitted within the box people believed she did, 'because I'm not then…defying what they're expecting', 'there's definitely an element of reassurance that I fit in a particular box, or I don't', and the 'thing that makes me cross is the fact that that's something I don't have any control over'. Nicola appeared particularly upset that her racial categorisation was seemingly out of her hands, and this was also reflected in her remark that, 'One day maybe I'm going to reply to them in Cantonese and that really will show everybody!'. This quotation suggests that she hoped to be able to defy people's racial definition of her, and to express her pride in identifying with her husband's Chinese roots. For Nicola, then, to be categorised as white was not necessarily a positive, in contrast to the afore-mentioned notion that whiteness is the most coveted and desirable of racial identities (Dyer, 1999). For Nicola, Otherness and difference seemingly could be positive, and not inferior to whiteness, and she asserted that she should be the one to decide her identity, not others.

Also, Nicola said that in her experience many people had a 'need for confirmation…about where you fit…which box do I belong in', and that often 'they've formed an opinion and all they really want you to do is let them know if they're right or not really, they're not interested in any of the history that comes around that'. Indeed, Nicola referred to people looking either 'really smug and self-satisfied – "I didn't think you were [Chinese]", or "I'm really surprised because I thought you looked it"…pretty much that's where the conversation ends'. Thus the interest for these people apparently did not lie in the culture or the history behind the name, but purely in how the name related to Nicola's own appearance: was she white or was she Chinese?

Nothing else mattered. Nicola's reported experiences therefore suggest that racial categorisation is seen as important and meaningful – that race matters.

Rebecca Travers (white British; bore a Polish surname during first marriage) also suggested that she has been racially categorised. However, unlike Nicola Zheung, who was asked about her race, Rebecca described that she was sometimes automatically taken to be Polish, after she took a Polish surname upon marriage. When asked if she felt differently about herself when she changed her surname, she replied directly that, 'I didn't feel different, but the way people reacted to me was different'. She explained that she was concerned by:

> …the fact that people seemed to be judging me as a Polish person even though I wasn't, and even people that had known me before I had been married, so they knew I wasn't Polish, would make silly remarks about, "Oh, it's not as cold as when you were in Siberia"…or…"you must eat a lot of cabbage"…I don't know, just really peculiar, semi-racist remarks.

One example Rebecca gave of this kind of response to her name concerned a guess the baby competition at her workplace. Rebecca explained that she had worked there for seven years before she had married and so 'people knew [she] wasn't Polish'. However, Rebecca said that one of her colleagues, who was looking at the photographs, told her: '"Oh I was trying to find you by the one that looked like she was Polish"' and that she replied, '"You know I'm not Polish!" [chuckles]…I just thought that was a bit odd really…And what does a Polish baby look like anyway?'. Indeed, Rebecca stated that 'it's like people think you've changed your…ethnicity…rather than just…your name'.

Rebecca said she interpreted such behaviour as being a response to her having 'stepped away from the norm' by taking a Polish name, which had made her 'vulnerable' in some way: 'it's like a way that they could make fun of me almost, some people, and…it's kind of where you change something about you and people can pick up on that…'. When I pressed her on whether or not she thought her work colleagues genuinely had forgotten that she was not Polish, she replied, 'Possibly…You've got to remember it was a big office…people didn't really know each other that well, maybe

they just…I don't know! [chuckles] Maybe they thought I'd always been Polish all along! [both laugh] And now it's coming to light…'. There is a suggestion here that perhaps Rebecca's work colleagues believed they had uncovered her act of racial passing as white British (Piper, 1996; see Chapter Two). Either way, her experiences suggest that Rebecca's married surname certainly made a difference to how people perceived her racial identity. It is also an overt example of how name-changing apparently can be partnered with a change in how a person's body is viewed in a racial sense. Because Rebecca had changed her surname, her colleague had racialised expectations that Rebecca as a child would somehow look Polish.

Additionally, some participants talked about people having disbelieved them when they gave their surname. Linda Abadjian (white British; Armenian married surname), for example, spoke about when she had first changed her name she expected 'a look, that particular look, and it's hard to explain that particular look...you can see it in the person's eyes – "Is this her [bank] card?", for instance. They look at the name, "Is this her card...has she stolen this card?"'. Likewise, Kayla Brackenbury (black British; Zimbabwean born and raised; Zimbabwean maiden name) relayed her experiences of giving her married surname and seeing that people 'wouldn't believe me, they were looking at me funny'. She gave a prominent example of this was when she had ordered some clothing through a major clothing company and had requested her order to be delivered to her local store. Kayla described how when she went to collect it she gave her married surname, upon which the shop staff would not believe that she was the person to whom the name belonged. Kayla said that the shop staff asked her, '"Oh, have you got any form of ID?"' and that she replied, '"Oh I didn't bother to bring any, but…I can show you my [work] card, it's got Kayla Brackenbury on it"', but 'they were looking at me funny thinking, "You can't…where…is that Brackenbury from?"'.

Furthermore, Kayla asserted that it is 'tough to convince people that you're a genuine person and whatever documents you've got are genuine'. She explained that she was used to such occurrences now, and another instance was when she went to her doctors surgery and 'you could tell that my GP was expecting somebody else, and

said, “Are *you* Mrs Brackenbury?” and I said, “Yes, it’s me!” [laughs]’. Additionally, Kayla relayed how when she has been called in for interviews the interviewers seemed surprised she was not white. She said she felt that the interviewers were thinking, ‘“How can she be Brackenbury?”’ and that she needed to ‘prove’ herself and, ‘work a little bit harder to convince them…that…[she was] a genuine person, [she knew] what [she was] doing’, that she was up to the job.

In this section I have presented some quite extraordinary stories about the perceived disjuncture of racialised name and body. As I mentioned above, such occurrences would appear to have been elicited by the participants because of the continuing vital importance of race to the way in which difference is structured within British society. My name-changers have in their everyday lives seemingly disrupted the ways in which race is usually categorised, and have thus helped to shed light upon, and embarrass, such discriminatory processes. Indeed, in the following section I will now discuss the ways in which my participants’ individual collections of supposedly contrasting racial signifiers have apparently determined the extent of their access to the privileges associated with white British categorisation.

The Interaction of Accent, Body and (Sur)name in Determining Participants’ Access (or Not) to White British Privilege: their Inbetween Status.

Abigail Koslacz (white British; Polish married surname) said that children she taught at her school would often ask her if she was Polish because of her surname, even though she was born and raised in the UK. This suggests that her surname perhaps carried more weight than her accent in the way some people perceived her national and racial identity. It seems curious that a disembodied identity (name) should take precedence over an embodied one (such as accent), although this implies that even if a person sounds British, it does not mean they are *authentically* so (as I discussed in relation to the concept of racial passing in Chapter Two; Belluscio, 2006; Kennedy, 2004; Sollos, 1997). Whiteness, as a system of according privilege, appears to be very discriminating in its criteria for acceptance. Having any hint of Otherness, such as a foreign name, could be enough to deny a person access to the privileges of

British whiteness in the UK context. This ties in with the 'inbetween people' thesis I discussed in Chapter Two, whereby access to the categorisation of whiteness was apparently ever at the whim of those in power (Dyer, 1999; Clarke and Garner, 2009).

Abigail said she would reply to questions about her nationality by saying, '"No, I'm not Polish, I'm British, I'm married to somebody with a Polish surname"'. She suggested that many of the children believed the notion that 'Eastern Europeans came over to steal all the jobs from the white British people', and generally this has not bothered her, that people assume she is 'a Polish immigrant'. However, she asserted that she was concerned by some 'quite unfortunate events' she had encountered with her next-door neighbour. Abigail described that when she and her husband first rented their current house, some of their mail was accidentally delivered to their neighbour, whom Abigail said 'obviously' saw their surname. Abigail explained that the neighbour gave the mail to them, but that Abigail subsequently realised the neighbour now held 'a prejudice against [them]': 'because she believes that we are in some way Polish immigrants and we are getting this house probably paid for by the council'.

Abigail stated that she and her husband discovered this from their gardener, whom the neighbour had questioned about whether he was Polish and upon replying that he was not, the neighbour said, '"They are, aren't they"', meaning Abigail and her husband. Abigail said the gardener explained that they were not in fact Polish, were born in the UK and just had a Polish surname. However, Abigail explained that the neighbour 'complained about several things [they] had done to the council, like [they] haven't cut [their] garden back adequately….and things like that', which have 'caused a lot of problems for [them]' with the council. This is similar to the point I made above about the seemingly fickle nature of the ways in which a white British identity is ascribed. Apparently, the neighbour felt that Abigail and her husband's Polish surname excluded them from the privileged identity of white Britishness.

Furthermore, Rose Urzica (white; Romanian married surname) said in relation to the Romanian surname she took upon marriage that, 'the assumption is that I am not English, for sure'. She said, 'you can hear the surprise, or when people meet me,

having assumed that I was foreign, because they've had letters from me or we've arranged a meeting and I go to a meeting and they say, "Oh! I didn't realise you were…English"'. Rose stated that she does not believe she looks Eastern European, unlike her husband and son. Yet she asserted that people have still assumed that she was, until she spoke and her British accent collided with – and in this case, replaced – the assumptions that had been made on the basis of her surname.

The stories I have presented in this chapter thus far are interesting in that they suggest a person's name interacts with their accent and appearance (skin colour etcetera) in the system of racialisation, as I argued earlier. There may, though, be times when one aspect takes precedence over another, such as a disembodied name on a CV. The overarching point, however, is that each part of an individual's racialised identity seems to relate to the other. Nonetheless the interpretation of this interaction is perhaps difficult to predict. Sometimes a person's name appears to be enough to categorise them as foreign, as has been suggested via the copious examples I gave earlier. Yet at other times the racial category accorded to an individual on the basis of their name may be dispelled by their appearance or accent, as shown in Rose's example.

Furthermore, Rose said she has experienced 'an occasional spark of hostility' towards her because of her surname, including when she was asked where the name was from and she told them that it was Romanian. She explained that she believed this to have been 'tied up with the whole Eastern European migration thing', whereby Eastern Europeans have had negative press in the UK, as alluded to earlier in Abigail Koslacz's quotation. Rose said this 'hostility' had then tended to be followed by the surprise and comments such as, '"Oh I expected you to be foreign"' or '"Oh that's a strange name, where does that come from?"'. Thus, Rose's white Britishness (through her accent and skin colour) essentially seemed to carry her through the hostility. She bore the foreignness as a temporary ornamentation, which could be – and was – removed in the light of her true British whiteness underneath. This links with the notion of tanning, which I discussed in Chapter Two, whereby white people are apparently allowed to take on blackness through tanning in a superficial sense. They still remain

white underneath and their white privileges thereby remain intact, whereas black people are conceptualised as never being able to take on whiteness, as always being categorised as black and therefore as never escaping the negative connotations/consequences of such an ascription (Ahmed, 1998).

In a similar vein, Alice Melissinos (white British; Greek married surname) depicted an incident whereby she 'had some young workmen at one time who had a thing about Greek people, didn't like them and they sort of made comments about the surname – "You're not one of them though are you? You're…just married to one" and things like that'. This also indicates that the name does not always racially make a person into what it symbolises. A person might have a Greek surname, but they may still be perceived as white British and not foreign. This seems to depend on the specific circumstances, and the relationship between the name and the person's embodied identities (skin colour, accent etcetera).

Natalie Mustapić (white British; Croatian married surname) spoke of how she has noticed a difference in her treatment at airports since changing her surname.

> …suddenly…from having a name that is essentially seen as a white [chuckles] if not Anglo-Saxon, a white indigenous surname, to having one that is suddenly a foreign surname…say I'm going to an international conference, it is quite striking how me among others with foreign-sounding surnames, coincidentally seem more likely to be stopped and searched.

She described how 'from being somebody…who could have that sort of assumption that they might not have any problems at any border, to being somebody that sometimes might be chosen…for extra checks, is actually quite striking'. Moreover, her 'experiences of that shift were before 9/11', thus they cannot be explained away by increased security checks related to terrorist atrocities. Natalie said that this has made her 'conscious of how lucky' she is, that she does not have other 'defining features that made me more foreign to an official…we're all equal, but some people are more equal than others'. She stated that she has had this experience at UK borders as well as international ones, and it has made her more cognisant of times when she is:

> …negotiating with authority…it's just that extra question mark…more arising because of the experience crossing borders, that you're not quite as British as you were…slight doubts over your Britishness…But again as I say…it more arises from the experience of being more likely to be searched at borders.

Consequently for Natalie, her married surname was apparently essentialised in an embodied way. Natalie's white British appearance, British accent and passport seemingly were not sufficient in this context to preserve her white British privilege at the airport gates. Unusually perhaps, her name appeared to take absolute precedence over her embodied identities and made her visible, foreign, Other.

In addition, Linda Abadjian (white British; Armenian married surname) talked of attending a hospital appointment in 1983 when the receptionist shouted out her name. Linda said that as she approached the desk, 'she looked at me and…said, "Have you been resident in the UK for the last 2 years?"', which Linda asserted was purely based upon her name. Linda said she had been under the impression that such incidents belonged to a former era, until this experience. Here, Linda's surname has apparently been explicitly equated to foreignness/Otherness. Her name is foreign, therefore so must she be, she is framed as a migrant.

Furthermore, Kayla Brackenbury (black British; Zimbabwean born and raised; Zimbabwean maiden name) argued that taking her husband's white British surname had not led to any 'acceptance' of her within society generally.

> …they'll never accept you...as an individual...they'll just know that, "Oh, maybe she's got a fella…who's English'…Some people don't even tolerate it, they think it's disgusting…it's like, "How dare you?"…I don't feel accepted, I don't feel like, "Oh, I've made new English friends" or maybe at work people talk to me better because they know I've got a husband who's an individual carrying an English name. No there's no acceptance, there's no tolerance at all. It's zero tolerance, nothing has changed...we're still dancing to the same tune, but it just came in a different name, so there's no tolerance, nothing at all…My circle of friends are still the same...and you get used to it...and it...becomes a way of life.

For Kayla, then, changing her name did not mean she was no longer perceived as foreign, because her physical appearance had not altered. She was still apparently seen as black with a Zimbabwean accent. The black body is conceptualised within whiteness discourses as being incontrovertible: it can never not be black (Ahmed, 1998; see Chapter Two). Indeed, Ahmed (1998:45) writes that bodies are '"lived out" and marked by differences by focusing on "skin" as the unstable border between the body and its others, which comes to be fetishised', in that the body is believed to indicate/mirror the reality of the person's identity and health. I am arguing here that a person's name represents and/or mirrors their body in the psyche of whiteness, in that they are expected to appear and sound in a particular way because of their name. Thus one can assert that name is 'fetishised' because of its expected relationship to the body.

However, the concept of racial passing does provide a challenge to this notion in certain circumstances, in enabling a person to escape their racial categorisation by passing under a different racial identity (Ginsberg, 1996; see Chapter Two). Indeed, Kayla said that when she has not been physically present with her name, she has found her married surname has made quite a significant difference to her everyday life. She asserted that if people do not hear her Zimbabwean accent on the phone, 'you find that the tone of the voice, and the way people are speaking to you…is a bit better than [with] my maiden name'.

Moreover, Kayla explained that her 'credit file has improved, because I've got a new name…I'm getting…offered, more credit…just compared to offering me as Kayla Manyika'. In addition, Kayla said that her name-change meant that if she were to ever get:

> …stuck in another foreign country, and they say "there's an English lady stuck somewhere, and [her] name is Kayla Manyika" they'll be like, "What?", but if they say, "There's an English lady stuck in wherever country, Afghanistan, and her name is Kayla Brackenbury", the government is more likely to take it more seriously, on my behalf…I feel that way.

Thus for Kayla, to have a white British surname makes her appear more bona fide British in some contexts. It gives her that (imperfect/partial) link to white British privileges that she felt her old surname did not have.

Rose Urzica (white British; Romanian married surname) meanwhile, said that her son's Romanian first name and surname had caused him problems. She described that although her son was born and raised in the UK, his name, and to some extent his appearance (which she described as Eastern European), meant that he has often been perceived as Eastern European rather than British. Rose cited an example of how her son had come back to the UK from America and wanted to exchange some dollars at their local bank, '…and they wouldn't change it…and kind of muttered stuff…'. She also described how there are many things that she does for her husband [who is originally from Romania] and her son, '…because it is less hassle, like that [exchanging money at the bank]'. Rose then explained about how her son had had problems with the police:

> [He has] been stopped a few times for, for speeding or parking or something and he goes through the most horrendous rigmarole each time about his licence and who he is and, because they've had such trouble with Eastern Europeans coming here and even though he's British and it's just his name and his appearance…he still gets the flack, so yeah that's an interesting one…the name is the trigger for the questions to be asked, I think that's the point.

Thus seemingly Rose's son had, because of his name and perhaps his appearance, been perceived by some people as being Eastern European, despite his British accent. I say only *perhaps* because of his appearance has he had these experiences because Rose went on to say that if he had had a white British name, she did not think he would have encountered trouble with the bank or the police. In other words, she asserted that the name had been backed up by his 'Eastern European appearance'. It was seemingly the combination of both of these aspects of his identity that contributed to his racialised identity as Eastern European. Without the Romanian name, perhaps his appearance would go unnoticed. As Rose said:

> I think the name is probably the most important bit in that combination [of name and appearance], because…when he's out with his step-brothers, who are [called] Bond he's totally accepted, as being one of the boys…by their friends and by his friends, and I mean in a small town like this, they're all a[n] homogenous group, type of thing, and nobody differentiates. But certainly outside, I think the only problem with having a name that's different is that…it does flag you up as…being different.

In other words, to have a name that is not considered white British could be equated to that person being racially 'different' or foreign in their entirety, whereas at other times this may not be the case. Such a racial position is reminiscent of the literature I discussed in Chapter Two about the nineteenth century Southern European migrants to the USA who seemingly lived with an inbetween racial status. They were not quite white, not quite Other, which meant they lived with an uncertain racial category (Roediger, 2005). Thus, despite their white physical appearance, they were, to some extent, denied access to the privileges of American whiteness (Garner, 2007; Barrett and Roediger, 1997).

Just as the inbetween people were white American in some instances and non-white in others, apparently my participants are likewise considered white British only in certain situations, as I have described above. In other words, because race is not a biological fact it is, to some extent, open to interpretation, although judging from my participants' reported experiences, perhaps this interpretation errs on the side of caution. One hint of foreignness could be enough to remove or deny the privileges of white Britishness and cement a person's Otherness – just as the one drop of black blood was enough to make someone black in the USA (Ginsberg, 1996; Chryssochoou, 2004; see Chapter Two). Although, as the literature suggests in relation to the inbetween people, it seems from my participants' stories that those who appear physically white will always be closer to gaining the privileges of whiteness than those who embody Otherness, foreignness and/or non-whiteness. If my white British participants were to change their (sur)names to ones considered white British, they could potentially (re-)claim the privileges associated with being white British

(Wilson, 1998; Rohrer, 2007) (see the discussion on name changing in Chapter One). Those – such as Kayla Brackenbury – who are embodied black, on the other hand, will seemingly always be held back from white privileges, even though bearing a white British name may give them access in a disembodied context.

This discussion also ties in with the notion of racial hierarchies, which I will explore in Chapter Six. I have asserted in this section that my participants' experiences relate to the privileges of British whiteness rather than just to the privileges of Britishness. As I mentioned in Chapter Two, the high levels of racial inequality in the UK (Stevenson, 2011; The Runnymede Trust Report, 2012; EHRC, 2010; Ramesh, 2010; Macedo and Gounari, 2006; Chryssochoou, 2004) suggest that to be black British or Asian does not carry the same advantages as to be white British. Consequently, privilege in the UK is about whiteness first and foremost, rather than just Britishness. Furthermore, although some participants carry surnames from countries associated with white populations (e.g. Polish names), my assertion is that these names are seen as white Other within the UK context. This is similar to the inbetween people thesis mentioned above: in the racial hierarchy of the UK (and consequently the racial hierarchy of names), white Britishness stands at the top, and Other whiteness is below this.

Accordingly, whilst those with Eastern European surnames may be closer to white British privileges than those with African or Asian surnames, nonetheless, there is a racialised distinction of whiteness. Some surnames (and bodies) are whiter than Others, and such hierarchization is subject to the particular time and national context. As I discussed in Chapter Two, those groups with power in a nation are apparently able to frame who belongs and who does not (Solomos, 2001). Because this is a politically sensitive process, the Other is variable. For example, in the recent past, Eastern-Europeans have been portrayed negatively in the UK, whereas at present, Muslims are especially vilified (Alexander, 2002b, 2004; Alexander, Edwards and Temple, 2007; Però, 2013:6). This enables such groups to be blamed for the nation's problems and minority and/or migrant bashing is seemingly used by national elites to encourage cohesion amongst the white British majority (Però, 2013).

Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented my participants' experiences pertaining to the seeming racial disparity between name, body and accent. I have argued that – at least in the reported experiences of my participants – a person's (sur)name is used as a tool of racialisation. An individual's surname is accorded a racial categorisation, which is then reflected within expectations of their embodied race. This process enables the functioning of whiteness: the prescription of privilege to those deemed white British and the denial of it to those categorised as Other/foreign, to differing extents. I will discuss this further in Chapter Six in relation to the idea of a hierarchy of racialised names. Thus a person's name appears to be an important aspect of their racial identity and thereby of the signifiers used in order to categorise their race, alongside more established indicators such as skin colour and accent.

My participants have revealed the alleged racialised naming process purely because they took a surname perceived to symbolise a different race to their own embodied one. Thus one can ascertain from the name-changers' stories the problematic and unfounded notion of race, whilst simultaneously gaining an insight into the eternal importance of this system in creating difference between people and according privilege or not on this basis. Consequently, the extraordinary responses that my participants have elicited because they have gone against expected racialised naming norms indicate what an integral part of the process of racialisation naming is. This point was further demonstrated in the section that established the way in which name, through the name-changers' experience, was assumed to be wholly connected to racial inheritance. The common practice of a woman changing her name upon marriage seemingly was not often considered as a reason for bearing a name that was not deemed to racially match the participants, even when they used the title of Mrs in the social interaction.

Indeed, in this chapter I have explored the ways in which some participants found their surname had led others to conceive and stereotype their inner qualities, knowledge, and beliefs. This equation of name with race suggests that names are used as part of the racialising system – the purpose of which is to apparently

determine the levels of access people should have to resources and privileges etcetera (Garner, 2010; Goldberg, 2005). I outlined this function of race in Chapter Two. Furthermore, I have suggested in this chapter that many of the name-changers occupy an inbetween people status in a similar way to the nineteenth century Southern European migrants in North America, in that they are vulnerable, on a more individualistic basis, to a partial fluctuation in the way that their race is categorised by others. I have suggested that such alterations in the standing of minority and migrant identities in terms of access to privilege, is decided by national elites who tend to scapegoat vulnerable groups in order to promote cohesiveness amongst the white majority populace.

In this chapter I have provided examples at the level of individual, everyday, experience of attitudes towards foreignness, and the ways in which access to white British privileges is often seemingly determined in an incoherent manner. I presented such incidences in the section on the ways in which accent, body and name interact in determining a person's access (or not) to white racial privileges. These data have demonstrated how these indicators of racial status collide in ways that may be difficult to predict. This surely further underlines how the disruption of the racialisation system causes confusion and extraordinary responses. In the following chapter, I will discuss some further quotations from my interviews, which suggest that there is no end to discrimination (racism) based upon the concept of race.

CHAPTER FIVE: NO END TO RACISM – (SUR)NAMES AND DISCRIMINATION

Introduction

In the previous chapter I demonstrated how my name-changers have indicated that a person's (sur)name is used as a tool of racialisation alongside skin colour and accent. In this chapter I will extend the argument that the racialisation of name has had serious repercussions upon many of my participants' everyday lives. This is with reference to their familial, social, educational and employment experiences. As I argued in Chapters Two and Four, racial categorisation is apparently used as a way of creating difference and consequently as a means of according privilege or not to people deemed to be of different races (Alexander and Knowles, 2005). Moreover, as I discussed in Chapter Two, the dominant conception is of whiteness as superior, unraced, flexible and speaking for all of humanity, and of blackness as lowly, inferior, and raced, fixed within the body (Dyer, 1999). Therefore the racialisation of name is not a harmless or meaningless process, but one that, according to my participants' reported experiences, has real consequences. I also discuss in this chapter how the racially inbetween status (via name) of my name-changers has led some to feel uncertain about their identities, especially because of persistent questioning with regard to the perceived disjuncture between their embodied racial identity and their name. Furthermore, the importance of the name racialising system will be underlined by examples I provide about the coping strategies many participants have invented in order to evade or fight name discrimination. Finally I will touch upon the complicity of everyone within the racialising system - even the name-changers themselves.

No End to Racism: Racist Incidents in Relation to (Sur)names

As I described in Chapters One and Two, there has been a common claim that racism has ended (Solomos, 2003; Gilroy, 1987; Berger, 1999). In this section I present many of my name-changers' experiences, which suggest racism is by no

means over. They instead indicate the dominant nature of racism in relation to the racial categorisation of name and the seeking out of difference.

Family and Friends' Reactions

Carol Sidibeh (white British; Gambian married surname) described that her daughters were very opposed to her second marriage after their father (her first husband) had died. She explained that one of her daughters had told her that, 'it [her getting re-married] wouldn't matter if [her husband] was from here [the UK]' rather than from the Gambia. Carol indicated that such attitudes were reflected in the development that only one out of her three daughters would put the name Sidibeh on mail that they send her. When I asked why she thought this was the case, Carol said that 'they don't want to write' the name, it is not because they do not know it. Indeed, Carol said that one of her daughters even went so far as to write Carol's maiden name on a card instead.

In a similar vein, Abigail Koslacz (white British; Polish married surname) spoke of how her sister calls her husband by a parody name: 'she won't call him "Mr Koslacz", he's "Mr [Coal-shed[6]], but…nothing negative. He's a lovely man, he's got a silly name, that's how it is! [chuckles]'. It seems doubtful that Koslacz would be regarded as 'silly' in Poland, thus the reason it is 'silly' in the UK is seemingly because it is Other/foreign. Although Abigail apparently did not see anything untoward in her sister's nickname, the implication that the surname is somehow comic, does seem disparaging of it. Similarly, Suzanne Balester (white British; formerly held a Moroccan married surname) told of how her family 'were totally agog…that I'd married outside my own culture' in that she had married someone from Morocco. Additionally, she said her biological father 'was very disgusted about the fact that I was married to the man, but also walking around with that name [Moussamih]'. Suzanne also mentioned that her father asked her if she would soon start wearing an Islamic veil.

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[6] I have changed this parody name in order to protect the anonymity of the participant's surname.

Suzanne said that her father told her when her son was born that he did not want him to have an Islamic name, and referred to her son as a Piccaninny[7]. Meanwhile, Suzanne spoke of how her friends 'just laughed about [her surname] really…the fact that it was a difficult name', which appears to be a similar reaction to that of Abigail's sister. Also, Suzanne indicated that they questioned her a lot about whether they should call her by her husband's prefix of 'Ali' along with her surname: 'that caused more humour than anything, because it was like, 'Ali [speaks with funny voice]…I suppose from that perspective like an Asian or a Pakistani, Indian type of a name…it sort of had that connotation didn't it? And I know they did mock a bit about "Ali", more than about "Moussamih"'. Regarding the latter name, Suzanne asserted it is 'a little bit different and I don't think the association [with Islam] for a lot of people is direct', in contrast to 'Ali'.

Stephanie AlAsadi's (white British; Kuwaiti married surname), friends were seemingly less jovial than Suzanne's and more overtly discriminatory: 'they knew I was taking on his [her husband's] surname and I would be joining that kind of [Islamic] culture and stuff, and they…weren't too keen…they didn't really approve'. Stephanie said this was all on the strength of her husband's name, as they had not 'got to know him or anything'. Stephanie explained that once she had got married, 'that just made my life go in a new direction, so…people that didn't agree [laughs] I know it sounds harsh, but I didn't really have time for them, I mean…if they don't approve then…it's a choice I made and I'm happy with my choice'. She said that her family members were 'accepting and open-minded and stuff', even though her 'nan's…first question is: "Is he brown?", which is a bit of a funny question. I mean just by hearing his name…'. Also, Stephanie said that some of her family members 'didn't agree with it, they didn't want me to change my name, or change my cultural perspective kind of thing'. It can be perceived here that her friends and family had made a direct correlation between surname and race, even religion, and that in taking her husband's surname

[7] A derogatory term referring to 'black' children.

Stephanie's family/friends feared that she would be racialised in the same way. She would become Othered, a Muslim, would forgo her white Britishness.

Indeed, Stephanie said that: 'It's only with people closer to me…they know me, they know what my surname is, they know who my husband is and everything, that's when problems start to arise'. Issues she described included:

> …the usual comments like, "Oh so he's foreign", that "He's going to be using you"…or, "He's just trying to get into the country", lots of rubbish like that…again, that was just by me mentioning his name to them, so they didn't meet him or know anything about him…they just presumed he's some [chuckles] foreigner…that he must be up to something or whatever…I mean no one like…none of my old friends congratulated me, when I got married…there was no kind of positive comments there.

It seems quite extraordinary that Stephanie should have apparently encountered such racist reactions from all of her childhood friends, merely in response to the name of the person she had chosen to marry. Stephanie indicated that none of her friends would even try to get to know her husband, the name was deemed sufficient to tell them all they needed to know about him. He was apparently understood by her friends to be raced, a Muslim, foreign, and they did not want any association with these identities, even at the expense of disowning their long-established friendship.

Meanwhile, Beth Villiers (white British; did not take her husband's Dutch surname upon marriage), said that several of her family members and friends, upon learning that she had not changed her surname upon marriage, had assumed 'that it is just to do with his name…because it is so difficult and long…not necessarily it being foreign I don't think, but I think people are like…"I don't blame you", and that's quite a common response'…So yeah there is an assumption that that would be the reason why you wouldn't'. Regarding her parents, Beth said: 'I do think that definitely with my parents there's probably again a bit of that…"Why would you want to take such a difficult name?" kind of attitude'. It is intriguing that people should apparently have so readily assumed the reason for Beth deciding not to change her name was because of

the name itself rather than for other reasons. Moreover, the 'difficulty' of the name is perhaps mostly concerned with the fact it is deemed foreign, unfamiliar, Other.

Jamal Hassan Hamdaoui (mixed-race British; Arabic name) described how his sister said to him one day 'that there were too many foreigners in [their home town in Scotland], and I sort of looked at her and I thought like…me and my sister have dealt with identity in two completely different ways, I guess when I was growing up', during which time they had both experienced 'quite a bit of racism'. For example, Jamal spoke of how when he was a young boy (known as Mal McKenzie) his teachers discovered his official name, assumed it was Islamic, and made him pray for forgiveness for the sins of his ancestors (because they were presumed to be Muslims).

Whereas Jamal explained that his reaction to such incidents was to identify with the cosmopolitan values he had internalised in London, he asserted that his sister 'made much more of an attempt to assimilate herself, I guess you could say that whole thing of the oppressor becoming the oppressed…and the rest of it'. Her comment about 'foreigners' was for Jamal indicative of her 'trying to fit in as best as she could': 'I do believe that it was through the scapegoating of her race, shall we say…it's what made her try to change her character'. Jamal said that his sister had subsequently changed her name officially to the white British alias her mum had given her as a child when she separated from their father, whereas Jamal chose to revert back to his official, Islamic, name. This is reminiscent of the literature I discussed in Chapter Two about racial passing and of the history of name-changing I considered in Chapter One. Racial passing and name-changing have been used historically by some individuals who were conceived as Other in order to try to access privileges associated with a white racial identity (Ginsberg, 1996; Wilson, 1998). Similarly, Jamal's sister had apparently perceived the privileges associated with bearing a white British name and decided to embrace that identity, in keeping the name her mother had given her, in order to racially pass as white British. She had seemingly internalised the fear of being known to be foreign/Other and consequently turned her back on the name she was given at birth.

General Societal Responses

Abigail Koslacz (white British; Polish married surname) said that she had been particularly troubled by an experience she had had with her bank. She explained that she had paid for a haircut by cheque, because she was waiting for her husband's pay cheque to go into their bank account. However, Abigail said the hairdressers did not cash the cheque for a while and when they did, it caused her to go overdrawn by £30. Abigail said that she then phoned her bank about it and was told: '"Well you knowingly wrote a cheque for £30 when you know you had no money in the account"', and made insinuations about how Abigail should not have spent money when she did not have it. Abigail said that she:

> …was really upset, I had to write a letter to the bank manager. And I'm not sure, I'd never dealt with this woman before, I don't know how long she'd been there, whether she had known me as my previous name, I don't really know, but I felt afterwards, "Maybe she was being like that with me because my name is Mrs Koslacz and [she thinks] I'm Polish and I don't have a job".

Rebecca Travers (white British; bore a Polish surname during first marriage), meanwhile, indicated that she had not, prior to my interview, considered the implications of the following remark made to her concerning her first married name (Czajkowska). 'I think I'd said it was cold and somebody said, "Well you must have been used to that when you were in Siberia". I just thought, "How ridiculous"'. When I questioned Rebecca about why the person mentioned Siberia when they understood her name to be Polish, not Siberian, she said that a lot of Polish people were sent to concentration camps in Siberia during World War Two, and thus it was an insensitive remark for the person to have made. Rebecca then said if she had been Polish, the comment would have probably been upsetting, even though she still described it as 'a fairly innocent thing'. This comment arguably could be understood as extremely derogatory: along similar lines to telling someone with a Jewish name that they should be used to the cold in Auschwitz.

In addition, Beth Villiers (white British; did not take her husband's Dutch surname) said her husband has been asked several times why he does not just change his surname to 'Smith'. Beth said her husband had found such questioning 'a bit disrespectful'. She also mentioned that at his workplace he is generally called '"Dutch Dave" and quite often introduced in that way rather than people trying to get their tongues around the surname'. She said she did not believe that this bothers her husband, but it does seem to suggest a lack of understanding around the meaning of a name to somebody. He was born and raised with the surname and it therefore most likely has meaning to him. I will also highlight this attitude that foreign names should be Anglicised in Chapter Six. I also discussed this in Chapter One regarding the history of name-changing, in that historically, thousands of migrants to the UK had their names Anglicised for them by immigration officials (McKinley, 1990). Similarly, to suggest that Beth's husband should just wipe away his name because someone does not wish to remember it or try to pronounce it, appears to be a racist concept in every respect. The idea seems to be that the surname is not worthy of paying heed to, that Beth's husband should acknowledge the Otherness of his name and hence the inconvenience that it apparently causes to white British others, and therefore just change it to one deemed white British.

Employment/Work-Related Incidents

Kayla Brackenbury (black British; Zimbabwean born and raised; Zimbabwean maiden name) said that she perceives that racism has changed, so that 'you won't be told that, "you monkey blah blah blah" like before…they don't do it that way, they do it in a very smart way, where you apply for something and you don't get it, you try to get something and you don't get it'. As I discussed in Chapter Four, Kayla indicated that her chances of being invited for job interviews greatly increased after changing her surname to her husband's white British one. This suggests that her Zimbabwean surname had been the tool used by people to deny her chances in the job market and in other everyday situations. However, Kayla's sister, Charlotte Leary (black British; Zimbabwean born and raised; Zimbabwean maiden name), asserted that her job chances had not really altered since changing her name. She said that her married

surname ‘in a way might give me a bit of an advantage sometimes…but…sometimes when they see you…if they were bad people they would just go back to their own original [chuckles] mentality’. Consequently, it appears that having a surname deemed white British may give an individual not considered white British (in an embodied sense) the advantages of whiteness in a disembodied sense. However, once that individual becomes embodied (i.e. their physical appearance/accent are known) they then seemingly become raced and foreign. The advantages of carrying a white British surname are wiped away (see Chapter Four for more on this topic).

Anna Aladeoja (white British; Nigerian married surname) said she had changed her name at the age of 18 upon marriage, looked for work after leaving school, and that she had been unsuccessful in a few job interviews. Anna said one of her former teachers told her that she should not have changed her surname from Rogers to Aladeoja, ‘like implying that that’s why I wasn’t getting the jobs…he said because people will look at it and think that they have to go through, obviously immigration and things and they won’t want that hassle’. As Anna expressed to me, this argument is somewhat flawed. She stated that she had already been invited for job interviews using Aladeoja as her name, which one would not expect if they were prejudiced against the name, unless she was invited to comply with equality criteria. Nonetheless, it seems that some people clearly believe that having a surname not deemed white British detrimentally affects the name bearer’s chances of employment in the UK, and that to have a foreign surname indicates that that person is a migrant. This notion is supported by pre-existing research on racial discrimination in the UK job market, as I discussed in Chapter Two. For example, Wood *et al.*’s (2009) research suggested that a job seeker’s racial identity impacts greatly upon their chances of being called for interview, to the detriment of candidates with African and Asian names (Wood *et al.*, 2009).

Naze Edgerley (mixed-race British) had not changed his surname, as I explained in Chapter Four. I included him in my sample because he provided an interesting example of the relationship between having a first name that apparently is generally perceived as not being white British (even though it is an English place-

name), and a surname, which is. Naze explained that his parents, as was his family's custom, had chosen an unusual first name for him (i.e. Naze), and that it has often been assumed by those he encounters to be Asian or Islamic sounding. Naze described that when he was working at a call centre, he received a phone call from a lady who 'had been passed around [several colleagues]' and was therefore 'a bit annoyed'. He said he began the call by greeting her and giving his first name, as was customary for his company. Naze stated the lady was 'very short' with him when he was trying to help her. He said that at the end of the call, after he had advised her what she needed to do in order to solve her problem: 'she goes, "Right okay well thank you…Can I take your name again please?", I go, 'Yes, it's Naze'. She goes, "Spell it, Naze", I go, "N-A-Z-E", she goes, "And your surname Naze?", and I went, "It's Edgerley", she goes…there's a little pause, she goes, "Ohhh! I wasn't expecting that!"'. Naze spoke of how he did not know what: 'she expected...what was she expecting me to say, "Naze Abdullah Mohammed?"'. Furthermore, he said that after he had given his surname:

> ...it was very, very strange because her demeanour completely changed…after that…She was like, "Ohh Naze is a very unusual name, where does that come from?" and I was like, "Well actually I'm led to believe it's actually Anglo-Saxon", she was like, "Ah okay well that's...excellent, well thank you very much for your help!" She became suddenly very, very polite….

For Naze, this behaviour was suggestive of name discrimination, as he said: 'she thought I was…some kind of foreigner and when I gave my Western sounding surname, her demeanour changed…her attitude towards me changed, which I think is a classic example…of discrimination based on name'.

Furthermore, Abigail Koslacz (white British; Polish married surname) conveyed how her husband (who is British-born) had come across quite a lot of prejudice against Polish people in his council job: 'if anyone comes in with a Polish surname, it's just assumed that they're after a free house' and so on. Consequently, Abigail said her husband was unenthusiastic about the idea of her taking his surname upon their marriage, asking her if she was sure she wanted 'to have a Polish

surname…Especially working in teaching'. She said that she decided to take the surname anyway with the assumption 'that people would treat me differently and that there may be some negative associations, but I wasn't that bothered'.

Also, Ailsa Czerniak (white British; Polish married surname) spoke of how her husband felt he had been discriminated against at work: 'when he was younger he felt he was prejudiced when he was in his jobs…Not [with regards to] getting work, [but] the way he was treated in work'. However, according to Ailsa her husband is now prejudiced against Polish migrants who come to the UK to work: 'he feels guilty that they're taking the jobs' because he feels that it reflects badly on him, with his Polish heritage. This draws parallels with the example given earlier, whereby Jamal Hassan Hamdaoui said that his sister had experienced racism and had subsequently expressed racist views towards migrants. It is seemingly as though Jamal's sister and Ailsa's husband have felt guilty for having a migrant parent when the prevalent UK mentality is anti-migrant, and consequently they have aligned themselves with this same mentality, in an attempt to disassociate themselves from any form of foreignness. These examples are apparently telling of the immense power of anti-migrant, in-group/out-group rhetoric within a national context (Macedo and Gounari, 2006; Stolcke, 1995; Van Dijk, 1993), as I discussed in Chapter Two. That is, that such discourse is so prevalent that even those against whom the anti-migrant/minority rhetoric is aimed can internalise it themselves.

Rose Urzica (white British; Romanian married surname), meanwhile, described how her husband, who is originally from Romania, has experienced some discriminatory attitudes in his job as a teacher:

> …he's certainly had a certain amount of stick from parents…I think the name has caused some problems for him, with parents…there's been comments about, "He should go back to his own country", that kind of thing, from the kids, from the parents via the kids: "My dad says you should go back to where you come from", that kind of thing.

Furthermore, she said that he has had 'parents…backing their kids up, saying: '"my child doesn't understand this foreign teacher…He shouldn't be teaching my daughter,

because my daughter can't understand his lessons because he's foreign"', and that this is when those same parents 'may well have never spoken to him…it's all based on his name'.

When I questioned Rose about how the school tended to respond to such treatment, she explained that her husband does not always report it: 'there's a certain amount of prejudice even within the school, the staff as well…I mean the whole "Eastern European coming over here to take our jobs"…happens in schools as well, so…there are staff members who are not very happy to have him there either'. Rose stated that there have however been 'a couple of occasions…where it's gone too far and it's actually been dealt with, by the parents being called into the school and the headmaster talking to them, but I mean, I think generally speaking it's best left. It shouldn't be left. I wouldn't leave it, but I'm not him'. When I asked why she felt it was sometimes best left, she responded that: 'I think the way things are at the moment…what can you do?...you can't bully people, push them or force them into changing their attitudes and their ideas…you can educate their children so it's not perpetuated…into the next generation'.

Sally Hasani (white British; Albanian married surname) described an incident at her former workplace, which was 'ironically…a race relations charity':

> …the director there was quite trying to pressure me to keep my unmarried name [Hayden]…and I never understood her reasons…why she felt that way…But she was quite adamant that I shouldn't take my married name and that I should keep my unmarried name as my professional name, even though I was only an administrator…which was very odd, and…I never found out why.

Sally said she had started doing some training for the company: 'giving talks to schools and my husband was doing that in a voluntary capacity, he was also going out to schools and talking so it seemed to be something to do with her…I don't think she wanted people to know that we were married'. In fact, Sally asserted that the director said to her that:

> "I think it would be better if you kept your unmarried name" and I said to her, "No, this is my name, I've changed it now, I'm keeping it", and she repeated it two or three times again, saying, "I really think you should keep your maiden name"…She did seem to feel quite strongly about that…she didn't seem to want that association…I really don't know why! [chuckles].

Sally said to this day she remains 'baffled', 'especially because it was a race discrimination charity…it was hard to believe that it could be racial discrimination…But then again, I couldn't see why else she would feel so strongly about it'. What is more, Sally claimed that this occurrence in question led to 'a whole kind of breakdown of the situation' and her leaving the company. Consequently it would seem that Sally's boss had a strong (racist?) aversion to the idea of Sally, as a white British person, taking a surname deemed non-British. It seems quite extraordinary that what was a personal decision of Sally's, should apparently have had such ramifications at her work place that she ended up leaving her job.

Education-Related Incidents

Jamal Hassan Hamdaoui (mixed-race British; Arabic name) related a couple of intriguing experiences he had had at university with regards to his name. Firstly, Jamal described how he had written an essay for one of his classes and had:

> …scribbled one [version] out…and then there was one that was typed…and I had asked my sister if she could just pop it into the university because I was off to the airport, so she had picked up the one that was handwritten and she took it into the university and handed it in, and I got it back…and it came back with an eight…saying that I should maybe like to take advantage of the in-sessional English classes…I was absolutely seething...I took great pleasure in going to his [the marker's] office and…by and large I have quite a good command of the English language…[chuckles] I went in with my most articulated hat on and I just sort of laid waste to him, and I really felt justified doing it, because that was an assumption that he shouldn't have made.

For Jamal, the lecturer's assumption was 'obviously [based on] the name, if I'd put down Jock McCleod and handed in that same piece of work, he'd of went, "This kid's

got problems…he needs to…get an examination done", but because my name was Jamal Hassan Hamdaoui it wasn't a disability it was a lack of acculturation'. Jamal said he managed to get it 'all fixed in the end, I got 60' but he still felt angry and that it was 'such the wrong assumption for someone in an academic situation to make…it made me lose a little bit of faith in the whole system from the very start, it was just like, "Well, you know, I mean these people are marking me based on their assumptions here"'. Jamal's anecdote raises the question of what other stereotypes were potentially being made about his work purely on the basis of his name? As I discussed in Chapter Two, the power of whiteness has apparently created a world in which white people flourish at the expense of those constructed as raced/Other, whereby those who are white are deserving of success and privilege and those who are not can perhaps see their talent go to waste (Garner, 2007). In the British context, there is an additional layer of the importance of Britishness in conjunction with whiteness. To be deemed white British is apparently the categorisation of ultimate privilege.

The second incident that Jamal related concerned how he had been travelling abroad and came back to the UK and applied to university in his hometown. He explained that the administration department had decided he would have to pay international fees as he has been outside of the UK for a certain amount of time. Jamal said he conveyed to them that he had only ever had temporary travel visas and had thus not been resident in any other country. Jamal described how the university nonetheless decided that there was some ambiguity about where he was *from*, despite him having given them all the appropriate information. He then had to attend an appeal panel, with:

> …a photocopy of my mother's passport, a photocopy of my sister's passport, my passport and my birth certificate and everything…So I went to this review meeting with my teeth clenched, I was like, "They are getting the most incomprehensible [local dialect from his hometown] they have ever heard! And…there were a couple who couldn't even understand me and I thought this was brilliant, here I am speaking the language of where I am from in a university, being judged by people who aren't from this place, judging whether I am from here or not!

Jamal relayed how the interviewer at the meeting told him that the meeting had been: '"the biggest waste of time ever! I'm going to follow all this up and see why this had to come to such a thing"'. For Jamal, this incident was also about his name, as: 'put it this way, if my name was James Bucken I don't think there would be so much ambiguity in the admissions office, they'd have been more like, "Oh check out this boy, he's been all over the place"…Because I put my name as Jamal Hassan Hamdaoui, yeah, sure they questioned it'. It is difficult to comprehend how a university could apparently make such crude assumptions about a person purely on the basis of their name. Jamal's name was seemingly used – alongside his travel history – as a way of constructing a foreign identity for him.

Similarly, Rose Urzica (white British; Romanian married name) expressed some concerns for her son's future because of his Romanian names, in terms of, for example, applying for jobs. She related how when her son applied to university he was initially questioned about his nationality:

> …there were questions about, 'Are you a foreign student?'…And I think…from that point of view that if his name was *David* Urzica, it would be slightly easier. I think people can kind of take a surname but I think the combination of Augustin and Urzica [her son's name] is slightly more problematic, than Rose Urzica is, for instance.

This incident also arguably raises the notion that just to have a surname (and/or perhaps a first name) that is perceived as foreign, can draw questions about a person's race/nationality, without any other information being needed. When reading Rose's son's name, for example, some people are seemingly visualising that he is of a specific nationality and/or race. That they apparently would feel comfortable in directly questioning his nationality on the basis of just his name suggests that to them it is not something potentially discriminatory, but is an obvious state of affairs, as apparently one's name symbolises one's nationality and race. This raises comparisons with the historical practice in the USA of one drop of black blood being sufficient to categorise a person as black (Ginsberg, 1996; Chryssochoou, 2004; see Chapter Two).

In addition, Katia Evans (white British; Polish maiden name) spoke of her experiences at school with her Polish maiden name (Wielky):

> …at school it was quite negative…but then my parents had foreign accents, so I think at primary school I used to get…a bit of teasing…and there were a few comments about that, so to go with my name as well, I suppose as a primary school child I just wanted to fit in and…I wasn't bothered about my Polish roots or…I didn't want to be different, I just wanted to be the same as everyone else.

From the above experiences, then, it can be perceived that to have a name, which is deemed foreign can be enough to make a person stand out in a disadvantageous way, even in the field of education. Indeed, in this section my participants' descriptions have suggested some quite blatantly racist thinking on the basis of their (sur)names. In their position as name-changers, I asked my participants to try to compare their treatment between their two respective surnames, and they have consequently suggested that there are some underlying racist attitudes towards (sur)names seen as foreign/Other. In the following section I further suggest that my participants' stories have intimated that there is a dominant attitude of disdain towards names conceived as foreign.

Disrespect for Foreign (Sur)names

Linda Abadjian (white British; Armenian married surname) conveyed that some people have not even attempted to say her surname: 'I don't mind it being pronounced incorrectly, but…I think I deserve an attempt at it'. She provided an example of being in the pharmacy awaiting her prescription and observing that two assistants were giggling and looking at a prescription form, and she: 'instantly thought, "It must be mine, and they're thinking, 'How do we pronounce this? You do it, I'll, no you do it, you do it'", and in the end they called me by the name of my house, so I didn't even have an attempt at it'. Indeed, Linda asserted that people not even trying to say her name 'happens a lot' in all kinds of places. It seems extraordinarily disrespectful towards Linda that the pharmacy assistants should apparently think it

acceptable to call her by the name of her house rather than to even try to read her surname.

Relatedly, Linda described the following incident:

> …a couple of weeks ago my son was in hospital outpatients, he'd broken his thumb……we're waiting for his name to be called, they said his first name, and again two people nudging each other, and I just knew it was for us, and I waited on purpose to see whether they would just try to pronounce his name, shouting in front of the waiting room, so they said his first name and then they sort of said, "A-a-a-Adrian" and I thought, "Well I'm busy, I need to get home", so I stood up, and I came up to them, we stood in front of them, and they looked over our shoulders and tried to say, "Er William [her son's first name] er Adrian" again, and I said, "Do you mean William Abadjian?" and they said, "Oh right", because they weren't expecting...a white skin, put it that way….

Linda said that she believed the people were nudging each other out of embarrassment at having to 'try to pronounce the name' and that subsequently 'they didn't expect me and my son to come up'. It is interesting that the name, which Linda reported was called in relation to her son, was what is commonly conceived to be a white British first name, rather than the Armenian surname. As the only similarity was that they began with the same letter, this appears to be a poor attempt at saying the surname, and perhaps matched the act of 'nudging each other' – this could be construed as quite disrespectful towards Linda's and her son's surname rather than being prompted by 'embarrassment', as Linda suggested.

Anna Aladeoja (white British; Nigerian married surname) also indicated some irritation with people making a lack of effort with her surname: 'often I think maybe white people…will think it's so hard to say that they don't want to try in a way…whereas actually when you look at it, you do kind of say it how you spell it'. Additionally, Sally Hasani (white; Albanian married surname) described how 'most people don't try' to pronounce her name, which she has found 'quite strange because it's quite a short name, and it's not that difficult, but people do seem to have…just a complete mental block, "Are you Mrs erm I'm not even going to try to pronounce that"…- "Do try, it's not so hard!"'.

Natalie Mustapić (white British; Croatian married surname), meanwhile, said that her surname is frequently mispronounced, and that, in her position as a lecturer, often her students will not know how to say her surname and 'they sort of mumble my surname and very quickly just want to call me Natalie on the first day'. This seems quite surprising that students should apparently so quickly begin calling their lecturer by their first name without invitation: is her surname so difficult that this should be her students' response? Moreover, Marion Stamatis (white British; Greek married surname) spoke of how, regarding her surname, 'most people just pull a face or make a comment…I'd say most of it is just, "By gum, that's a mouthful! Where, where does it come from? Where's that from?"'.

Jenny Legris (white British; Mauritian married surname) argued, though, that people within her field of education have generally been able to say her surname correctly: 'none of my teacher friends get the name wrong', and this has made her a bit impatient when it is pronounced incorrectly 'in…other walks of life', especially on the phone. She depicted herself as thinking, '"Why are you saying it wrong?...other people can get it right"'. This implies that those who are not especially close to Jenny do not make the effort to say her surname, that perhaps a lack of respect is shown towards it. Jenny said that she corrects people instantly who say her surname wrongly: 'you might think, oh you'd let it slip, but no, because you've said my name wrong'. She also expressed her surprise at the sheer number of mispronunciations she has experienced for such a short name, and how she had never had any problems with her maiden name (Taylor), which is the same length. Although she said she 'wouldn't change Legris for the world', she did indicate that it would have been easier to have held a complicated white British surname than it has been to bear Legris: 'a few times I wish I had been Mrs Bennett, it's easier, I mean, I'd even cope with a double N, double T or one N, two Ts, or one N and one T…but sometimes Legris has been…a bit difficult'.

Similarly, Claire Negev (white British; Israeli/Hebrew married surname) described how one of her friends called her by a completely unrelated, Spanish surname for a couple of years after she had married, which 'irritated' her, 'because I

had told her several times it was different, but she just didn't kind of seem to think it mattered to get it right'. Additionally, Bryony Chiamaka (white British; Nigerian married surname) explained that her surname had been spelt wrongly by the DVLA on her driving licence, in that the 'I' had been missed out. She said that she did not bother to report this: 'You might say, "Oh! What if the police get you and they say, 'Oh you're name's…'", "No! They won't notice!"'. It seems quite surprising that Bryony's surname apparently has been spelt incorrectly so frequently that she is confident that the UK authorities would not notice her name was incorrect on an official, and major, document. It also suggests that, in her reported experience, her surname tends not to be properly noticed in the UK context: all that is perceived is a foreign name, rather than the name in itself.

Likewise, Katia Evans (white British; Polish maiden name (Wielky)) described how her maiden name, was 'always spelt wrong…it would be the most ridiculous [spellings]', and that even her bank cards had her name spelt incorrectly on them, as did some of her mail. Katia stated that 'it was unbelievable that there were so many different ways of misspelling it', considering it was such a short name, and how she has not experienced any such problems with her married surname, [a difference] which she felt was 'quite nice'. Nicola Zheung (white British; Chinese married surname) also indicated that she could not understand why her surname should so often be misspelt (especially with the 'E' missed out):

> I've never understood why, it's like in their head they know how it's spelt, so they're going to spell it that way regardless of whatever I say…because if I spell my name for you, I expect you to be able to write that down, it's only six letters, whereas to miss one of those letters out when someone has spelt it for you is a bit strange.

Furthermore, Jamal Hassan Hamdaoui (mixed-race British; Arabic name; grew up unofficially as Mal McKenzie) described times when people have tried to

pronounce his name and how he feels that 'they're trying to project that they're making an effort to say your name, you know…it's like, "Oh, we've got one here, oh!", it's like, "Just get over it, those syllables are really, really simple'[8]. Indeed, Jamal explained that 'they'll always say it wrong, like always…and I get people putting Bs in there'. Jamal said that such issues originate from 'the fact that there's a construct of how you say these names and people are trying to find it…they're looking for the…Ahmed or whatever, and they look at it and because it's such an unfamiliar Arabic name, people always stutter with it'.

These stories suggest that problems of pronunciation/spelling derive not from the complexity or length of a surname, but from the foreignness/Otherness of it: the structures of whiteness seemingly indoctrinate people with the invisibility of white (British) names (within the UK) and the raced inferiority of Other names. This thereby supports existing theory relating to embodied notions of whiteness. As I discussed in Chapter Two, the system of whiteness purports that white people are not raced, they are individuals. This contrasts with the notion that black people are raced and thereby inferior (Dyer, 1999). The conception of certain names being inferior is suggested by my participants' experiences, in that foreign names were presented as not being worthy of being properly listened to or spelt/pronounced, which is borne out in the many people who apparently refused to even try to say my participants' surnames. I will address in the following section the apparent impact such incidents have had upon some of the name-changers' feelings of identity.

Experiences of Invasive Questioning: Hostility Towards Foreign (Sur)names Leading to Uncertainty of Name-Bearer's Identity and/or Impacting Upon the Name-Changer's Decision-Making.

As I discussed at length in Chapter Two, and touched upon in Chapter Four, academics such as Roediger (2005), Garner (2007), and Barrett and Roediger (1997)

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[8] The pronunciation of the participant's actual surname was (in my opinion) simpler for an English speaker than of this pseudonym.

have written about the migration of Southern Europeans to the USA in the 1800s. These migrants, despite their white physical appearance, were considered by the US system to be inbetween white and black racial statuses. Their racial categorisation was, though, continually reassessed and was consequently indefinite. My participants' experiences invoke a similar concept, in that they spoke about what it is to live in such an inbetween racial position by having a name, which is commonly racialised as not matching their understood embodied race. In this section I will analyse how some name-changers have described some uncertainty of identity as a consequence of feeling not quite white, not quite Other/foreign, and having encountered often quite hostile questioning/reactions as a result of bearing a surname perceived as Other. Such incidents have also apparently impacted upon many participants' decision-making.

Abigail Koslacz (white British; Polish married surname) described how the mispronunciations of her surname that she has encountered, have led to a feeling that her 'identity's not clearly defined, because you can be Mrs Koslacz, Mrs Colacz, Mrs Kuslack…'. This is a fascinating statement, as it implies that the fact that a person's surname is hardly ever pronounced correctly or recognised, potentially leads to a level of uncertainty as to the veracity and existence of that name. A person's name is arguably integral to their identity, and if their name is in a constant state of flux, what does this do to their sense of identity? As I discussed in Chapter Two, writers such as Hall (2000), have asserted that a person's identity is founded upon the notion that there is a concrete 'self' inside of them. Because names are an important identity marker (Titford, 2009), it would appear that if a person's name is not 'defined' – as Abigail described – then this seemingly can lead to that person feeling uncertain about their sense of identity.

Moreover, Elinor Murley de Mendoza (white British; only uses the Spanish/Peruvian 'de Mendoza' at the doctors surgery), spoke of how such mispronunciation issues are a significant factor in why she decided mostly not to use her married surname. Elinor talked quite movingly of her love for, and interest in, 'South American culture and Spanish and Portuguese and that sort of thing' – so

much so, that when she first got married, despite being a feminist, she said that she thought the idea of adding the 'de Mendoza' name to her existing maiden name (as is usual in the Spanish naming-system) 'was rather lovely!' According to Elinor, the name was 'definitely…foreign, but it's quite sort of artistic and continental' and would associate her with one of the cultures she so admires, thus in that sense it had 'quite a nice set of connotations or…associations…for me'. However, she said that she 'discovered' 'when you actually transport it into England and everyone goes, "Men-e-doza?" then it's not pretty and exotic and lovely anymore, it's just a bit annoying that no one can say it right...'.

Elinor therefore asserted that whilst for her the surname is 'quite a nice name', it does not 'necessarily' translate well 'into the British context', which 'is probably…why I don't necessarily use it, why I don't embrace it as I might'. Indeed, she went further to suggest that if, when she had used the surname:

> …everyone I'd met had been like "Oh Mendoza [with correct pronunciation], what a beautiful name! How exotic…how nice! Ah that must be related to South America" or that sort of thing, then I might have just used it, I might have just said I'll get rid of Murley [her maiden name] and use Mendoza but, that didn't happen and it was a lot simpler to stick with Murley because it was a name people recognised and could pronounce and that sort of thing....

Thus, in summary, Elinor conveyed that de Mendoza 'symbolises…exoticism and difference, or at least continental sophistication…to me personally…but actually, in everyday usage it doesn't carry those connotations 'cause people get it wrong and they don't recognise it and so it's not a pretty, lovely name, it's just a…bit of a hassle'. Elinor went further to discuss her first name and how this has quite an unusual spelling, and is consequently 'a slightly different name', which she has always liked to have. However, she said that she also recognises the benefits:

> …that Elinor is a recognisable name and that, I think if I'm like booking a table or booking a taxi or something, then I have a choice of giving Elinor, giving Murley, or giving de Mendoza, and I know that if I try to book a table under Mendoza, I'll be there all day, going, 'M-E-N...' [chuckles], whereas if I book a

> table under Elinor they'll spell it wrong, they'll spell it E-L-E-A-N-O-R, but I won't have to spell it out to them, and I hate them spelling it wrong, but I do appreciate that having something that's kind of recognisable is also quite useful in some ways.

Furthermore, Elinor admitted that her experience of using de Mendoza has been limited, as she has only used it at the doctors surgery, but this experience has nonetheless made a big impression upon her:

> …when someone picks up my prescription…you can just like see their faces falling [laughs]…like, "erm...what possible part of this name can I pronounce? Where does the first name end and the surname begin?" It's…unfortunate that not only is the very last bit of it foreign, but also the whole thing is quite incomprehensible in terms of you don't know what's the first name, what's the middle name, what's the surname etcetera, but…I think, every single time I'm like waiting to have my prescription...filled...I especially pay attention when they come out of the back room...and if there's a massive pause, then I know it's mine...and then when I'm there and I go, "Yes, that's me", then you can just see the relief and I think...yeah, there is something strange about that for me, that I've not experienced before, I put this bit on the end of my name, it's very...new and it's partly a result of having such a...long and peculiarly built name for my married name, but it's also the fact that when you put one unpronounceable bit on, the whole thing becomes unpronounceable...they can't pronounce Murley anymore….

Elinor very clearly expressed here that she has experienced what it can be like to bear a surname conceived as foreign in the UK, and she has not enjoyed it. By having a foreign surname attached to her pre-existing white British one, she had apparently made her whole name, and therefore at the very least her *dis*embodied identity, entirely Other. Elinor said that she began to feel an 'anxiety' about ringing up her doctors' surgery to make an appointment, knowing that they would have difficulty finding her name on the system. She stated that:

> …it's actually put a lot of, just that small thing, and…it's only at the doctors, because that's the only place I use it, but even there it does add kind of anxiety to the whole experience…And most of my name is still British, so if I

> had an entirely foreign name, I can imagine it would be...very laborious and awkward to have to make an appointment at the doctors or that sort of thing'.

Elinor, in effect, asserted that her surname at the doctors 'becomes an issue, where it wasn't an issue before'. Elinor's quotations provide a rich insight into the level of inconvenience that bearing a foreign surname seemingly can bring: to her, the pronunciation issues are important. Elinor implied that she does not perceive the pronunciation difficulties of de Mendoza to be a slight inconvenience similar to the misspelling of her first name, as de Mendoza is not recognisable in the UK context, thus it has an extra layer of difference to it, which is something she felt unable, and/or unwilling, to deal with. Elinor expressed that the efforts involved in bearing the name outweighed her own personal liking of it. de Mendoza apparently became a token of discomfort, something to be avoided if possible, so much so that Elinor said that even when she was picking up a prescription she would tell them to just use her maiden name. I will discuss later on in this chapter how Elinor appeared to have internalised the apparent negative attitudes towards her husband's surname.

Rebecca Travers (white British), spoke of how at times when she bore her first husband's Polish surname (Czajkowska), it seemed 'unprofessional' at work:

> I used to have to give my name quite a lot as part of my job…it was a requirement for me to give the name, so I always had to have that kind of embarrassment of knowing that I was giving a name that people couldn't say, and I would have to spell it out, and then when people asked for me they've got that embarrassment of saying [her surname wrongly], and I don't know I suppose I felt a little bit unprofessional, with having a…stumbling block to…normal communication...and that's something I was quite glad to get rid of [chuckles]...I mean…I quite liked it to be honest when I first got it, I thought it was nice to have an unusual name…I found it quite exotic and nice in a way, it was quite a pretty name...it was just a drawback when it came to…trying to be taken seriously...I felt that English people were a bit unwilling to look beyond it....

Indeed, Rebecca said that it was a relief to revert to her maiden name when she separated from her husband: 'I was fed up of it, and I thought, "Why am I having the

hassle of this awkward name when we're not even married anymore?", so that was quite nice [chuckles]……I think when I took the name on, I didn't realise…I thought it was going to be all romantic and exotic and everything, I didn't realise it was going to be a bit of a drag day to day…'.

Marion Stamatis, meanwhile, indicated that although she is 'fairly outgoing' about being questioned in regards to her surname, she is also wary about why someone is questioning her about her name, and tries to 'judge', '"how are they asking it, why are they asking it, what am I going to tell them?"'. Thus she said she takes her 'cues from the person who's asking really…you're always alert to it, you think, "Oh no…I've got to spell my name now, or I've got to say I've got this foreign sounding name"'. Consequently Marion said she often will 'lax into most working class white English as I'm going to say, "Well I've got this foreign sounding name, but actually I was born in [Nottingham], what are you going to say about that? Bring it on!"'. In other words, Marion asserted that if she feels as though the questioner's motives are not friendly, she will be 'on the defensive', whereas if she:

> …felt like they were genuinely interested then you can relax a bit…and enjoy it…but you've got to be on guard, I think I'm on guard, so I must have had enough knocks with it, and perhaps I just don't remember them…Maybe you just feel it, you know, because you're not, I'm not Hawkins or Jones, you know, you just live with it that it's something different…I don't know what I am really, I don't think I would describe myself as [Nottingham] now, because for 30 odd years I've lived with somebody from a different culture, so I'm like a hybrid…so then you're speaking from that position, aren't you?.

This quotation suggests that having a foreign name seemingly can make a white British person feel vulnerable, perhaps open to attack, in that they have so obviously associated themself with Otherness, and can no longer assert that they are truly white British anymore.

Relatedly, Rebecca Travers (white British) indicated a dislike for being questioned about her Polish surname (Czajkowska), held during her first marriage, as she said the surname 'made me stand out, like they would [say], "Oh she's someone

with a Polish name"'. Rebecca explained that she is 'not somebody that likes to be in the limelight or anything…I didn't like the fact that it drew attention to me or…I didn't want to have that conversation with people I suppose…"How do you say your name?", "Why is it like that?"'. For Rebecca, then, her surname made her too visible, too different and open to being questioned. These participants apparently had been (perhaps unconsciously) used to the privileged invisibility and individuality of their white British maiden names: to be racially Othered (at least in a disembodied sense) on the basis of their married surnames shattered this experience. Marion Stamatis (white British; Greek married surname) stressed that to have a foreign surname makes one feel like 'an odd person, and…you do feel a certain degree of trauma associated with it'.

Furthermore, Lynsey Bridger (white British; did not take her husband's Kashmiri surname) spoke about her difficulties with having chosen to give her daughter a Kashmiri/Islamic surname, whilst she had kept her white British maiden name for herself. She referred to the questioning which she had consequently encountered: 'I hadn't quite realised quite how complicated it would be sometimes, so that's quite interesting that even in 2011…your child having a different name, and within that a culturally different name, just makes things more complicated, and you are asked to explain yourself at various points'. Lynsey said this questioning would not 'stop me…naming my children the way I wanted to, but…that I guess does signify that if they're doing that on a[n] overt, conscious level, and they feel free, the amount of times people ask questions, it does make you wonder what's going on that they're not saying…'. Thus, Lynsey seemingly suggests here the hidden, controlling power of whiteness in determining a person's life chances according to their allocated race (Dyer, 1999). That is, that white people have created the world according to their own benefit and to the detriment of those they classify as Other (Bush, 2011). Yet this privilege is not acknowledged by white people, who assert that their success is because of their own individual merits (Dyer, 1999; see Chapter Two).

Indeed, Lynsey spoke of how the questioning has led her to be concerned that her daughter's surname will potentially leave her in a vulnerable position, for example when she applies to go to school:

> …it does make me realise that actually at that point, admissions have got the power to make a decision around who they take and they don't take, and the name that you put on that application form is what they see…so…it's a potential opportunity for people to make a decision about who they accept at a school based on a name.

Lynsey asserted that she has been asked about why she and her daughter do not have the same surname by 'passport control, doctors, anywhere where you go anywhere new for the first time', and that it is her impression that one of the reasons she is questioned so much is because her daughter's surname is Islamic, 'it is a different name': 'if a child had a different second name that sounded English, they may just assume that it's an ex-partner or whatever'. This is something Lynsey said has surprised her, that 'something within…means people…feel they have the right to probe…further than they would' if her daughter's surname had been white British. As Lynsey argues, 'there is a climate of high levels of divorce in general, it's not unusual for children to have a different second name [from their parent]'. Thus her reported experience of being questioned so much about having a different surname to her daughter, implies that it is to do with the two surnames being commonly conceptualised as racially (with religion included within this term) different, and that somehow this difference is of importance.

Additionally, some participants described the invasive nature of questioning they encountered in relation to their surname, specifically in regard to why they have the surname when their embodied racialised identity is deemed not to match it. Victoria Ravanbaksh (white British; Persian/Iranian married surname), for example, spoke about how she knows that her surname: 'is different', it 'stick[s] out' and so there is:

> …more conversation about it just because your name's different, and there's no need for it…"It's none of your business, don't be so nosey!" [laughs]…you know why should everybody know your life history?...And that's what they'll want…to know all the ifs, buts and whys, whereas if I just said, "Oh I'm Victoria Hay [her maiden name] well that's it, end of story.

Victoria asserted that such questioning is something that 'comes up all the time', and she argued that:

> …you don't usually tell everybody everything do you…because then they want to know, "Where did you meet? How did you meet him? How did this happen? How did that…?" And you think, "Well who are you anyway?!" You know! No, it's not necessary. I mean sometimes it's appropriate, but sometimes it just isn't…but it's always there, and you've got to decide what level you want to discuss it with anybody and everybody.

Furthermore, Chloe Hardy-Mathiesen (white British; Norwegian name added to her maiden name (Hardy) upon marriage) described herself as having 'an American accent even though I'm English', and joked that she 'should just write out a card that explains' why she has the accent and why she has 'a funny name even though I'm English….because…I have to spend around 15 minutes at the beginning of talking to people, just answering questions about sort of quite normal things, like your name'. Natalie Mustapić (white British; Croatian married surname) said that the questions she fielded were often motivated by a desire to know if she came from Former Yugoslavia, thus they were leading questions, trying to find out more information. Moreover, Anna Aladeoja (white British; Nigerian married surname) suggested that she does not get questioned so much about her name when talking to someone over the phone as she does face to face, and she thinks that is because the phone converser 'might think I'm a black person' and that it might be construed as racist to question her so much if she was black.

It appears then from the experiences outlined above that, as I discussed at length in Chapter Four, when there is an understood racial disconnect between the participant's embodied identity and the surname they carry, this causes problems with

the hardwiring of the way whiteness works. Racial passing demonstrates that there can be no such thing as race if someone can pass as white when they are supposed to be racially black (for example) (Ginsberg, 1996; see Chapter Two). My name-changers have also shown up the problematic and inconsistent nature of racial categorisation, when they have to be questioned to know if their surname accurately/racially represents their embodied racial identity, or why it does not.

As Victoria said above, apparently if she uses her white British maiden name there are no questions, because the name matches who she is usually (racially) considered to be. It appears that as soon as there is a suggestion of foreignness, through the name-changers' foreign surnames, many of my white participants have been questioned. Seemingly it must be established whether or not they are truly white British or not, and if they are, then there is consequential confusion and intrigue: why have they got this foreign disembodied label/identity? Furthermore, as I described above, it seems that such questioning has the added impact of affecting how some name-changers feel within themselves, in terms of not feeling confident about using their married surname or not wanting to face such invasive challenges concerning why they bear their surname. Indeed, in the following section I further assert this point and describe how some participants have attempted to reduce the amount of questioning/racism they receive in relation to their surname.

Avoiding (Sur)name Discrimination/Interrogation

It was notable that many of the participants spoke about trying to avoid what can be described as discriminatory or interrogatory incidents, such as those I have presented in the sections above. Victoria Ravanbaksh (white British; Persian/Iranian married surname), for example, stated that there:

> …are certain times…it's not because I'm embarrassed, it's not because of…trying to hide anything, but sometimes it's just easier when people say what's your name, I just say "Victoria"', and they subsequently ask, '"Victoria what?" And I can say well I'm the only Victoria here….so…it's often easier just to go no further and say Victoria will do.

In addition, Victoria explained that she often books unofficial things, such as cinema tickets under her maiden name (Hay), 'because it's [three] digits to say down the phone rather than having to go through the whole conversation of: "Yes, it's from Iran and it's from here and this is this", it's easier to say "It's under Hay", but then you've got to remember when you go to pick them up!' .

Indeed, Victoria also said that for the first ten years of marriage, although she had taken her husband's surname straight away, she kept one of her bank cards under Hay and one under Ravanbaksh, as 'it was easier to sign Hay, because it's so much shorter'. Victoria explained that sometimes she does not mind talking to people about her married surname, but at other times she thinks, '"Ah not going to play today, we'll be Hay!"'. However, 'there were a couple of occasions that I forgot which one I'd given them and I signed the wrong one – I thought "No, I've got to become one person and not two!". But…sometimes it makes it easier not to have to go through the rigmarole of telling everybody who you are…why you've got a name like that'.

Victoria also said that her daughter uses the shortening of 'Rav' at school, and that Victoria herself uses an e-mail address with this same shortening – 'just because it's easier and you don't have to go into everything…yeah nobody knows where Rav comes from, but…because it's so short they don't associate it with anything…so they don't sort of pry and nose…they just accept it'. Rav is apparently not so easily racialised as Ravanbaksh, it reads more as a nickname, and hence Victoria said that she is more invisible when using it. Indeed, it seems to be the invisibility of her white British maiden name that Victoria misses: people seemingly tend to racialise Ravanbaksh and consequently demand to know how she racially matches (or does not match) the name.

Bryony Chiamaka (white British; Nigerian married surname) also mentioned that her husband calls himself 'Mr David [his first name]' if it's 'for something that doesn't…legally require him to give his name…So like he's putting the car in to be serviced, he will just call himself 'Mr David' because it's so much easier…it doesn't worry him, it makes his life easier'. Bryony said they also do this at places like their Chinese takeaway (as does Alice Melissinos with her husband's first name). Even

Ailsa Czerniak (white British; Polish married surname), who said that her surname has 'never bothered me one iota', stated that when she and her husband have ordered things over the phone they used the name 'Brown', 'because it was easier for spelling and saying it'. Rebecca Travers (white British; bore a Polish surname throughout her previous marriage) also recalled how she and her husband had used the name 'Williams' on their holidays, 'just because it was…easier than people stumbling over your name…[chuckles] and he [her husband] told me that he used to call himself Stuart sometimes [instead of his Polish first name]'. As I touched upon earlier, Rebecca herself said it was an 'added bonus' when she divorced her husband to 'drop this troublesome name!'.

A couple of participants said that they avoided using parts, or the entirety, of their husband's surname, in an attempt to avoid hassle. Suzanne Balester (white British; Moroccan married name), who took her former husband's surname of Moussamih, said that she decided not to use the 'Ali' prefix, 'probably because of what it represented, if I'm honest', which referred to her reported perception that 'Ali' was too obviously Asian, and thus open to racist attacks. Marion Stamatis (white British; Greek married surname) apparently struggled even more than Suzanne with the idea of taking her husband's (Greek) surname and said that she initially kept her first husband's white British surname (Goodall), which was 'a lot easier to deal with'.

Marion explained that it was only after about eight or so years of marriage when she started a new job and the lady who did the wages insisted that she should be recorded by her married surname, that Marion used Stamatis at all. She said that she did not use it anywhere else, but living with two names became 'an awkwardness' and 'in the end…you've just got to get your head together and make a decision on what you're going to do, and I settled for Stamatis'. Nonetheless she still spoke of having 'an ambivalence towards' the name: 'I don't think I've ever comfortably used the full name, Haji Stamatis, I think I get enough reaction from Stamatis really [chuckles]'.

Marion described how even once she had changed her surname, she still tended to 'use whichever name suited me…if I felt like I was in a context that might be

tricky I would use an English name…I wouldn't say that I've felt that frequently but it's always an option…Obviously there are people out there that are racist and you just have to use your kind of antennae about it really'. Indeed, Marion said that she does have a lot of admiration for her husband's full surname, and how when she is in 'a safe community' (such as when she had been teaching a class of Muslim children) the Haj part is 'something that you can celebrate…but you can't do that everywhere…in other contexts it's something that I might have to conceal or play down or feel a bit uncomfortable about'. In addition, Marion said that she does not use Haj: 'personally I don't think I could live like that [using the Islamic pre-fix] very easily…it's too much of an encumbrance…too difficult to spell, people can get perplexed and a bit grumpy…if they're trying to spell it and there's not enough boxes for the letters [on forms] [chuckles]'.

Furthermore, she stated:

> Stamatis is bad enough…trying to spell Stamatis is difficult enough, especially on the phone because…[M] sounds like [N], and you start going through the police "[M] for [Mike]"…and that kind of thing…So just to minimise that inconvenience to people really, I don't use the Haj very often…Yeah, so there's a lot in there isn't there, I've definitely made the decision not to use the full name even though I think it's glorious…and…my husband, he does as well, he calls himself Dr Stamatis, but he'll put PH, so the Haj is…subsumed into H.

This is quite interesting in implying that both Marion and her husband (to some extent) have been prepared to alter their names according to anticipated discrimination or hostility in relation to them. Nevertheless, Marion said that now she would always confront racism with regards to Stamatis, and would always use the name, but not with Haj. For her, it is as if she has had to grow emotionally strong enough to use a surname that is not deemed white British, as apparently it was not something she was able to countenance for a good part of her marriage.

Stephanie AlAsadi (white British; Kuwaiti/Arab married surname), meanwhile, said that she had converted to Islam upon marriage - and that to do so one must choose an Islamic first name, which she chose not to use, because:

> I'm happy with my first name for starters, my parents gave it to me…in a way changing that would feel like I'm kind of saying something to my parents and that wouldn't be true…[C]hanging your first name, that is a bigger step…people would know straight away then [that she had an Islamic name], because first names are much more recognisable.

These stories have indicated the emotional difficulty of bearing a name that is commonly seen to be foreign/Other, and/or the vulnerability felt, the fear of meeting with racist attitudes because of it. They have also suggested that some of my white British participants were willing either to move back towards their previous white British identity by using their former surname, or tried to avoid taking and/or using their married surname in full. This bears similarities with existing literature on racial passing that suggests some people who are able to claim a more privileged identity may well do so (Ginsberg, 1996; Belluscio, 2006; see Chapter Two). It also supports the name-changing history that I discussed in Chapter One, in that many migrants/racial minorities have altered their names in an attempt to claim the privileges associated with the majority white identity in the UK and the USA (Wilson, 1998). In the following section I will suggest the universal nature of whiteness and racial thinking, and how carrying a (sur)name that is seen to represent a different race to one's embodied racial identity seemingly does not make such a person exempt from the influence of such discourse.

The All-Pervasiveness of Racist/Problematic Attitudes Towards Foreign (Sur)names.

As I mentioned in Chapter Two, Said (2003) asserted that the West has created prevailing interpretations of Orientals (the Other), which have then been adopted by the Other themselves. He further argued that there is no two-way interchange of ideas regarding this but that there is only a Western monologue (ibid.).

Similarly, a theme which has been running as an undercurrent throughout many of the experiences I have presented in this chapter has been how the foreignness of the participants' adopted surname has been something that apparently has played upon the white name-changers' minds. They have seemingly in some way become Other, because of their adopted surname, in accordance with the apparent name racialising system. Furthermore, there has been a tendency on the part of some white name-changers to arguably overstate in the interviews how awkward their surname must be for others. This suggests they have internalised the notion of foreignness/Otherness as being negative, inconvenient and difficult, and of white Britishness as being the marker of civilisation, easiness and normalness (Dyer, 1999; see Chapter Two). Indeed, it was quite noticeable how a number of participants were quick to try to explain away any incidents/attitudes that could potentially be perceived as racist. Elinor Murley (white British; only used her husband's Peruvian/Spanish surname at the doctors) spoke of how she felt 'bad in some ways for the pharmacists, that they *can't* pronounce my name', that they are '*struggling'* [my emphasis] to say her name, and that she often tells them to call her by her maiden name: 'it's fine you don't need to say *the rest of it*' [my emphasis]. To refer to her husband's part of her surname as 'the rest of it' could be interpreted as being disrespectful to the surname, to its origin and meaning, that somehow it is not worth someone making the effort to say it.

Rebecca Travers (white British) meanwhile spoke of her Polish surname from her first marriage as being 'embarrassing' and 'unprofessional' at her workplace (as mentioned earlier), that having the name '*undermine[d]* her professionalism' [my emphasis], so much so that she would get people to pronounce the name 'in an *easier* way' [my emphasis] – in other words, it was the name's fault for being difficult, not the people who would not make the effort to say it. Indeed, Rebecca asserted that those who tell people how to pronounce their name correctly 'can come across as a bit…it's making people *uncomfortable* by presenting them with a really difficult name to pronounce' [my emphasis]. Rebecca suggested that the reason for any negative responses to her name was that there was 'a bit of *embarrassment* there for people, a *fear* that they can't say your name, or you might not be able to communicate with each

other, because of your name' [my emphasis]. This arguably implies that she was somehow at fault for bearing a Polish surname, for requiring others to try to pronounce it. Similarly, Sally Hasani (white British; Albanian married surname) said that she does not usually get too annoyed with people who mispronounce her surname because: 'although to me it looks like an easy…I mean I know myself, I think everybody knows, when you see a foreign name and you don't know how to pronounce it, you do kind of panic and think "Oh…", wonder if the person is going to be offended…I don't really mind too much'.

Linda Abadjian (white British; Armenian married surname) spoke of how her children's friends have always made jokes about their surname, and for Linda this was 'because, a lot of people I think are *embarrassed* at trying to attempt to say a foreign sounding surname' [my emphasis]. In addition, she described how at her workplace the only problem with her name was regarding the pronunciation of it: 'I think it's a bit like the attitude we have in this country about learning foreign languages…we tend to think, "Oh I mustn't try to say that because I'm going to sound stupid if I get it wrong"'. As I mentioned in Chapter Four, Linda said that she has experienced a lot of surprise at her physical appearance in relation to her name, but her caveat was that: 'I think it's just normal isn't it…wouldn't you normally associate the person with that name? For instance, if I had a Chinese surname, then I could expect people to think that maybe someone who's Chinese is going to appear before them'. This explanation contrasted somewhat with the annoyance she described when people kept looking over her shoulder, not believing she was the person to whom her surname belonged. It is as though she felt the need to make excuses for the behaviour she had encountered, despite feeling irritated by such incidents. Indeed, she was keen to state that she believes that the questioning she gets about her name is because 'I think they genuinely are interested' in the name.

Chloe Hardy-Mathiesen (white British; Norwegian 'Mathiesen' added upon marriage to her maiden name (Hardy)) also suggested that 'human beings [have]…an inherent *fear* of strangers that we as civilised people should recognise…and overcome…and certainly not let it affect our judgement' [my emphasis]. Furthermore,

Jamal Hassan Hamdaoui (mixed-race British; Arabic name) said that although there is 'a lot of prejudice around a name', for him the 'bigger question is…is that a racist or an intolerant act…Or is it exactly the same as anyone looking at an ambiguous word that maybe pushes their nose out of joint, because they don't know exactly what it means first off?'. The example he gave was that 'if you were a proud sort of self-assertive person, your nose might be a little out of joint because you can't tell me what that name means, that word is other…and I think it's exactly the same for a label for a person or name'.

In addition, Victoria Ravanbaksh (white British; Persian/Iranian married surname) spoke of a theory she has developed regarding why people could not say her surname:

> I think when you come across a strange word, you pick out certain letters and your mind blanks some of the others, and they just pick out the ones and form it into something that they can say, or that they think it might be, and they don't do it consciously, sometimes it is totally subconsciously…because your brain just works that way, and it picks out certain letters that are the main ones, or they might pick out the first few and then something's left at the end that just – "Well, we'll forget about that bit"……if they try, if they make a conscious effort and sound it out, then they'd get it right, but…I suppose they're unbelieving that it's as easy as it is, they expect it's going to be harder, so, they don't want to make a fool of themselves, which you can kind of understand…but a lot of it is just the way their brains work...I mean mine's the same, everybody when you see a strange word, you pick out certain letters and form it into something that you know…and that's what comes out of your mouth…so…you know, it's a long word, and it's got Ds and Bs and Rs and Ks…all over the place, so you just kind of make something up that sounds like it's got those in…I think that's it!

Ailsa Czerniak (white British; Polish married surname) also asserted that she does not mind that people ask her about where her surname comes from as she often asks 'people where they originate from'. She further explained that it 'gets my back up' if people get angry with her for not being able to pronounce their name so she does

not get angry with those who cannot say her name. Indeed, Ailsa's view of migrants or foreignness appeared to be quite colourful:

> Emily: you don't feel like you're treated any differently because of your name?
> Ailsa: No, no. I get more annoyed with other people when I ring…I'm on NTL and I ring up for help, and it's gone to India, and it's gone to someone who can't speak English. I get annoyed about that…
> Emily: Right…
> Ailsa: …and it's not really with the person, it's with Virgin, for employing people that can't speak English and you can't understand them…I get annoyed with that, and I get annoyed with doctors at the hospital when they can't speak English…'cause I don't think that's fair. I get annoyed with other things as well! I am prejudiced with some things, I guess, not towards me, but towards other people, because it annoys me that the National Health has to pay for interpreters because they can't speak English, that annoys me…because if we went to another country, we wouldn't get that free, we would have to pay for it. Those things really rile me, especially when the National Health Service is on our knees. So I guess I'm more prejudiced than I've felt it to me.

Additionally, Marion Stamatis (white British; Greek married surname) said that when the children she taught used to Anglicise her name as 'Steve-ridis', she 'never took it as racist, I always took it as fun really…because to me it was a bit like Lego…moving the part about…"How can we make this English?"'. This example buttresses Lipski's (1976) point that names deemed foreign often tend to be re-made by others in terms of the dominant phonetic system in the particular country. Lipski (1976) also asserts that the name bearer may do the same thing due to an expectation that their name will be badly mispronounced. Nonetheless, Marion's point also seems to be another example of a participant trying to think the best of people who mispronounce/modify their name, of a belief that the mispronunciation is almost natural. Similarly, Natalie Mustapić (white British; Croatian married surname) said that she tells people not to '*worry*' [my emphasis] about mispronouncing her name and that 'half of my colleagues and family can't pronounce my name anyway, so…I don't make

a big issue of it…I tend to *make people feel more comfortable about the fact that they mispronounce my name*' [my emphasis].

Furthermore, Anna Aladeoja (white British; Nigerian married surname) said that 'it's funny, because I can kind of judge people [for not pronouncing Anna's name correctly]…but then I realise that I do exactly the same…when it comes to African names or something, just kind of skim over it when you don't recognise it'. Also, she stated that when she started her new job, one of her colleagues said to her that when she had attended the job interview they had 'imagined a black lady coming' because of her name. Anna said that this comment was 'quite interesting…it wasn't said in a negative way at all'. Anna thereby implies that this comment did not have any adverse side to it, but would she have been given the job if she had been conceived as actually black? Why had the panel been considering whether she was black at all?

Also, Charlotte Leary (black British; Zimbabwean born and raised; Zimbabwean maiden name) seemed very aware of her status as a migrant, even though she is now a British citizen, and seemed to try to justify the racism that she indicated she has experienced in the UK:

> …this is not my country so obviously sometimes people can pick their own. If I was in Zimbabwe I'd probably do the same thing, so sometimes there's *natural* discrimination that someone can just favour someone from their own origin or from skin colour you just…do them a bit of a favour in comparison to the other person. So there can be something like that, yeah….
> [My emphasis].

Meanwhile Linda Abadjian (white British; Armenian married surname) articulated that her surname tends to be remembered when she complains about something: 'they certainly remember the surname as being that weird sounding name'. When I asked if someone had actually referred to her name as 'weird', she said, 'Yeah they have yeah, "That weird sounding name", "That funny sounding name"'. Linda said that she did not react to these comments, 'because I've come across so many things over the years, I just don't bother reacting anymore now', and that she was just relieved that they remembered her, so that her phone call could be dealt with quickly. It seems

surprising that Linda should not be offended by such comments, especially when she was already making a complaint about something else. Linda stated that this 'probably sounds strange', and explained that, 'because it's my married name, that's probably why I wasn't offended…I think if I was born with that name, I probably would have been offended, thinking about it'. This implies that she has been so used to negative responses to her married surname that she does not even notice, or bother about, them. Or perhaps if it was not her surname, but was someone else's, she would have thought it was a 'weird' name too.

I have presented these excerpts not in order to castigate my participants but rather to underline how the concept of white supremacy, and the Othering of anything not deemed white British, are apparently so overwhelmingly pervasive and natural. Moreover, it is seemingly taken for granted by my participants that there are such things as white British names and foreign names: just as the literature suggests is the case with race itself (Ratcliffe, 2004; Ahmad and Sheldon, 1994). My participants cannot be exempt from dominant societal discourse just because they have changed their surname to one deemed to be of a different racial category to their conceived embodied one. In the next section, however, I will provide examples of participants who have seemingly tried to make a stand against anti-foreign discourse.

Fighting Discrimination/Racism through Name

In the previous section, I mentioned Said's (2003) view on the internalisation of Othering discourse by those constructed as Other. However, as I stated in Chapter Two, Said's argument can be criticised for seemingly disallowing the possibility of Orientals/the Other to resist dominant Western representations of them. As Foucault (1983) argued, relations of power are found within everyday, individual relationships, as well as within structural/institutional situations (also Wemyss, 2009). I will use the following interview excerpts in order to demonstrate how some of my participants have spoken of strategies for avoiding name discrimination/racially-motivated questioning, of a desire to fight racism by promoting their foreign (in the UK context) name in their everyday decision-making and encounters.

Sally Hasani (white British; Albanian married surname) explained that her husband 'considered changing his name [to Sally's maiden name when they got married] to avoid…discrimination', because he had experienced episodes of discrimination, but she did not 'feel comfortable with that' so she took her husband's surname. She gave one of her main reasons for doing so as: 'I did feel like if there's…discrimination, I don't think it's the right response for you to have to change…do you know what I mean? I didn't feel like it was right to do that'. Additionally, Anna Aladeoja (white British; Nigerian married surname) described how she likes the fact that her surname is 'different', because:

> …it reminds me that I'm married, and…I think it's really important to value my husband's culture as well…because obviously I'm aware of…racial issues in the past and even now, like the way that Africa is often kind of looked down upon, I think it's good to be like proud of who he is and stuff…and then I like the fact that it identifies me as married to a Yoruba.

Furthermore, although Marion Stamatis indicated that she was in two minds about taking her husband's name, as I discussed above, she asserted that she has used her experience in order to correct children she has taught:

> …they might be taking the mick out of another kid for some reason or other and then I could draw them up and say, "Ah right, you think that's bad, what about this?", because somebody would make some cocky comment, and I could tackle it, I could try in a little way to try to tackle a bit of racism, a bit of bullying…so it was definitely an advantage in that position of power or authority, but in a nice way, because you can't like terrify kids…I used to see that as a definite positive at school.

Also, as I will discuss further in Chapter Six, Jamal Hassan Hamdaoui (mixed-race British; Arab name) spoke of how he decided to drop his informal name (given to him by his mother to help him racially pass as white British) of Mal McKenzie so as not to give in to prevalent Islamophobic and anti-migrant views. He asserted that it was his name, so why should he not use it? He said that he 'strongly' feels that those

‘people who are actively trying to Anglicise themselves by deliberately trying to hide an aspect of their identity which they feel will maybe hinder them’, ‘are doing other people of mixed-races a slight injustice’. Jamal argued that ‘it needs more people just to have the guts to say, “Yeah [chuckles]…my genes come from all over the place, what can I do about it?”…what’s a name…?’.

Jamal stated that his inner ‘rebel’ was ‘excited’ by the idea that in having a name, which does not reflect the stereotypical idea of his race (in that he is mixed-race and his white, European heritage is obscured by his name), he was somehow fighting against ascriptions of race in relation to name. He depicted how this notion was also reinforced by his habit of telling people who questioned him about his race that his grandmother is Swedish:

> I guess it’s because you don’t look at me and see a Swede…I specifically start with Sweden, not because I feel that it’s easier to integrate myself being part-Swedish, because it totally just bloody throws them!...they’re ready to make ascriptions and I’m like, “Yeah, Sweden” and they’re like, “How can you be Swedish?”.

Indeed, Jamal said that: ‘the fact that my grandmother comes from Sweden seems to be insignificant, but the fact that my grandfather comes from Lebanon is significant’. Thus, Jamal appeared to revel in the way in which his name, his appearance, and his mixed-race identity, seemingly challenge people’s conceptions of what he (racially) *is*. This is similar to Dreisinger’s (2008) point, which I mentioned in Chapter Two, concerning how racial passing can be an anti-racist, revolutionary act, in that it problematises and thereby challenges the presumed absoluteness of whiteness (also Pfeiffer, 2003). Jamal has asserted that he has deliberately chosen to use a name, which he knows will lead to a lot of questioning about his race etcetera in order to try to show up the constructed and problematic nature of racial categorisation.

Rose Urzica (white British; Romanian married surname) spoke of having played with people’s perceived prejudices against her surname. She emphasised her belief that the UK is no ‘less racist than it ever was’ but that people have ‘just got cleverer at covering it up’, and the ‘name is the tag that…racists use…Sometimes

wrongly, which is quite amusing'. She described her occasional response to apparent discrimination as follows:

> …when people have made that assumption that I'm Eastern European…I've played along with it, just to see…how far down the road they would…go……I've also done it with the whole Roma thing…and because people have no clue about Roma names…I've let people assume that I'm Roma, until they've met me, and that's been quite amusing as well.

This is an apparent example of someone pretending to meet others' expectations of their race (based upon their name) and then confronting those people with the problematic and inconsistent nature of racial thinking. Indeed, these examples above have indicated an awareness on the part of my participants of the racism associated with foreign names and that they have felt some duty to make a stand against such attitudes.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have highlighted the significance of the racialisation of names upon my participant's everyday lives in terms of their familial, social, educational and employment experiences. Despite claims that difference is now conceived in terms of culture rather than race (Solomos and Back, 2000; Brah, Hickman and Mac an Ghaill, 1999; see Chapters One and Two), my participants' reported experiences strongly suggest that the essentialisation of skin colour (embodied race) lives on, and thereby so does racism. Indeed, many of my name-changers' stories have also indicated the high level of disrespect and/or invasive questioning they have experienced in relation to their names. I have suggested that the seemingly persistent questioning of my participants implies the remaining importance of racialisation within UK society. I subsequently discussed in this chapter how hostility towards foreign (sur)names has led some participants to make decisions about their name choice, which they may not otherwise have taken.

Moreover, for some name-changers, bearing a (sur)name associated with a different race to their own ascribed embodied race has apparently led to feelings of

uncertainty, even vulnerability, in relation to their own sense of identity. I compared their position with that of the inbetween people, as theorised particularly by Roediger (2005). Such feelings apparently led some participants to develop strategies in order to try to feel safer/more at ease in terms of trying to avoid name discrimination and/or questioning. On the other hand, some other participants described how they tried to make a stand against racialised thinking.

What came through very strongly from the participants' reported experiences is that the racialisation of name appears to matter very much, as it has impacted on their everyday lives. Names in relation to race thereby are worthy of further research, alongside other signifiers of race such as skin colour and accent. I have also asserted in this chapter that racialised thinking is seemingly all-pervasive, even amongst those who have taken a (sur)name associated with a different race to their own perceived embodied race. As I discussed in Chapter Two, we are the product of the society in which we are raised and we seemingly cannot be exempted from its systems of power or discourse, including those which assert the supremacy of whiteness (Ferber, 1999).

CHAPTER SIX: 'WHAT WOULD IT BE REASONABLE FOR THE KID TO BE CALLED?' – NEGOTIATING THE RACIALISED ESSENTIALISM OF NAMES.

Introduction

Lieberson and Bell (1992) assert in their US-based study that parents' naming choices are influenced by what they believe their children's eventual personalities or characteristics will be. However, they also cite outside pressures on name choice. For example, the parents' perceptions of how other people will react to the chosen name, a mindfulness of how names are viewed in the mass media, and an awareness of institutional 'norms and pressures' (ibid.:514). This refers to religious, class and ethnic/racial norms (ibid.). Research into naming practices where the parents consider themselves to be of different racial and/or faith backgrounds has been surprisingly limited in the UK setting (Edwards and Caballero, 2008). Edwards and Caballero's (2008) work is an exception, and it indicated that whilst such couples tended to choose names that they liked from popular culture, they also desired that the names should represent the dual heritage of their children. Edwards and Caballero (2008) suggested that parents' attitudes towards the chosen name may change as their child grows older, and that they may begin to fear that a name conceived as foreign could make their child vulnerable to racial abuse.

I will analyse in this chapter the data from my interviews, specifically in relation to the topic of naming children. As I mentioned in Chapter One, this issue emerged in the interviews as a theme of particular importance to many of my participants. My data in this regard further suggest that names are racially essentialised as being foreign/Other or white British. Accordingly, in line with Edwards and Caballero's (2008) claim, name-discrimination was something many of my participants feared would be encountered by their children.

Consequently, in a similar vein to the analyses of Lieberson and Bell (2008) indicated above, something that became very apparent during my interviews was the deep level of thought that most of the interviewees had given to naming their children. Specifically, though, some of my participants suggested that such thinking was in

terms of how the name would be racially perceived: would it be too foreign/Other? At the same time, there was often an articulated desire to represent the non-British side of the child's heritage, and the name was frequently considered to be one of the main ways of symbolising this. Name was thereby often reified as standing for what the person *is*, in terms of race. The incongruence of these two considerations was also combined with some of the participants' own rather problematic position towards race and name, in that some participants seemed to consider their child to be in some way foreign/Other. This is perhaps unsurprising in light of the literature I discussed in Chapter Two on the way in which white supremacy grows out of the mainstream (Ferber, 1999), and – in relation to my white participants - how every white person is complicit within the system of whiteness, in promoting and benefitting from its power and notion of superiority (Macedo and Gounari, 2006).

Such (perhaps unconscious) difficulties/struggles about their children's race/foreignness subsequently resulted in some participants asserting that they had developed the coping strategy of giving their child a name that they felt would help them to racially pass (Ginsberg, 1996; see Chapter Two) as white British, at least in a disembodied sense – that is, on paper. Some other participants, however, indicated that they had chosen to give their children foreign names in the belief that this would oppose racist structures. It is interesting to note that the interviewees therefore (un)consciously associated/equated name to race/nationality, almost as though it is some kind of regime of truth (Reed, 2005; see Chapter Two). They indicated that their married/maiden name (respectively) would be perceived as foreign, whilst their other surname was constructed as white British, unmarked, invisible.

Furthermore, I discussed the notion of a racial hierarchy (Bulmer and Solomos, 1999; Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo, 2005) in Chapter Two, which suggests that people conceived as black are placed at the bottom and those considered white, at the top. In this chapter I will also consider if, according to my participants' reported experiences, there is likewise a common conception of a racial hierarchy of names.

What is it 'Reasonable' for a Child to be Called? Balancing Fears of Discrimination with Desires to Reflect Children's Heritage.

Victoria Ravanbaksh (white British; Iranian/Persian married surname) said that she and her husband wanted their children's names to be pronounceable by both her English family and her husband's Iranian family, and that it was thus a 'deliberate' decision to give them one 'English' first name and one 'Persian' first name to go with the Persian surname. At the same time, however, Victoria expressed that her husband in particular was:

> …aware of prejudice against name, on your application form for a job and that sort of thing…so we wanted them to have a very English name if they want to use it…So he was really aware that there may be a prejudice against the Iranian name, so we decided to go for one of each…and we put the Iranian name first because it flowed better, with the names we'd chosen.

However, Victoria said that she and her husband impressed upon their children that they could use their English name in the future should they encounter discrimination. This implies an understanding that names are reified in terms of whiteness and Otherness, in that Victoria discussed English and Iranian names without conscious awareness of the constructed nature of these terms, as well as in suggesting that her children may suffer from having a name that is understood to be foreign. Consequently, Victoria and her husband's apparent strategy for coping with their expressed dilemma, was to give their children a choice. They could try to racially pass as white British in the future, by using their English name, should they feel that they have experienced discrimination in relation to their Iranian name (although they would still presumably carry the Iranian surname). Alternatively, they could express their dual-heritage within their names. This latter option supports Edwards and Caballero's (2008) afore-mentioned research finding that parents with different racial backgrounds tend to want to reflect both heritages within their children's names.

Chloe Hardy-Mathiesen (white British; raised in America; added Norwegian name to white British maiden name upon marriage) and her husband Lars Hardy-Mathiesen (white British; born and raised in Norway; British name added to existing

Norwegian surname upon marriage), both expressed a desire to choose names for any children they have in the future that are pronounceable and recognised in both the UK and in Norway. Chloe said that this is a constraint in terms of the pool of names that could be chosen: '…it's annoying because it does kind of limit you, you think, "Ooh that's a really nice name, but oh no well it doesn't work…it's not a name that anyone in Norway has ever heard, or it's not a name here anyone has ever heard"'. When I asked her for more detail about why she would decide their children's names according to this criteria, Chloe cited her concerns that their children would find it difficult enough having to spell their Norwegian surname in the UK, without also having an unfamiliar first name:

> Emily: …how does that make you feel when your name isn't pronounced correctly? Is that something that really…upsets you, to that extent…where you would let it affect your choice of names?
> Chloe: …I'd let it affect my choice of names simply because it just makes your life so much more difficult…I mean you're already going to have to spell Mathiesen, having to spell your first name as well and having people get it wrong…I don't like people getting my name wrong…I think fitting in more rather than less would be better for my child, and being able to fit in both cultures means choosing a name that's conducive to both cultures……But…with first names I don't want it to become that huge issue that people can't pronounce things and it's a nightmare for them and it…just makes you stick out more…so…I think…trying to fit in with a name would be a good idea.

It is interesting how Chloe uses the term 'culture' in order to express the way in which her children's names would or would not 'fit in' within British and Norwegian societies. As I discussed in Chapter Two, culture has largely replaced the term race in common discourse within the UK (Gilroy, 1993). There has been a move away from the biological understanding of difference, which has been acknowledged to be racist, towards culture, which is deemed to be accessible to all and thereby not discriminatory (Lentin and Titley, 2011a). However, in actuality, culture can be as essentialised as race (Lentin, 2005). To argue that there is one culture of white Britons, and likewise other cultures belonging to specific 'communities' of racial

minorities within the UK, and still other cultures belonging to other nations, is problematic, and racialising in itself. It would appear that names are similarly essentialised in terms of a racialised notion of culture. It seems that names considered British – with the strong undertones of whiteness that this classification seemingly suggests - are perceived positively within the powerful majority discourse of the British nation, whereas names, which are deemed foreign are conceived negatively (-perhaps to differing extents, as I will discuss later).

Elinor Murley (white British; husband has a Peruvian surname, which she decided not to use generally) also spoke of her wish to have names for her children that would be representative of both her, and her husband's, backgrounds. Yet she expressed concern about the potential for discrimination in relation to those names that would symbolise her husband's Peruvian heritage:

> But in terms of names...I suppose, yeah…I would worry about it, and I'm looking at de Mendoza [her husband's surname] now, and I'm thinking, 'it's not that bad', but in the fact that I'm thinking, 'it's not that bad', then I sort of...it's on some kind of progression of being more difficult to live with perhaps.....I mean particularly because as mixed-race children they would be dark-skinned...not recognisably of a particular culture…then…it's a concern, how would they go through life with that and perhaps…it would depend on the choice of Christian names as well, but if you called…them Spanish names that, again English people didn't recognise and a Spanish surname, or well we just think of it as a foreign name that people didn't recognise and a foreign surname, then it might be...an added problem….

Elinor thus suggests here that names are essentialised: those names that are not considered by the majority discourse to be white British are lumped together and given a foreign label. She is implying that there is little desire within mainstream white British discourse to understand the origins of Other names – some are just foreign and that is that. Relatedly, Winder (2004:348) provides an interesting example of British television commentators who 'find it hilarious when their colleagues stumble over a foreign name', whereas a migrant who 'slightly mispronounces an English word is thought an utter dunce' (see Chapter One for more discussion on this topic). All in all,

as I suggested in Chapter Five, names that are perceived to be different/foreign are not necessarily accorded much respect, for they are conceived as noticeable and different, in contrast to the invisibility of white British names. This supports the notion that embodied whiteness is deemed invisible and pure, and oppositional to the negative and ultra-visible embodied blackness (Dyer, 1999).

Furthermore, Elinor eloquently represented her dilemma as regards naming any children she may have:

> …there is kind of that question that…would you burden your child with a…foreign name, when you don't have to, or when it's not, for me, it doesn't necessarily represent part of my culture, it would almost be giving them that name because I thought it sounded pretty.....but at the same time then...if you avoid giving your child a slightly different name, then it's almost kind of making the whole situation worse, and dividing society more between people who can claim white heritage and people who can't and that sort of thing….

Here Elinor has asserted that some names are representative of 'difference', of foreignness, in contrast to other names, which are symbolic of 'white heritage'. Thereby Elinor has suggested that some names actually represent a person's racial background. The implication of this is that if Elinor were to give her children names that she felt were white British, and which thereby did not reflect her husband's Peruvian heritage, she would consequently be helping them to racially pass as white (Ginsberg, 1996; see Chapter Two for my discussion of embodied racial passing).

Elinor did though express that her ideal preference would to be represent the children's dual-heritage within their names:

> …it would be very nice if we could work it out so that our children's names perfectly symbolised...their full ethnic background from both me and Eduardo's [her husband's] side, um if we could come up with the perfect name…[on] the level of ideas – that is what we both want, and it's certainly what I would want would be to come up with a perfect kind of combination of, either a collection of things that were very Scottish and very Peruvian, or very Spanish….

Nonetheless, Elinor also outlined another consideration that Spain had conquered Peru and that her husband's surname was more Spanish than Inca. Consequently, she questioned if they would 'be really signifying what [they] want it to signify?' if they chose Spanish Peruvian names for their children. Thus, Elinor said, 'in an ideal world, at the level of kind of ideas and things, what we would both want…would be to have the perfect name for our children, which synthesised all these different things, had bits of Scottish and bits of Peruvian, and sounded very nice, and very artistic and that sort of thing'. However, Elinor asserted that the difficulty with this idea is that:

> …no one would be able to pronounce it and no one would be able to spell it, and every time the poor little child said what its name was, people would go, 'Oh, where are you from?', so for those reasons we might have to tone down [chuckles] what we'd like to do in the way of names, or what I'd like to do in the way of names, and think, actually...what would it be…reasonable for the kid to be called....

To talk of 'what it would be reasonable' to call a child is an intriguing statement, as it implies that there is a juggling act going on within Elinor's mental process of choosing her (hypothetical) child's name, which could also be said of many of my other participants. The dual-heritage of the child is apparently being considered and how this should duly be reflected in the child's names. However, there is also the underlying concern of practicality: what is going to be recognised, what is it *acceptable* for a child to be called in the UK in terms of their not being subjected to questioning about their origins, or even to discrimination. One can perceive in both Chloe's and Elinor's accounts the power of whiteness at work, in that making name-discrimination/practicality a factor in name-choice is presented as being a natural consideration. It seems that these participants feel it is common-sense to consider the Otherness of their partner's heritage in comparison to the apparent notion that white British names belong and are unmarked.

Indeed, several parents expressed concerns about their children's employment chances in relation to them not having a typically British sounding name. Victoria Ravanbaksh said that she feels things are much better now than in the past,

but nonetheless: 'you can never tell, I mean when there's 50 applicants for a job, you don't get an interview, how do you know it's not your name?'. Furthermore, Natalie Mustapić (white British; Croatian married surname) revealed that: 'It's…a question I raise for my children…in terms of what would happen if they were applying to…the sort of traditional law firm that I applied to…how would they react to my children with a foreign surname…applying for a job there?'.

Natalie indicated that her concern was therefore about: 'the impact of the children's names in terms of in the future applying for the jobs and the key thing…that…initial judgements are being made, purely on their application and their…names'. She also spoke of an awareness of 'those employment surveys that do suggest that names, unfortunately they do sometimes matter…on that initial thing…'. This seems to be a reference to Correspondence Test research (e.g. Wood *et al.*, 2009) (as I outlined in Chapters One and Two). Natalie's anxiety about how such economic penalties may apply to her children is especially poignant when considered in relation to her own reported experience of being a young person who grew up with the apparent privileges of an unmarked, invisible white British surname.

Linda Abadjian (white British; Armenian married surname) also spoke of being apprehensive about potential economic penalties, as she said her children's Armenian surname was often perceived by others to be Asian-sounding:

> Emily: Is that a concern for you…when perhaps your children are applying for jobs…that…their name is taken to be Asian, do you think there is a disadvantage?
> Linda: ……when they employ…it should just be based on ability…But you've got to get past that barrier haven't you, to get to the interview stage?
> Emily: Yep…
> Linda: That's the problem, so if you're just applying, then it's your name that's…coming up isn't it, it's not what you look like…
> Emily: Mm…
> Linda: You see, I find these particular questions difficult to answer because I'm not in that situation…I've often thought that they would have more of a problem with the surname, to be honest, as they were growing up…I'm hoping things will have changed a lot…but then again…as I said, you know, it's underlying isn't it [discrimination], it's still there….

Something that seems to come through from many of my participants' interviews is a fear of the unknown, of things which could happen but over which they have no control. Often they spoke of a hope that things were getting better, that discrimination could not be so bad anymore because there are more and more people with names that are not typically white British sounding in the UK. Victoria Ravanbaksh asserted that: '…I think things have changed, and I think people are more accepting now than they were twenty years ago of funny names…'. Amy Jammeh (white British; Gambian married surname) also expressed the rationale that her son's Gambian first name 'doesn't particularly stand out even amongst the kind of white British children - many of them have…quite unusual names now'.

Both Amy and Victoria have here suggested that some names are 'funny' or 'unusual': in other words, strange or Other. As I mentioned above (and in Chapter Five), this intimates that many of my participants have (perhaps unconsciously) internalised the notion that some names are white British, unmarked, familiar. Also, that Other, foreign names, are unnatural, overly-visible and potentially disadvantageous in a context where some races are deemed to be higher up in the national hierarchy than others. As I discussed in Chapter Two, such ideas are seemingly perpetuated and promoted via a nation's elite members, who draw the boundaries of normalness and who thereby depict (in the UK) minorities as Other and to be excluded (Solomos, 2001). I am arguing that my participants' data suggest this Othering also occurs with names: names construed as white British are privileged, and those that are not conceived as such, do not carry this privilege.

Indeed, Amy said that she fears for her son in the future because of his mixed-heritage: 'I think as he gets older that's when children start looking for differences', and this concern is so deep-set that she has been making preparations (such as taking a Masters Degree to improve her employability abroad) to move with her husband and son to Gambia once he finishes primary school in the UK: 'I'd like to put him in an environment where it's more focused on his education than his name and his heritage really'. This appears to be an attempt by Amy to take control of the

situation, to shield her son as much as she can from the discrimination she perceives to be awaiting him in the UK. She stated:

> I don't want him to be bullied or persecuted or discriminated against in any way...and if I can protect him from that by making that move, I think that's a perfectly reasonable thing to do…I can't see any reason that I would not do that…and if I have the choice to make his life simpler then I think that's what I need to do really....

On the other hand, not all of the interviewees said they had worried about their children having a foreign name. For example, Bryony Chiamaka (white British; Nigerian married surname) responded to my asking 'did you ever have any concerns about…your children…having a Nigerian surname…?', as follows:

> Bryony: No…And…maybe I should have done, but I didn't because I just thought that they were very lucky to have such a lovely dad who is very clever…all my three kids are clever, all the grandchildren are clever, so how lucky are they?
> Emily: Yeah
> Bryony: And…they're good looking, they've got this lovely physique…tall and slim and…[they] don't put on weight, and so I just used to talk about all the advantages they have, and…I'm not saying that they never have problems, don't think I'm saying that, I'm just saying that everybody has problems, everybody has issues and you have to face them and you have to deal with them….

This is interesting in that even though Bryony said she did not have concerns for her children in connection with their Nigerian surname, it seems to be reflective of her own positive outlook on life. Throughout the interview she promoted the idea of having an empowering attitude towards living, of how a person should not let the negativity of others, and/or problems they encounter, affect them, that they should instead grasp the positivity of their situation. Nonetheless, her assertion that everyone has issues does imply an acknowledgement that she did have underlying concerns for her children in bearing Nigerian names. Moreover, as I expressed in Chapter Two, that

Obama's race is much referred to when assertions are made that the USA is a post-racial society, suggests that race does still matter (Lentin and Titley, 2011a) – likewise, Bryony arguably would not be so vehement in stressing the positives of her children's dual-heritage, if she did not think there were also potential negatives to bearing names perceived as foreign.

Additionally, Mandy Mundra (white British; Indian married surname) described how her sons have told her of their own feelings that their Indian surname may hold them back in life, but Mandy does not seem to accept that this could be the case:

> Emily: Do you think that some surnames have more advantages than others?
> Mandy: Um…I don't think so, I mean, I think listening to…my boys, they would say that they can see it being sort of a hindrance for them, because people don't know them, they don't see them, but people, there is a problem with surnames, sort of, people judge you without seeing you…but I don't feel like it has done so far with them, and I don't think it matters at all with me, so…
> Emily: Yeah sure. So, when they've been saying that to you, is that in terms of their education, or is it socially? Or…I mean, what kind of examples did they give you?
> Mandy: I think they feel in university, or when they're applying for jobs that they're wondering whether they'll be judged because…it is an Indian name and whether…there will be a time that maybe…they don't know how that'll impact on them. So far it's not mattered at all, I mean there's such a mixture at university anyway….

It may be the case that Mandy's children have indeed not had any problems with their surname. Nonetheless, it seems from the way that Mandy was so dismissive (in tone as well as vocally) of the possibility of them encountering problems (despite what she said her sons had told her), that she was denying the possibility of her children experiencing racism from a perspective of love, from the perfectly understandable position of not wanting this to happen and so not acknowledging that it has or could.

Racial Hierarchy of Names

In a similar vein to Mandy's quotation above, Chloe Hardy-Mathiesen (white British; raised in America; white British maiden name (Hardy), Norwegian name

(Mathiesen) added upon marriage) also seemed to deflect any worries about name discrimination away from her (future) children. For Chloe, though, the reason she gave was: 'I have read in the papers…of people who have had problems with foreign sounding names, but…as far as I can tell they tend to be Asian and African names, which sort of…I would say is less anti-foreigner and more racist, so I don't think that having a Scandinavian last name would prejudice my children…in that way, so it wouldn't worry me at all…'. She said she perceives in the UK that:

> …there is this feeling with Scandinavians that…there are, I hate to say it, but it's like, "They're foreign, but they're our kind of people"…"They're foreign, but they're alright"…and…when people think of Scandinavia they think of fish and IKEA and Abba…I can't think of that many negative connotations that people have in this country about Scandinavians except maybe people who disapprove of their liberal views towards things like sex and nudity and stuff like that, but it's not something I've ever come across really….

Consequently, Chloe is suggesting here that there is a racial hierarchy of names, whereby Asian and African names are at the bottom, and Scandinavian names are higher up, signifying a more acceptable form of Otherness: in parallel with the notion of a hierarchy of races (Dyer, 1999; Ratcliffe, 2004; see Chapter Two**)**.

Moreover, we can see from the history of British naming that there have been trends of giving children exotic names originating from France and Scandinavia. In the twentieth century, for example, there was 'a vogue for French versions of names that already exist in English: Abigail, Diane, Nicole; and for Scandinavian names: Greta, Karen, Kirsten and Ingrid' (Wilson, 1998:330). Wilson (1998) asserts that the exoticness and 'strangeness' of these names disappeared once they had become popular and accepted. Thus it would seem that Chloe may have a point, in that some names may be conceived as acceptably or even positively foreign in the UK context, if they are associated with a country that is not disdained within the UK.

In addition, Chloe also shared an interesting anecdote in relation to this topic, whereby at a previous workplace of hers, she said one of her 'white colleagues'

decided to give his son a first name that she took to be Asian-sounding. She explained how:

> …there were a lot of raised eyebrows…someone actually said to him, "Well don't you think that that might prejudice people?", because…I could have understood it, and I think most people could have understood it more if it had been a mixed marriage, you know, if his wife had been black or Asian, and it had been a name from her culture, but they were both like middle class white people.

She went further to express that to have 'this little blond hair, blue eyed boy' with an Asian sounding name:

> …is quite unusual, and I would say that it wasn't that people disliked the name, but there was this sort of worry that…you're already making his life that much more difficult because people are going to make assumptions about him based on that name…unfortunate assumptions…people are going to assume that he's black….

Consequently, it seems that Chloe's concern about her own future children's Norwegian names was somewhat dissipated by her expressed belief in a racial hierarchy of names: some names will be more discriminated against than others, some names may be foreign but some are more foreign than others. This asserted belief meant that her own potential concerns for her children were seemingly deflected onto others. To have a name that people perceive to be 'black' is 'unfortunate' as it is the 'black names', which attract the discrimination, not the Norwegian names her children would have. Furthermore, her anecdote indicates a real equation of name with race. The implication is that a person's name matches their heritage, who they are: therefore, why would someone give a black name to a white child, and thereby risk tempting racism when the child does not have the embodied racial heritage to prompt it?

Jenny Legris (white British; Mauritian married surname), meanwhile, explained that her son had altered his surname. Jenny said he researched about his

Mauritian surname (Legris) and discovered that it originally had a prefix of 'De' attached to it, and so he added this prefix to his existing surname. When I asked Jenny if she had any idea why her son had done this, she responded as follows.

> Jenny: [Laughs] Yeah, I think so. Edward [her son] is a typical prep school boy [both chuckle] and I think he thinks it sounds like it's got more kudos, I think it was only for that reason…yeah…
>
> Emily: Yeah, I just wondered if it was to make it sound more French or…
>
> Jenny: Yeah…I think it might have been, yes…they're sort of fairly strong names aren't they, that have 'De' in them, and they're quite…aristocratic aren't they? I mean I think Edward's always got pretentions to sort of aspire to greater things in life, you know! [both chuckle] It's interesting that George [her other son] hasn't bothered, nor his dad for that matter…It could have been, yes, but I don't think, I know what you're saying but I think it's more…Edward likes things to be very sort of…public schoolboy…and I think that sounds a bit more up the social ladder, do you know what I mean?
>
> Emily: Yeah
>
> Jenny: Awful, awful really in a way…that shouldn't…be an issue, but…I must admit I like the ring of it: "De Legris" it does sound rather sort of…Louis the 14th doesn't it really?.

Thus, for Jenny's son, it appears as though his original surname, which Jenny said had sometimes been mistaken for being Egyptian, but never for being French (even though it seems that its etymological origins may be French), was not so advantageous as a surname that was more obviously French. Jenny framed her son's decision to change his name as being about attracting privilege rather than avoiding discrimination, but perhaps all in all this is a similar thing. Moreover, this anecdote also seems indicative of the concept of a racial hierarchy of names: whilst some names are white, some are whiter than others. For Edward's surname to be associated with France was to move up the rungs of the racialised name hierarchy,

perhaps. That is, away from a name that sounded merely foreign, to one that sounded – not white British, but one not too far down the hierarchy of whiteness – French. I will further touch upon this notion of there being a racial hierarchy of names within the following section.

Using Name Choice to Help Children Racially Pass / Avoid Discrimination

Some participants openly expressed that one of the main factors involved in choosing their children's names was that of avoiding racial discrimination, and that as a strategy to protect their child from this, they chose names that they perceived to be white British. The assertion was that they wanted to give their children every chance of attracting the privileges associated with a white British identity, and thereby save them from the discrimination they associated with names conceived as Other.

Lynsey Bridger (white British; did not take her husband's Kashmiri/Islamic surname) explained how she had had her first child when she was only 19 years old, and that her partner was a practising Muslim. She said that her partner wanted their child to be given an Islamic first name, but Lynsey studied this requirement and argued that 'there are various interpretations of what would be accepted as Islamic, because different cultures have different names, as obviously there's the original Arabic names, but there's all sorts of variations of them'. She said that she consequently chose a white British first name, of which she had found there to be an Islamic version. Lynsey stated that she did not like the Islamic version, so she chose the white British version, and one reason she cited for this was that she '…was…concerned about…racism that he would experience if he was using in Britain, at the time – I must have been fairly aware of that – a non-Western-sounding name - it did concern me'.

Lynsey explained that this choice of name has been a 'niggle' between her and her now-husband since then, especially as she had also given their son her own maiden name (Bridger), rather than her husband's surname. Nonetheless, Lynsey conveyed that her worry when naming her son was not so much about discrimination based upon what her son looks like, but:

> …that kind of more hidden level [of discrimination], particularly around job applications actually and that level of…power that people have over you when they see a name and what they decide to do with that name…and you don't know, you never know, how can you ever prove it unless somebody reported…a colleague that had made a decision on that basis….

Indeed, she explained that a person can never be aware of how many times someone has made a decision about them, such as whether or not to give them a job, based purely upon their name. Lynsey thus suggests she has a high level of awareness about the apparent power-structures involved within the racialisation of names: that a person's name often goes beyond their embodied existence and is interpreted without them being present, in a manner over which they have no control.

Similarly, Kayla Brackenbury (black British; born and raised in Zimbabwe; Zimbabwean married surname) spoke of having concerns about racism in regards to any children she might have. She was adamant that her children would be given 'an English name that they'll use at school, and my husband's second name'. Although she said she planned to also give them a Zimbabwean middle-name in order to represent her own heritage, she stated that the Zimbabwean name would:

> …never be found out at the school…I'll probably use it around the house just so that they can have a little bit of me…because they're growing up here, they're going to be whatever, I just want them to know, even when they get old, and say, "I've got a middle name and my middle name is whatever and I got it from my mum".....that's all...just so that they can remember....

Kayla explained that her reason for deciding this was purely to try to help them avoid the name discrimination that she described she had experienced before she got married and changed her Zimbabwean surname (Manyika) for her husbands' white British surname (Brackenbury). She asserted that her children will 'grow up affected with the discrimination' because they are mixed-race: consequently she said she is going to give them typically white British names so that 'they don't face much discrimination, as much as I have'.

Kayla went on to say that her husband's white British surname is 'a blessing' for her children, and she explained why.

> …because at least with their name and their second name and their accent, it will only be the colour that will be in the way...their accent will be…okay, their names will be fine, so it will be when they are in the school, or when they go to work, it will be their colour, of which usually they won't be as dark as me, they'll be a little bit on the light side, they will look a little bit tanned, so it shouldn't affect them that much. But…they will face it, but it won't be as bad as what I've been through…because at least they can stand and say, "I'm born here, I grew up here, and I'm English"....

Kayla's statement is interesting as it suggests that she wants her children to be able to racially pass as being white British, in a non-embodied sense:

> ...at least when they make phone calls they'll be taken serious, because their accent is not selling them.....their name is not selling them, everything is not...showing that this person is…[an] ethnic minority.....because obviously they will be treated like ethnic minority, so...it's an advantage to be, opposed to...if you [Emily] have kids and they take your boyfriend's name, it will be slightly different for them. They will think that they came from Nigeria or Zimbabwe to here...and they…are foreigners, they've come on holiday and they've overstayed their stay...Unless their accent carries them through, if they're a little bit lighter, those are the things that will carry them through, but without that…I'm hoping by the time my children will be old enough, at least things will be levelled a bit, but it's difficult.....I think maybe it'll be okay, but...I hope so, it's just a hope, that they won't go through what I've been through....

It seems that Kayla's own experiences of racism have left a painful psychological mark, and this means that she would be prepared to try to hide her children's Zimbabwean heritage, and promote their father's white Britishness, through their names and their English accents. Kayla said that the Zimbabwean names would not be put on the children's birth certificates, they would only be used at home in secret, their skin colour would hopefully pass as tanned white skin that would not betray their real blackness. This all aligns with Ahmed's (1998) point about the overlapping nature

of skin colours (see Chapter Two), which contrasts with the purported essentialisation of skin colour and race. The doctrine of whiteness infers that a white person can be tanned as an adornment that does not permanently remove their true state of whiteness, but to be black is incontrovertible and immovable. Yet one can be in-between this tanned whiteness and real blackness, the boundaries can be blurred simply because of the constructed nature of the concept of races (Ahmed, 1998) – as Kayla's testimony implies. Kayla's interview data also ties in with Fanon's (2008) notion that a black individual must wear a white mask in order to be perceived as human. That is, they must adopt the values and culture associated with whiteness in order to dissociate themselves from the stigma of blackness. Fanon (2008) asserted, though, that in doing so, the person can be estranged from their own feelings of self. Kayla would appear to be in such a position.

Suzanne Balester (white British; had a Moroccan married surname - Moussamih - prior to divorcing), also said she chose her son's first name on the basis that she did not want him to experience discrimination because of his name:

> I wanted him to have, because I knew how racism exists in this country…more of an English name…because I thought he would be better served if he had…an English name than if he had a name like Mohammed or Husain or whatever…because of the way things are, and I didn't want him to be victimised and…racially abused and stuff like that…so…unbeknown to my husband, I trawled through this book of suitable Arabic names, and found one that I could shorten to an English name….

Thus Suzanne said that because her husband expected his son to have an Islamic first name, she did give him such a name (Hamal), which is on all of his official documents, but unbeknown to her then husband, her reason for choosing this name was so that it could be shortened informally (to Mal) and pass as being 'English'. So much so, that Suzanne stated that only her son's father and his side of the family actually call her son by his full Islamic name, and that when applying to schools she used his shortened name. Suzanne said that many people 'make an assumption' that her son's full first name is actually a Christian name (Malachi), as Mal is also a

common shortening for this name. Suzanne explained that her son does tend to correct people and tell them his full name and is not ashamed of it, but she named him as such because 'I wanted him to fit in more…I'm not daft and I know that there is still a lot of racism in this country, and even more so now with war on terror and things like that'.

Suzanne said much of her concern for her son came from her own experiences with regards to how her father, for one, behaved about her 'mixed-race' marriage: 'my dad…was very racist, came from that era where racism were okay, you know? It were alright to go around calling people disgusting names…A lot of my friends were shocked that I was going to be marrying somebody who was Muslim…it was quite a big thing really…'. Suzanne also related an incident she had had when she and her ex-husband went on holiday to Scarborough about 20 years ago:

> …I've never felt so…it was awful…we walked down…the coast, and…everybody was staring at us…it was really bad…And I remember saying to [her husband], "Why's everybody staring at us?"…and he said, "Oh no, just ignore them, they obviously haven't seen very many mixed-race couples"…[chuckles] "It's not normal!" But I think because they're probably…[in] a smaller environment where there weren't so many different cultures…my goodness, it were awful, it really was…they didn't say anything, but you could quite openly see the disgust…the aggression over it…it wasn't nice…And I didn't want Mal, because I knew we were living in a predominantly white area anyway, to go through that, and I thought it would be easier if he had a name…he got a Muslim name, with an English version, but I did do it specifically….

It appears, then, as though just as with Kayla Brackenbury, Suzanne's own experiences of racism had left a deep impression upon her that impacted greatly on how she named her child. Suzanne was apparently anxious to protect him from the racism that she understood, and still understands, to be prevalent within the UK. However, she did make it clear that the fact her son's name was often taken to be Christian was not an intentional outcome on her part. Suzanne explained that when she separated from her husband, she told him that their son would not be raised as

either a Muslim or a Christian and that when he was old enough he could choose if he wanted to practice a religion. To her, the shortening of her son's first name was intended to make it, 'Not Christian, [but] more English'. This implies – as I suggested in Chapter Five - that many of my participants tended to conceive Islamic names as Other/foreign in a racialised, rather than in a particularly religious, sense. Their concern appeared to be not so much that the name would be considered Islamic but that it would be perceived as foreign, and therefore not as white British. This buttresses and extends my earlier point that cultural identities can be as essentialised as racial ones and therefore be just as racialising (Lentin, 2005:388; see Chapter Two). I should acknowledge here that most of my participants chose Islamic names prior to the Islamophobic backlash of recent years, which could be a reason for this conflation of religion into a general category of Otherness. Nonetheless, most of these participants did indicate a current awareness of Islamophobia in their interviews and still made such points as I have just discussed.

Suzanne went further to say that her motivation in choosing her son's name was related to her belief that: 'in society you've got to acknowledge, whether we like it or not, that people are racist here…and we were living in a…predominantly white area, I knew he were going to go to that school and I wanted him to fit in with an English name, because I knew there was not going to be another boy or girl in his class who was not English…'. It is notable that Suzanne implied her son is not 'English', in saying that there would not be *another* child who was not English in her son's class. To her, then, it seems her son's dual white English-Moroccan heritage was something that prevented him from being 'English', that made him somehow foreign in an embodied sense, and she did not want his first name to further suggest this. Suzanne's apparent conclusion that her son is Other seems surprising. Yet, as mentioned previously, the power of whiteness is penetrative and consuming: although there is the possibility to fight against its doctrine (as I suggested in Chapter Five), nonetheless a person is heavily influenced by the societal discourse with which they grow up (Ferber, 1999).

Indeed, Suzanne talks of her son's 'very large brown eyes…Afro hair' and 'brown' skin, whereas she said all his classmates were 'white English'. She further explained that, 'I think a name like that with a white parent and another parent who's not from here, in a predominantly white area in a predominantly white school, would have caused him more problems than I really was willing to let him have…It's protection isn't it, you know what life's like out there'. Suzanne further described how her then-husband had presented her with 'very Muslim names, like Mohammed and Safir' to consider calling her son, regarding which she said: 'hopefully I'd like to think for the right reasons, I didn't want him to have a name like that…'. She said that she did not discuss her reasons for selecting the first name they did call their son with her then-husband, even though he had often experienced discrimination/racism himself:

> Emily: So he didn't ever…suggest about…your son's name…that by calling him a Muslim name that might actually…not be so advantageous?
> Suzanne: No, no…Because he wouldn't look at it like that…Even though he knows about things like that, for him it's…first born, boy…mega important if you're Muslim…My son now is the oldest boy in that family…and they treat him like a king…but…they [Moroccans] have a very negative approach themselves to women and their importance within the family, so…he [her son] was always going to be very important, and he was always going to be having a Moroccan name…because that would have been an insult to the family…it wouldn't ever have crossed his mind. If…he'd have said to me, "No it's Mohammed and that's it"…and I'd said, "Well, no, we can't call him that"… "he's got to go to school here and…" – that wouldn't have come into it, he's Moroccan, he's meant to be a Muslim, he's got to have this name…
> Emily: Yeah
> Suzanne: …that was more important than, would he be racially abused or whatever, for them….

Therefore, in sum, Suzanne asserted that she felt so strongly about the potential for her son to experience discrimination in relation to his first name that she deceived her then-husband into choosing the name, which she informally altered so that it would not sound Islamic. This action could be perceived as being quite extreme, and as symbolic of her fears that even now if he 'had gone to the school that he went

to with a name like Mohammed, he would have had problems…as it is, he didn't…'. In effect, she is asserting that she does not regret her decision, but sees it as being decisive in preventing her son from being racialised as Other, and incurring resultant negative experiences, on the basis of his first name. She goes on to suggest that by shortening his first name she in effect helped him to pass as being 'English'/white:

> Emily: …why do you think he didn't have problems? I mean I'm just wondering how the…name discrimination relates to like colour, more physical established…
> Suzanne: Because…he's quite fair skinned, and you could actually think to yourself well actually he's…just a dark haired, brown eyed English boy, and he's called Mal, so there's nothing, you know, and children…they're not going to look at the surname and all this sort of thing, they're going to look at what they see: "So here's a boy, he's called Mal. Oh, he's got brown hair, but he's not black, he's not dark brown, he doesn't look Pakistani"…but all that has come from their…first five years at home, and I think…that still goes on now, I know it does, I know it does…We like to say it doesn't, but it does….

Suzanne's declaration that her son could visually pass as being white differs somewhat from her description earlier of his 'Afro hair', 'very large brown eyes' and 'brown' skin. Her suggestion seems to be, then, that her son could racially pass as white if he had a first name that symbolised this identity. Thus the notion of disembodied racial passing through name is intertwined here with the idea that the name could aid and/or enable embodied passing. For Suzanne, her son was not white or even truly English, but was Other and vulnerable to discrimination. She decided to do everything within her power to try to limit his susceptibility to this: just as Kayla Brackenbury intended to do with her future children. As I discussed in Chapter Two, this is indicative of passing in order to access white privileges (Ginsberg, 1996; Belluscio, 2006), which Suzanne implied would be closed to her son should his Islamic, racialised identity be known. Suzanne wanted him to pass – as much as it is possible with his mixed-race appearance and Moroccan surname - as white and thereby be racially invisible.

Marion Stamatis (white British; Greek married surname) said she too struggled with the idea of giving her child a name that would mark her out as being 'foreign'. Even though she explained that she had divorced and re-married, and had her daughter with her second husband, she had kept her first husband's surname, Goodall. She perceived this name to be white British and subsequently she gave this surname to her daughter too because of her concerns about giving her the surname of her second husband. When I asked her for the reasoning behind this decision, Marion said she perceived her second husband's Greek surname with an Islamic prefix (Haji-Stamatis) to be:

> …a huge, cumbersome problem really…how could you call this little child Haji-Stamatis…it was so foreign, even to me…it was definitely a foreign thing to me, even though…I'd lived for five years in London and did hear every name under the sun…as patients and as colleagues, and then I moved to Manchester and that was quite multi-cultural, so when I met Parthenios [her husband] and started to go out with him, it didn't strike me as odd at all.

It is intriguing that Marion said she did not find her husband's name 'odd at all' when she was dating him, however when it came to the idea of giving their daughter the surname, it apparently then became 'foreign'. Seemingly her asserted initial attraction to the exoticness of her husband was replaced by her fears regarding the Otherness of the identity that would now be passed onto her daughter. Consequently, Marion said she desired for her daughter to pass as white British, and that that is why she gave her daughter her first husband's surname. Indeed, Marion said it was only when her daughter started nursery and the headmistress interviewed Marion and found out about her daughter's Greek heritage that she was then known by the Greek surname with the Islamic prefix (Haji-Stamatis). Marion spoke of how the headmistress:

> …wanted to know all the background…and she was very poetic and romantic, and I suppose it [the history of the name]…is very lovely…Oh and she absolutely insisted…she threw up her arms and said, "We should celebrate this glorious name, this glorious tradition!"…and the poor little thing…about

two foot high and she had to go to school and be registered as Haji-Stamatis [chuckles].

Marion said her daughter was consequently known by her father's surname (Haji-Stamatis), whilst Marion herself still kept her first husband's surname (Goodall) for a number of years afterwards. However Marion asserted that she made the 'decision…for [her daughter's first name] to be a brief, English name': Ann. Even though she said she would have liked to have used the French spelling (Annette) she did not because she presumably knew her daughter could potentially have the Greek name (which she of course eventually did). The surname, including the Islamic prefix, was 13 letters long, so Marion said she gave her daughter the 'shortest [first] name that I could kind of get away with at that time'.

Marion also spoke of her belief that when her daughter was born (nearly 30 years ago) 'there wasn't this Muslim threat…that's come in more recent years', and of how with hindsight she wished that her daughter had been registered just with the Greek name (Stamatis) rather than with the Islamic pre-fix (Haji) attached. Moreover, (as I will discuss later) Marion indicated that she fears the Islamic connotation for her daughter because she has a disability, and that she tends not to discuss the Islamic pre-fix in connection with her daughter, as she has to be 'very careful how [her daughter is] perceived'.

It therefore seems that Marion does not want her daughter to be racialised as being Muslim, whereas she had come to consider the Greek part of the surname as being okay, perhaps not too far down the hierarchy of names. As I mentioned earlier, I have used the term 'racialisation' in regard to the Islamic religion because my participants have implied that this is how they have viewed it. In addition, it would appear that, despite the fact anyone can practice a religion, there is a common conception within the UK that Islam is associated with Otherness and not with white Britishness. A prime example of this was very recently when the *BBC*'s Political Editor, Nick Robinson, apologised for asserting that the two men who apparently murdered a British soldier in the Woolwich area of London were of 'Muslim appearance'

(Robinson, 2013) – a statement that was apparently proven wrong when the men were found not to be Asian but black. I will discuss this further in Chapter Seven.

Marion said her fears about her daughter having the Islamic prefix have grown over time, seemingly in parallel with increases in Islamophobia (Alexander, 2002b, 2004; Alexander, Edwards and Temple, 2007; Però, 2013:6; see Chapter Two), and she appeared to regret having being persuaded by the headmistress to change her daughter's surname. Having said that, she did stress the beauty and the historical and cultural significance of the Islamic name, and of the Greek surname too, but she expressed her fear that discrimination may come her daughter's way because of bearing it.

Furthermore, Linda Abadjian (white British; Armenian married surname) spoke of how although she was not against giving her children an Armenian first name as a way of reflecting her husband's Armenian culture, she and her husband 'probably…did think that it would be easier to give them a commonly used name here [in the UK] than a[n]…Armenian first name with an Armenian surname…I suppose we thought that for a child at school it would be easier for them…'. This is also similar to Sally Hasani (white British; Albanian married surname), who indicated that she had given her children white British first names to go with their Albanian surname, and that it:

> …was quite a conscious decision to give them that mixed name…and…I suppose part of that was to avoid discrimination, because we did feel like we would be living here [in the UK] for some time, and it would make it easier for them to have, [than] if we'd picked very Albanian sounding names…So I suppose there was part of that in the decision to name them that……I guess it was a choice not to have the Albanian first name….

Sally explained that this naming-decision was based upon her 'husband's experiences…He has experienced some discrimination, because he is foreign…'. The way that she so simply justified the discrimination her husband had experienced with the statement, 'because he is foreign', is interesting. Seemingly for her it is not a matter of surprise that he should be discriminated against, but just the way of the

world. Indeed, Sally said that her husband initially tried to persuade her that he should take her maiden name (Hayden) upon marriage and forgo his Albanian surname. However, Sally stated that she did not feel comfortable with breaking the tradition of taking her husband's name, and that she did not believe it was right to let discrimination affect her decision-making in that regard. Nonetheless, that she apparently allowed her husband to persuade her when it came to choosing their children's first names, suggests that she was not comfortable with the idea of her children having an entirely foreign set of names.

Jamal Hassan Hamdaoui (mixed-race British), who was born to a white Scottish mother and a father of mixed French-Lebanese and Spanish heritage, was registered upon birth with a fully Arabic name. However, Jamal said when he was a few years old his parents divorced and his mother decided to take him and his sister away from London to live in her relatively remote hometown in Scotland. Jamal explained that upon doing so, his mother informally changed her children's surname to her own maiden name of McKenzie, a name perceived to be white British, and she also shortened Jamal's first name to Mal so that it appeared to be a white British name (Malachi). Jamal stated that this was 'in a bid, I suppose in my mother's head to kind of shelter us from any kind of racial abuse or anything', and that he and his sister were consequently known by these new, but unofficial names, from there on. Indeed, Jamal said his sister eventually changed her surname legally by Deed Poll to McKenzie, whilst Jamal in his early twenties decided to revert back to being known by his Islamic surname, Hamdaoui (as will be discussed further later on). The point here, is that Jamal said his mother made him feel as though his real name was something that needed to be hidden in order to avoid racism. He said that in actuality perhaps the name change did help him fit in (or even racially pass as white British) at school, although he said he does not with hindsight agree with his mother's decision.

Some parents, however, framed their decision to give their children white British names in terms of practicality, in order to make their children's lives easier, rather than acknowledging a fear of racism. Bryony Chiamaka (white British; Nigerian married surname), for instance, described how she and her husband gave their

children both ‘English’ and Nigerian names to go along with her husband’s Nigerian surname (Chiamaka). Bryony said they decided to ‘put the English name first, the Nigerian name second…Because…the children were obviously going to live in England…none of them were ever going to live in Nigeria, and so it’s much easier [to have English names]’.

Bryony went on to enunciate how several of her Nigerian nieces and nephews have Anglicised their first names, ‘because…when you’re at school, you’ve got these names that nobody can get their tongue around, it just makes life…– their life’s difficult enough in school without really difficult names…’. Bryony compared this phenomenon with ‘English children [who] change their names, especially boys [who] give themselves nicknames…”the name I call myself”’. Thus, it appears that Bryony perceived her decision about the order of her children’s first names to be a practical one: not so much that the children would be discriminated against because of having a Nigerian name but that it would be difficult to pronounce. Bryony emphasised her pride in her husband’s Nigerian heritage and surname, admitted to having quite a forceful personality, and declared that she would not let other people’s negative attitudes affect her. Consequently, it seems that she did indeed perceive that the hassle for her children to have a Nigerian first name would be quite significant, considering she had let it affect her decision-making in giving them ‘English’ first names. This notion of making the child’s life easier was also expressed by other participants, such as Chloe Hardy-Mathiesen (white British; raised in America; Norwegian name added to her white British maiden name of Hardy) who talked about not wanting her children’s ‘name to be such an issue that they are going to suffer from having…“How do you pronounce this?”’, which she said her husband (Lars Hardy-Mathiesen) had experienced a lot because of his Norwegian names.

Such attitudes seemingly further highlight the depth of whiteness’ influence on how names are generally perceived. There are many long and phonetically difficult surnames that would seemingly be considered white British, yet it is unlikely that parents bearing such a surname would spend so much energy contemplating which first names would not add to the difficulty of the name as a whole. There appears to

be a rather pervasive attitude in the UK that foreign names are kindly tolerated by the white British, who have to expend much effort in order to do so. As I mentioned in Chapter One, there is a proud rhetoric in the UK about an age-old (some would argue, mythic) notion of British tolerance (Clarke and Garner, 2009; Putnam, 2009; McKinnon, 2006; Wemyss, 2006). This notion can be perceived in the following quotation from the website of a company that helps people to change their name in the UK for a variety of reasons, one of which is described below.

> Many people who come to live in the United Kingdom can experience difficulties with their original names especially if they are particularly difficult for British people to pronounce and spell. Some find that the easiest thing to do is to abandon their original name altogether and change to something that is more common and easier for British people to use. In such a situation it is also possible to rearrange or add names to the current one. For example, if somebody's surname was the “difficult” one, they could take a new surname and use their previous surname as a middle name. This option allows people to maintain a link with their family name, and at the same time simplify everyday matters. Other people choose to simply alter the spelling of their current name, making it easier to pronounce and therefore more convenient. This option favours those who do not want an entirely new name but are having difficulties with their current one.
> (*UK Deed Poll* company website, 2010).

Seemingly at the root of such pronouncements about the ‘difficulty’ of names is the notion of racial otherness/foreignness. That is, a name that is not deemed white British represents foreignness/racial difference, which varies in terms of its desirability according to how highly or lowly it ranks within the changeable racial hierarchy of names. I suggested in Chapter One that the UK media tends to portray problematic or negative attitudes towards names deemed foreign (e.g. Allen, 2013), and I also discussed the history of migrants’ names being changed wholesale by UK officials (McKinley, 1990). I thereby intimated that there appears to be a dominant attitude in the UK that foreign names are a hassle, whilst white British names are easy and somehow universal – no one could struggle to say them, as suggested by the anecdote about television commentators, which I presented earlier. The UK’s move

away from being ‘passively tolerant’ (Cameron, 2011; see Chapter One) would seem to be reflected within the above *UK Deed Poll* quotation, which indicates that the responsibility for dealing with such foreign names rests with those who bear them: why should they not just dispose of them when they are so inconvenient to the white British majority? This is framed as straight-forward, common-sense, and as non-discriminatory, when in actuality it seems to be grounded within the hegemonic power discourses of whiteness. That is, that whiteness is the coveted identity, that all people should strive to be white (Dyer, 1999; see Chapter Two).

Similarly, although Nicola Zheung (white British; Chinese married surname) said she had not fully discussed the issue of naming (any future) children with her husband, she indicated that they would be given ‘English’ first names and Chinese middle names, with the order being justified on practical grounds:

> I think partly it’s for ease really, because obviously if you’re living in the UK and you were born in the UK, then I think it’s, we’re not quite culturally ready to deal with names…because obviously where I work we have a wide range of customers with names from all over…the world and very often…it’s the names that aren’t the most traditionally English that you end up with the most spelling problems and data problems, and the result of that…so people just…I don’t think it’s intentional, I think people just don’t understand them yet….

It is intriguing, in the same vein as the above-discussion, that Nicola explains her idea of naming from a very practical, perhaps functional perspective: she mentions ‘spelling problems and data problems’ rather than discrimination or racism, such as with access to the job market. Her idea appears to be that the UK populace is not familiar with names that are not typically white British. However, this notion is challenged by her subsequent remarks that, ‘I don’t think it’s intentional’ and ‘I think people just don’t understand them yet’. To not ‘understand’ something is surely an active verb, something that is consciously considered. Spelling and data errors are arguably not a lack of understanding a name, but more a lack of concentration or perhaps respect for the name. To suggest that she does not ‘think’ it is intentional, is not a definitive or

strong claim, and perhaps even raises the possibility that some name difficulties are deliberately perpetrated.

Victoria Ravanbaksh (white British; Persian/Iranian married surname) said she gave her children Persian first names and her husband's Persian surname (Ravanbaksh), as well as what she considered to be white British middle names. Victoria had also indicated that her children were happy to use their Persian first names rather than wanting to use their white British middle names. However, Victoria explained (as I mentioned in Chapter Five) that her daughter had informally shortened her surname, so that 'when she was at Sixth Form nobody ever called her [by] her full name, she was Rav and that was her name, everybody knew her.' Victoria also spoke of her belief that there is discrimination against name: 'I'm quite sure, I know one of my employers in the past has looked at people's names and immediately binned a few', and she applied this concern to her children:

> …what concerned me a lot was what will happen with my children, when they're applying for jobs. I mean, I'd already got my qualifications and what have you, but they're starting out. And whether there's prejudice against them…they've got an Iranian or a Persian first name and an English first name, and I've always said to them, if you want to put your English name on, do it…and you might find you get further.

Consequently, this implies that Victoria does have concerns about her children bearing Persian names, in spite of her prior claims to the contrary, and that she would be happy for them to try to racially pass as white British should they wish to do so. The way she suggests they could achieve this is similar to that promoted by the *Deed Poll* quotation: they should just use their white British names and hide their foreign ones.

Using Name-Choice to Fight Discrimination and/or Promote Otherness.

I began the previous section with Lynsey Bridger's (white British; did not take her husband's Kuwaiti/Islamic name) explanation that she gave her son white British names in an attempt to circumvent racial discrimination. However, Lynsey said that

she and her partner went on to have a second child over a decade later, and she outlined how her 'awareness, and…understanding of racism, and how it operates', as well as her own role within that, had altered during this time. As such, she stated that although she had named their first child with the idea of 'wanting to protect' him, she now felt that 'it's also colluding with, and supporting – I think – broadly…principles of racism at the end of the day'. Consequently, Lynsey explained that she and her husband gave their daughter 'three Islamic names and one English name' (the opposite way around to her son's names), even though, as Lynsey professed, 'the climate in terms of the racism she could experience by having this Islamic name is…more profound and significant now [than when her first child was born], so…it's not a decision I took lightly'.

Lynsey declared that she would be happy to support her son, 'in terms of whatever legal processes were involved', should he wish to change his white British names to Islamic ones. However, when I asked if she would do the same for her daughter should she wish to change her names to ones considered white British, Lynsey admitted that she would 'have a lot more concerns about her wanting to change her name, and I would tell her that, although I'd let - obviously when she's an adult she can do whatever she wants -…Because of my own awareness of the role that that would play'. She compared the idea of her daughter changing her name to the idea of racially passing, of concealing her identity in order to pass as white. She stated that this was especially so because her daughter could perhaps physically pass for being white, and that it is only her name, how she dresses, or her being seen with her father that would indicate that she was not white.

Lynsey said she was well aware from anecdotal experience and reports she had read that since 9/11 there have been attacks, particularly against female Asians in the UK, and that 'the general climate now is, if you're racist and…within that…have Islamophobic beliefs…you perceive any name that sounds vaguely Middle Eastern to be Islamic now'. As such, and as mentioned above, she seemingly did not take the decision to give her daughter Islamic names without a great deal of thought. That she

did so is seemingly in part testament to her reported desire not to be complicit with Islamophobia and the system of racism.

Nonetheless, Lynsey said that she chose not to use her own Islamic first name, which she had selected for herself upon getting married. When I questioned her about this, she did not provide a reason. There could be many explanations for this, one of which could be that (as I discussed in Chapter Two) it is perhaps difficult for a white person to withdraw entirely from the system of whiteness: all white people are complicit within it and benefit from its privileges (Garner, 2007). Nonetheless, to give her daughter Islamic names after how much she had tried to help her son to racially pass as white does seem quite a brave decision in the context of her awareness of Islamophobia – even if she did not want to claim an Islamic identity herself.

Sally Hasani (white British; Albanian married surname) also avowed her belief that even if her children do experience discrimination in relation to their Albanian surname, that 'that is who they are, that is part of their background…part of their family is Albanian, and we shouldn't have to deny that just to avoid discrimination'. However, she freely admitted that: 'How I feel about that [the idea that they should not deny their Albanian heritage in order to avoid discrimination] when they grow up, I don't know! [chuckles]'. This latter caveat acknowledges that her seemingly courageous stance against racism, both through taking her husband's surname herself and in giving the surname to their children, may falter should her children experience racism. Therefore there is something in the foreignness of a surname that, not just Sally but most of, my participants implied: they acknowledged the visibility of foreign names, and the (potential) consequences of this visibility in terms of racism/discrimination. No one appeared to just see a name, all of the participants talked in terms of the racially representative and symbolic nature of names.

Jamal Hassan Hamdaoui (mixed-race British; Arabic name) explained how he reverted back to his Arabic name from a white British alias his mother had given him (as I mentioned earlier). Jamal said that when he was in his early twenties he 'decided, well…my name's never been changed properly from my birth certificate so,

yeah, you know what, I'm just going to change my name back to what it should be…I mean…not that it had been changed at all but…[to] make sure people are calling me by my name…! [chuckles]'. When I asked what led him to make this decision, he explained that he had just started at university and had been thinking intensively about his name:

> …I realised the only reason I was McKenzie [his mother's maiden name] was for some reason that would keep me safer than if I was Jamal Hassan Hamdaoui and it seemed to me that it was a ridiculous thing…this notion that…what the thing's called, represents what the thing is…it's absolutely ridiculous.

Indeed, he said he felt 'more than anything…there was no problem with my name', even though he did divulge that 'it definitely did help' when he was younger to be called McKenzie, 'in the context of growing up in Scotland with…a Scottish name as a part-Arab…I definitely would say that to an extent it made it easier for me'. Jamal said this was in the sense that, '…even though I looked foreign it was easier for them to bridge the gap, you know, to locate McKenzie to understand this, the boy speaks in a Scottish accent, everything's fine, you know?…but as Hamdaoui there is definitely…a construct of Hamdaoui [that they have]'.

However, Jamal indicated that there was more to his name situation than the practical side of it being easier for him to have a name considered white British: 'there was that sort of identity part of it, where I felt like I was kind of hiding from who I was, through this adopting a Scottish name…especially when your mother…she's instilled it upon you, you think, "Well it must be very serious"'. Since changing his name back to Hamdaoui, Jamal stated that he felt 'more empowered':

> …I'm not scared of being who I am…and being a McKenzie, you're always kind of on your back foot…"Why am I a McKenzie? Why has everyone else got their dad's name? Why have I got to change? I don't understand…", and then you start to understand and you think, "Well I don't like this!" [chuckles]'.

Jamal further explained that his desire to revert back to his Arabic name had nothing to do with 'keeping the paternal line going', but that 'it solely came from' wanting to be, feeling 'that I could be me'. This is reminiscent of my discussion in Chapter Two regarding the way identities are seemingly so multi-layered and complex (Alexander and Knowles, 2005). It appears that Jamal's apparent experience of racially passing as white British via his name encapsulates Ginsberg's (1996:2) point that 'passing is about identities: their creation or imposition, their adoption or rejection'. Jamal has seemingly lived a life of 'double-consciousness' (Du Bois, 1999:126) and he has chosen the more difficult path of being Othered, by reverting back to his Islamic name.

Jamal further described that in using his mother's maiden name he had been passing, 'continuing this tradition of trying to shroud yourself…trying to sort of masquerade as one of them when you're not'. This links to Goffman's (1990:20) assertion, which I presented in Chapter One, that trying to avoid a stigma by passing (by a person changing their name in this case) does not necessarily help that person to be 'normal', they still hold the history of that which is not 'normal' inside their minds. Jamal suggested here that he felt uncomfortable with hiding his Otherness and that he disagreed with the notion that Otherness is a negative, and thereby wished to present his un-normalness to the world. Indeed, as Jamal went on to say:

> Jamal: …if I could put it into a sentence that would kind of…[W]hy should I call myself a name that has been chosen for me to make more discreet something about who I am?...And I guess you get to an age where…you get over the fear of racism, you get over it all, and you just think, you know what, I don't even believe in race…in this whole shroud of McKenzie...it's very restricting I think…
> Emily: …so in essence…you kind of feel that…your surname now is…representative of your mixed-race identity…as you say race doesn't really exist, but is that kind of what you mean? It…represents that part of you that you don't want to hide, you're not ashamed of?
> Jamal: Yeah, yeah…McKenzie to me was…it did kind of represent an attempt at hiding from oppression…and turning back to Hamdaoui it was kind of like a rite of passage, like I was over it….

Hence it seems that Jamal's desire was to re-claim his *real* name and thereby stop racially passing as white. In doing so he implied that he had somehow attacked the whole premise of racism in not being afraid of it and not being held by its power – just as Lynsey Bridger said she had tried to do in the naming of her daughter. She too had apparently moved from wanting to hide her son's dual-heritage due to apprehension about potential discrimination, to being proud to give her daughter names that signify her Islamic identity from her father's side of the family.

Anna Aladeoja (white British; Nigerian married surname) also indicated a desire to call her (future) children by full Nigerian names (that is, first names and surname), in order to reflect her husband's heritage, although she said she would also consider Biblical first names to reflect their Christian faith. Should she give them Nigerian first names, she declared that she does not think she would have any concerns in doing so, as she:

> …would want them to be proud of both sides of their heritage…If they're growing up particularly in England they will already be exposed to their…English way of life and stuff…and obviously I wouldn't be ashamed of being English myself and obviously things I naturally do are English…but I would want them to be very proud of their Nigerian heritage and…spend time with their Nigerian family, so I think having the name is part of that….

Anna also emphasised her pride about being in a 'mixed-race' marriage, and her belief that they are setting an example to others of what, according to the Christian Bible, heaven will be like, with people mixing freely together. She also clearly professed a deep respect and admiration for her husband's Nigerian background throughout the interview, and raised her concern that images of Africa in the West tend to be negative. This all seemed to be reflected in her asserted desire to consider giving her children fully Nigerian names, as though she felt that this, alongside her mixed-race marriage, would in some way blaze a trail against racism. The attitudes contained within the stories I have discussed in this section so far, indicate that these participants are not passively accepting the notion of racial discrimination. They are seemingly prepared to make sacrifices – perhaps to their own and/or their children's

detriment – in order to make a stand against racism. This buttresses the point made by Però and Solomos (2010) that racial minorities (I include racial minorities via name in this category here) are not always passive as some literature seems to suggest (e.g. Said, 2003). Indeed, there is seemingly a link between these participants' acts and the notion that passing for black can be a revolutionary act, which challenges racial categorisation processes (Dreisinger, 2008; Pfeiffer, 2003; see Chapter Two).

Furthermore, Rebecca Travers (white British; whose Polish married name before divorce was Czajkowska) conveyed how, had she had children with her first husband who was of Polish descent, they would have given them Polish first names, middle names and the Polish surname, because she 'thought it was a nice thing to do really, to keep that part of their identity, especially because they would then be the second generation being born in this country'. She explained how her husband's identity was very much based on being Polish (even though he had been born and raised in the UK), and that consequently she felt that this was something important to 'continue' for her children – saying, 'Even our cat had a Polish name!' She said that she did not have any concerns about the idea of her children having fully Polish names, and that she just saw it as important to promote their Polish heritage and not let this die out.

Thus in all of these cases Otherness seemingly has been (or would have been) chosen in order to refute the power/status of whiteness. Nonetheless, these children/people are/would be racially passing entirely as the Other, rather than as people of dual-heritage. In so doing it is perhaps debatable how much they undermine the racial categorising system of whiteness. If someone is considered to look mixed-race and has an entirely foreign name, they would perhaps be considered purely foreign/Other, if the 'one drop' rule applies, as I discussed in Chapter Two. Consequently, perhaps such names confirm the racial system - rather than confuse it as those participants who had names perceived to be oppositional to their embodied racial identity apparently do. Furthermore, in some of these interviewees' descriptions of fighting against racism, there is also the latent notion of essentialism, in that they talk of their partners' racial identities as though they were fixed entities rather than

social constructions. Does this not also contribute to the eternal power of race/racialisation and, consequently, of whiteness? As Dreisinger (2008:149) argues, a person who chooses to pass as black must be continually 'self-reflexive' and employ a double-consciousness of how they conceive the world to be, and how they are regarded in the world (see Chapter Two), in order to truly challenge white supremacy.

Reactions to the Foreignness of Names

Another topic that emerged in my interviews with regards to children's names was the perceived lack of patience, tolerance or even respect allegedly shown towards those participants' children's names, which were deemed not to be white British. Linda Abadjian (white British; Armenian married surname), for instance, related her disappointment at how some teachers at her children's primary school had not learned how to spell her children's surname:

> …I would have thought after my child being in their class for a certain amount of time, they would have made a point of learning how to spell their surname correctly, because often we found that they didn't…And that was a total surprise to me, because if it was me, I would make doubly sure that I had spelled it correctly, and I used to get comments like, "Oh I'm sorry, I haven't…spelled it correctly…", you know, as if it's acceptable to spell a foreign sounding name incorrectly….

This last bit about it appearing that the teachers somehow thought it acceptable not to spell a 'foreign sounding name' correctly, indicates a certain lack of respect for the name, on the part of the teachers: if they perceived a name to be important, would they not then see it as integral to try to spell it correctly?

In addition, Marion Stamatis (white British; Greek married surname) talked about her daughter being bullied at school in relation to her name. As mentioned previously, Marion explained that her daughter has a long surname, which is Greek with an Islamic pre-fix, along with a very short, stereotypically British sounding first name (Ann Haji-Stamatis). Marion conveyed that her daughter was given an obscene nickname at school by the other children, who used her first name as it is, but added a

parody of the sound of her surname, which questioned her gender and contained an explicit word. Marion said that she felt her daughter 'suffered from it really……unfortunately that was a very unhappy period of her life…'. It is impossible to know the motivation(s) for the children's apparent parodying of Marion's daughter's name in such a way, but perhaps it is likewise reflective of a certain disdain or lack of respect towards foreign names. As I have discussed earlier, a person is largely a product of the (racist) society in which they are raised (Ferber, 1999). Therefore, if a person grows up in a society, which devalues foreignness on a hierarchized scale (as I have asserted is the case in the UK), why would they not then consider it natural to belittle names deemed foreign and/or find them comical/bizarre?

Similarly, Linda Abadjian (white British; Armenian married surname) spoke of how her children's friends have made jokes about her children's surname:

> Linda: I've noticed as well throughout school they've had their friends…making jokes because a lot of people I think are embarrassed at trying to attempt to say a foreign sounding surname, and to try [to] hide the embarrassment they'll sort of make a joke out of it, like say, Abadijagidan or something like that…they've [her children] been accepting of that, they just think it's a joke…their friends think it's a joke and…they've accepted that…they will call them…silly names…
> Emily: Mm, that's interesting. How do you feel about that then? Do…you see it as a joke?
> Linda: Um I think if they're okay with it, then I'm okay with it….

Linda's response when I asked her if she finds it funny that her children's friends make jokes about their surname seems quite non-committal. In effect, she is not making a judgement on it. If her children were upset about it, then seemingly she would be too, as she makes no case about it being funny or unfunny, just that she is happy for her children to take the lead on it. She did, however, see it as significant enough to raise in the interview. Linda's description of her children's reactions to jokes being made about their names suggests an internalisation of racist attitudes towards names generally, as if they conceive that they have a peculiar, foreign name, and that it is consequently natural for their friends to joke about it. This is a similar point to the one I

made in Chapter Five about how some of my participants had arguably internalised problematic attitudes towards their names. Similarly, it appears that Linda tries to make an excuse for the jokes, in saying that she thinks the children's friends are 'embarrassed' about saying a foreign surname. In my experience, it was not the case that children had to call their friends by their surname at school, and even if they did have to say the surname, it does not seem that they were suffering from embarrassment, judging by the jokes they apparently made about it.

It is also interesting that when some participants raised positive experiences in relation to their children's foreign names, there was still an element of the names being conspicuous: they were never invisible. For example, Claire Negev (white British; Israeli/Hebrew married surname) spoke of how her children's teacher has been 'really good at listening to how they pronounce it and…checking up on pronouncing it how it should be and things like that, which is good.' Alice Melissinos (white British; Cypriot married surname) also illustrated how her daughter '…used to perform and she just used to use her name…and…they would say, "Well you don't need to have a stage name with a name like that, it's lovely"'.

Furthermore, in some interviews I perceived on the part of some participants, who had given their children foreign names, a feeling verging on guilt. Jenny Legris (white British; Mauritian married surname) mentioned more than once about how she has often contemplated how her children feel about their surname and their dual-heritage:

> I must admit…I've…had moments where I've wondered how it is for my children, and I do wonder…because, I don't know, maybe you could say selfishly so, Ros [her husband] and I decided to bring…a sort of ménage of culture and skin colour into the world and that will stay for a very, very long time.

Jenny's words are reminiscent of the afore-mentioned point made by Edwards and Caballero (2008), whose research suggested that as time goes on, parents of mixed-race children may increasingly come to fear that their children will experience discrimination. Jenny's statement also implies the essentialisation of race: that Jenny,

in having parented children with her husband feels that they have created mixed-race beings, the consequences of which will last down the ages.

Indeed, Amy Jammeh (white British; Gambian married surname), who had not changed her maiden name [McConaughey] upon marriage, said that she decided to take her husband's Gambian surname when their son was born, as she felt that if her son was going to experience any discrimination in relation to his name, she would feel guilty if she did not also have the surname:

> Emily: I was just wondering…if you had thought that your future lay here [the UK]……would you still have changed your [sur]name?…
> Amy: No I think I would…I think if Alieu [her son] had difficulties and any of that was down to his name and I had a different one…I would be really uncomfortable in that situation in terms of support, if I hadn't shared it. And it's clearly different for me to have that name as…a white British person…that…I cannot in that sense…be prejudiced against in terms of my race, where I think that…Alieu certainly can, as can his dad, but I can't…I might experience it in other ways but it can never be about my race, whereas for them they have that factor. So to just change my name seems a very simple thing to do…and to show that…it's a unit of people, it's a family…so it was…symbolic I think in some ways really….

Consequently, there is the implication that a white British parent who gives birth to a child considered (partly-)foreign, carries the guilt of taking away the child's white British privilege that they would have enjoyed if not for miscegenation. Alternatively, if their child had been fully Other, the parents would not necessarily have experienced this guilt, because their foreign name would have represented who the child really is in an embodied sense. When the child is of dual-heritage, it seemingly casts a burden onto the parents to decide if they should try to help the children racially pass as white British in an attempt to access white British privileges. This interrelates with Lieberson and Bell's (1992) afore-mentioned assertion that parents are influenced by societal norms regarding race when choosing names. Thus there is seemingly an expectation that a person's name should match their embodied racial identity (as I have argued in Chapter Four). When parents have children considered mixed-race, they then have to

decide whether to name them according to such societal norms, or to name them according to their own wishes (should these differ).

Furthermore, Jenny Legris provided an example of how some participants appeared to worry about other people's perceptions of their children's foreign names:

> …it's times for me where it's clearly been an unusual name…when the children were in the [cathedral] choir…and we got a bit of headline news in the [local newspaper]…all three of them [her children] were from the same family and…they were in the choir, and you could just imagine somebody – I mean, this is only my opinion –…I could imagine some people in [Canterbury], bless them, maybe thinking, "Oh gosh, Legris!", you know, you wouldn't mind if it was, oh I don't know, Tinsleys or…Rowbottom or…Smith or whatever…but you know nothing untoward, just…and perhaps it's just me, I mean perhaps nobody bats an eyelid…but I think maybe it's something because I do know it's clearly not a British name…maybe I'm putting too much weight on it really….

This same kind of concern can also be gleaned from Marion Stamatis' own expressed idea of what she imagines could be the far-reaching negative consequences for her daughter in having an Islamic pre-fix to her surname (this is despite her having said that she thinks most people in the UK would probably be unaware that it is an Islamic pre-fix because it has many different spelling variations). Marion said:

> I would always face it out with Stamatis…and deal with any racism but because of the Haji bit, having to explain that, I would be very careful who I explained all that to, because now there's obviously a Muslim connotation…and my daughter's disabled, I have to be very careful how she's perceived as well…[I]n my most sort of imaginative moments…I can kind of see that we'd be targeted…[Y]ou know in the last war…Japanese and Germans were interned, well we'd probably be interned if there was a war – because of that…it's not such a far stretch of the imagination really, so you have some degree of that feeling just from day to day really….

Moreover, Marion stated that she regrets that her daughter has got the Islamic pre-fix at all and that Marion herself only uses Stamatis without Haji.

Emily: …I was also going to ask about your daughter's name at the moment, does she still use the [Islamic pre-fix] bit or does she just use the Stamatis?
Marion: She uses the full works, yeah
Emily: Okay, so um, so that doesn't make you think that you should use the same as her? To be like a family…
Marion: No, no I wish it was the other way around actually, I wish I had registered her as Stamatis……but I suppose it would be more convenient if we were all Stamatis - that would be my preferred option.

For Marion, it appears that her husband's family's Islamic heritage is something to be hidden because of the dominant Islamophobic discourse that has been, and still is, prevalent in the West since the September 11th terrorist attacks (Alexander, 2004; Alexander, Edwards and Temple, 2007; Chryssochoou, 2004; Clarke and Garner, 2009; Yuval-Davis, 2006). Despite the fact that people categorised as Christians have also committed atrocious murders in the name of religion (for example, the IRA in Northern Ireland) (Younge, 2011), terrorism has been particularly framed in the West as an Islamic problem, and consequently, it seems so have names conceived as Islamic. For Marion, it appears that the Islamic name has the potential to give her daughter an Islamic identity, which intersects with her identity as a vulnerable, disabled young person.

Conclusion

I have provided an overview in this chapter of some naming practices my participants spoke of. For example, many participants expressed a desire for their children's dual-heritage to be reflected in their names, which supported Edwards and Caballero's (2008) findings. Many of the data I have presented also suggest that the participants have been negotiating issues of race and the way in which names are commonly understood to be racialised identity markers, when contemplating what to call their children. This appears to be a role that holds significant responsibility for the parents, and many of the quotations I have presented indicate that parents felt the

weight of this pressure and even guilt about their children having to negotiate their dual-heritage.

Indeed, many participants expressed their concern that the idea of their children's names being racially symbolic of their children's dual-heritage should be balanced with the notion that if their children could pass as white British then they would potentially have access to the privileges of whiteness Britishness, rather than to the discrimination which is apparently connected to foreign names. Some parents made steps towards trying to deflect the gaze of others from their children, by making their names invisible, passable - in other words white British. This extends the literature on racial passing (e.g. Ginsberg, 1996) to include names as a disembodied indicator of race.

Indeed, it seems clear from the data I have presented in this chapter that names are not just personal identity markers, but are in fact perceived, both by the participants and seemingly by the people they have interacted with, as important markers of race on the level of individual experience. Indeed, as I have shown, the participants referred to names as being 'English' or 'Norwegian' or 'foreign' etcetera, as if there is absolutely no doubt that that is what they are: racialised categories of names do not seem to be perceived as social constructions, but rather as real.

I have also asserted that some of my participants have implied that there is a hierarchy of names: that names, which are deemed particularly Other/foreign will attract more discrimination, whilst some names are more foreign than others. This extends the existing theory on the hierarchy of embodied race (Dyer, 1999; see Chapter Two). Those names, which are perceived to be white British appear to be conceived as unmarked, familiar and of greater privilege (in symmetry with embodied notions of white privilege (Dyer, 1999). It is not surprising then that many participants implied they desired names for their children, which would embody the latter characteristics. In trying to make their children racially pass as white British via their names, however, there is the implication of further-strengthening, rather than challenging, the hierarchical system of whiteness.

Nevertheless, I have suggested that even those participants who aimed to fight/oppose this racial hierarchy of names may also not make an impression on it, in that they may be reinforcing the idea of foreignness and its embodied attachments. Arguably, by giving what the parents' presume to be their (partially-)foreign child an entirely foreign name, they are telling the world – within what appears to be the currently dominant racialised naming system – that the child is also entirely foreign. Indeed, perhaps my name-changer participants' reported experiences, which I displayed in Chapter Four have questioned more firmly the power of race and whiteness, in that their (sur)names represent – in the current 'regime of truth's' (Reed, 2005:80-81) dogma – something different to their embodied race, which thereby somewhat confuses and undermines the racialised naming process. Nonetheless, there does seem to be some admirable bravery on the part of those participants who could seemingly claim a white British embodied identity for their children and/or themselves but who have instead embraced a foreign identity, via choice of name, in order to try and make a stand against racist discourse.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

I began this thesis by outlining the dominant notion that multiculturalism has failed (McGhee, 2008) and the prevalent idea that a neo-assimilationist approach (Però, 2008; Grillo, 2005; Vasta, 2007; Alexander, Edwards and Temple, 2007) to conceived cultural difference should be pursued. I suggested that the idea that racial minority and migrant cultures are somehow a threat and an imposition on the majority white British culture is essentially a smoke screen for racialised notions of difference. In addition, I wondered if the prevalent focus on the incompatibility of cultures appears to reduce the conceived importance of racism and racial inequality. I also discussed how there is an accompanying rhetoric, which suggests that the white British majority has been overly tolerant (for example, as cited by David Cameron, 2011, the British Prime Minister) and that this has led to a disjointed society – framed as the fault of racial minorities and migrants. The common discourse asserts that racial minorities and migrants refuse to integrate into the – undefined - British way of life (Sveinsson, 2010), in terms of refusing to wear British clothes, or learning the English language (Alexander, Edwards and Temple, 2007), yet they are able to readily claim benefits paid for by the white British majority. They are seen to be underserving of such benefits and the white majority is framed as being too generous in allowing racial minorities and migrants to claim them (Bonnet, 2000). I also explained that it was my impression that such rhetoric was ill-founded, that race is still a much-used tool of categorisation, and that consequently racism may still be a dominant force. Whereas prevailing rhetoric suggests that anti-racism is merely a preventer of free speech (Gilroy, 1987), in actuality racial minorities and migrants do not have such societal power that they can dominate the white British majority (Lentin, 2012). Rather, the extent of racial inequality is well documented (The Runnymede Trust Report, 2012; EHRC, 2010; Ramesh, 2010; Macedo and Gounari, 2006; Chryssochoou, 2004). Yet this racial inequality is hidden behind the neo-assimilationist discourse I have

described, and thereby race and racism are seemingly not given credence in popular rhetoric.

In order to explore from a sociological perspective this issue of the denial of the importance of race and racism, I decided to focus on the function(s) (if any) of names within potential racialising processes. This was within the context of existing quantitative research (Wood *et al.*, 2009), which had indirectly argued that names are used as a means of propagating racial discrimination in the job market. My interest in name racialisation was also reinforced by an existing history of name-changing in response to perceived discrimination on the part of the name-changer (as I presented in Chapter One). It was further supported by what I perceived to be generally problematic attitudes towards names within the UK media (as I also discussed in Chapter One). In Chapter Two I discussed embodied notions of race, racism and whiteness, and nationalism. I also explored how my project might draw upon issues within these bodies of literature. As described in Chapter Three, I have taken a social constructionist and interpretivist perspective towards conducting my research project. In Chapters Four, Five and Six I have investigated and analysed the data that I collected from my 31 semi-structured interviews and one questionnaire based interview.

In this chapter I outline the key conclusions I have reached, on the basis of my analyses and interpretations as presented in the data chapters. Specifically, in the first section I discuss my conclusions in relation to my research concerns and questions. I consider these findings with regard to the literature I presented in Chapters One and Two. In addition, I also reflect on the research limitations of my project and potential for further research. In the second section I further expand upon the main theoretical contributions of my study.

The Case Study Findings

Conclusion One: Racist Attitudes Towards (Sur)names Impact Significantly Upon the Name-Bearer's Everyday Life, and/or Choice Making and/or Feelings of Identity

In relation to my research question, 'Does bearing a surname, which is stereotypically taken to be from a different racial/national origin to a person's former surname have an impact on their everyday experiences/quality of life: for example, in the social and employment contexts?', I have asserted in this thesis that some name-changer participants have experienced racist incidents in relation to their surnames. The racialised coding of surnames had impacted upon many participants' everyday familial, social, educational and work lives in various ways, which I explored in Chapter Five. Consequently, the racialisation of name has had especial significance to many name-changers' lives. For example, many name-changers described the invasive – and what could be deemed hostile – questioning that they experienced regularly in relation to the alleged disparity between their embodied race and the race that their surname was seen to signify.

Indeed, my project has highlighted that to have a (sur)name suggestive of white Britishness but to be conceived in the embodied sense as not white is problematic purely because a person's name is supposed, within the racial system, to racially match their embodied race. The importance of this is that whiteness (in this context, white Britishness) accords someone privilege, and Otherness, the reverse (Dyer, 1999). This is likewise the reason that racial passing has caused such controversy in the USA, because it has been conceived as a fraudulent attempt by black people to gain the privileges of whiteness (Ginsberg, 1996; Belluscio, 2006; Piper, 1996). This project has provided the testimony of those who have been in a sense (largely unconsciously) racially passing through name. It is when the disparity between name and embodied racial appearance has become apparent that problems ensued for the participants. In other words – in a similar sense to what the racial passing literature suggests - it was when the apparent deception in terms of the lack of symmetry between the supposed racial connotations of their name and their

embodied racial identity had been revealed, that the participants experienced negative responses.

Another of my research questions was: 'What experiences are related to bearing a (sur)name that is not (potentially) considered to represent a person's embodied racial identity? And what impact do such experiences have upon those people's personal and/or outward identities?'. Some participants, as I discussed in Chapter Five, expressed how constant questioning about their surnames in relation to perceptions of their own embodied racial identities had emotionally affected them. Furthermore, this also led, for one participant in particular (Abigail Koslacz; white British; Polish married surname), to some uncertainty of identity in that her surname was so often disrespected and/or consistently misspelled or mispronounced. This contrasted with the assuredness she indicated that she had felt when bearing her maiden surname, which she conceived to have matched her embodied race.

This notion of a person's identity being affected by the perceptions of others holds similarities with the literature on identity, which I discussed in Chapter Two. For example, Stuart (2005) writes of the importance of the other's gaze in establishing one's existence. There is a 'doubleness' (Du Bois, 1999:126) in simultaneously seeing oneself and the ways in which one is viewed by others that is central to the creation of one's identity (Ratcliffe, 2004).

Name is an important identity marker (Titford, 2009), and when that name is not properly respected, known, or acknowledged, this arguably questions the significance and meaning of that name and consequently of that person's identity. This bears similarities with Bond's (2006) point that majority views significantly affect an individual's sense of national identity. Indeed, some white participants let the ambiguity regarding their relationship with a surname constructed as being opposite to their own embodied race affect their decision-making in terms of, for example, deciding whether or not to use their spouse's foreign surname (as discussed in Chapter Six). Whilst it may appear that my participants' experiences are representative of 'banal' episodes of everyday racism, such incidents must not be discounted, just because of a widespread preoccupation with more obvious/overt

racist incidents (Lentin, 2005). Indeed, as I discussed in Chapter Two, Kohli and Solórzano (2012:443) assert that understated everyday slights, such as misreadings/mispronunciations of names, are 'racial microagressions', which uphold a 'racial and cultural hierarchy of minority inferiority' (ibid.). They may not seem blatantly racist, but they cumulatively cause a similar effect upon those who suffer them (ibid.).

In addition, it would be interesting for further research to consider gender with regard to the topic of name-changing and racial discrimination. Solomos and Back (2000) rightly emphasise the importance of exploring the interaction of race with gender within social research. I did not take an intersectional approach to research, as I explained in Chapter Three, because the area of names and racialisation/racism had been so under-explored, and consequently I felt that to explicitly concentrate on other aspects of the participants' identities (aside from race) would be beyond the scope of this project. Nonetheless, there were indications from three of my (white) female participants that they considered feminist issues when trying to decide if they should take their husband's surname upon marriage. Two of these participants suggested that this decision was tied up in the fact that their husband's surname was foreign. It would be interesting to explore this interaction more extensively, as well as how, and to what extent, the apparent pressure for a woman to take her husband's surname affects those (white) women who decide to take a foreign surname upon marriage: are they put under societal pressure to take their husband's surname? (Hamilton, Geist and Powell, 2011). Do they have doubts over taking the surname for feminist reasons and/or because of fears of experiencing discrimination?

It would also be intriguing to explore the ways in which experiences may differ in terms of name-changing for male participants. Do they experience societal pressure with regards to keeping their surname upon marriage, for example? And/or do their experiences differ from the female participants in terms of applying for jobs in relation to their name?. A further concern would be to interview more racial minority individuals, as the sample for my project was regrettably skewed towards individuals who considered themselves white (as I discussed in Chapter Three). Additionally, I discussed in Chapter Two how it has been asserted that the privilege of whiteness

can cause class differences to be temporarily forgotten amongst white people (Garner, 2007): that racism is a cohesive device in this regard. Consequently, it would be interesting to have explored the intersection of social class and names. Unfortunately, this was also beyond the scope of this thesis.

Conclusion Two: (Sur)names are Racialised (Racially Coded) in the UK

My project grew out of an initial interest (as I outlined in Chapters One and Three) in whether or not (sur)names are racialised. This subsequently informed a concern with how this racialisation of names may occur. For example, were some names conceived as being normalised and invisible within the UK context? I situated this latter question within whiteness literature in relation to embodied race. This suggests that to be conceived as white in terms of embodied race (skin colour, phenotypical features etcetera) means that that person is seen as unraced, just human, and that this is consequently a privileged position (Dyer, 1999). I wanted to understand if such conceptualisations also apply to names.

I have suggested on the basis of the data presented in Chapter Four that (sur)names are understood in a racialised way in the UK, and that they have been commonly perceived to be either white British or Other/foreign. I have further asserted that the disembodied racialising process of categorising surnames applies the respective racial category to the bearer of the name in an embodied sense. That is, that the bearer is expected to racially embody what the surname signifies. In addition, most participants uttered terms such as 'foreign', 'non-British', 'British', 'English' etcetera to label (sur)names, without appearing to consider the socially constructed nature of such concepts.

Furthermore, many name-changers (as I discussed in Chapter Four) indicated that since their name-change, others consequently expected them to be of a different race and/or nationality to the one they allegedly embodied. These experiences particularly emphasised the racially coded nature of surnames. Additionally, some of my white British female participants expressed how people often assumed that their foreign surname was reflective of a foreign heritage or that people felt there was a

disjuncture between their white embodied racial identity and their foreign surname. Consequently, these participants asserted that the possibility of them having taken the surname upon marriage (despite this still being common practice in the UK; Wilson, 2009) was not considered. This highlights the apparent strength of associations made between (sur)name and embodied ideas of race.

Conclusion Three: The Name Bearer's Inner Characteristics/Knowledge are Stereotyped According to their Surname

A further research aim was to establish if a person's surname is commonly constructed as being symbolic of their entire racial identity within the UK context. That is, are surnames taken to be representative of an individual's racialised identity? As I explained in the section above, the data presented throughout the thesis have indicated that (sur)names are socially constructed in racialised ways. In addition though, as I explored in Chapter Four, some interviewees found that their foreign surname was equated to more than just their understood external racial appearance. It was also deemed to represent their internal abilities, and/or beliefs, and/or lifestyle, and/or knowledge etcetera. This is consistent with, and extends, existing race theory, which asserts that perceived differences in embodied race can be aligned with understandings of internal characteristics (Alexander and Knowles, 2005; St Louis, 2005; Bhavani, Mirza and Meetoo, 2005). Consequently, a person's surname is – within most of my participants' experiences - taken to be holistically representative of that person's identity, of who they are racially understood to be. That some participants' inner characteristics were assumed on the basis of their surname indicates that the stereotyped racialised coding of surnames has potentially discriminatory consequences beyond just disbelief or surprise at the name-changer's appearance in relation to their surname. Indeed, whilst name racialisation may be a common process of perception for all surnames, the exclusions which often follow are not shared, but are particular to those with Other/foreign names – particularly when they are deemed to match such a name in an embodied sense. I will discuss this further in the subsequent conclusions below.

Conclusion Four: There is a Racial Hierarchy of Names in Terms of the Level of Access to White British Privilege

It emerged from the interview data that some participants felt that not only were (sur)names racially coded, but also that such racialisation is hierarchised. I discussed this in Chapter Six. For instance, Chloe Hardy-Mathiesen (white British; raised in North America; Norwegian name (Mathiesen) added to her maiden name upon marriage) spoke of how she was not concerned that her children would bear a Norwegian (sur)name because she felt that Norway generally holds positive connotations in the UK. She contrasted this with the negative connotations she felt Asian- and African-origin (sur)names carry. Indeed, whilst some (sur)names may be deemed acceptably foreign/exotic (for example, the historical trend for taking European names in Britain; Wilson, 1998 - see Chapter Six), Other (sur)names are constructed as unacceptably so. As I mentioned in Chapter Five, most of the foreign (sur)names held by my name-changers were not particularly long or difficult to say in comparison with their white British (sur)names. Yet the amount of issues reported by them in relation to their foreign (sur)names was quite extraordinary. This endorses the argument that it is not the (sur)name in itself that is difficult but perhaps the meanings accorded to the (sur)names' respective racial associations, and consequently the level of respect, trust and acceptance afforded them by those with whom the participants came into contact.

Indeed, as I explored in Chapter One, historically some of those migrants to the UK who Anglicised their surnames apparently spread the stigma of their designated Otherness to their new surnames (Wilson, 1998). Their Anglicised names were then seen to represent their own embodied race and foreignness. In essence, my argument is that it is not the (sur)names in themselves that have caused the problems faced by many of my participants, but rather it is what the names are deemed to stand for or signify. As I mentioned above, the data I have presented in this thesis have suggested that (sur)names are racially coded, hence some names are more advantageous than others. Not only is there a conception of white, Asian,

African names, but there are internal hierarchies within these categories. This extends the hierarchy of embodied race idea (Ratcliffe, 2004; Bulmer and Solomos, 1999), which I discussed in Chapter Two, whereby white people are considered at the top and black people at the bottom (Dyer, 1999). Within the UK context I have argued, in an extension of current whiteness theory, that it is not just bodies that are understood as white but also (sur)names, as they are deemed to be reflective of embodied race. The importance of this is carried in the notion that to be conceived as embodied white is to be in a position of privilege, to be understood as an individual (Clarke and Garner, 2009; Dyer, 1999; Garner, 2007) who is unraced (Aanerud, 1997; Babb, 1998; Dyer, 1999). This contrasts sharply with understandings of blackness as being entirely raced, as the negative opposite from which whiteness finds its identity (Garner, 2007; Babb, 1998).

This oppositional nature of whiteness means that it has a normative, invisible quality (Garner, 2007): to be white is simply to be human (Dyer, 1999). This in itself is a position of immense power: all others are judged from this position of white normativity (ibid.). I have asserted that the same notion likewise applies to (sur)names as a disembodied aspect of racial categorisation. Consequently, those (sur)names deemed to be white British are invisible, unraced, accepted, whilst those constructed as being at the bottom of the hierarchy (those seen as foreign, non-white etcetera) are highly visible, raced, and disadvantageous.

I have also argued that this notion of whiteness is interwoven with the concept of nationalism. The most privileged identity within the UK has been deemed to be that of the majority: white Britishness. The nation, through its elite members, consequently frames minorities as Other, as they are able to demarcate who and what is normal and thereby exclude those who are not deemed to be so (Solomos, 2001). These minorities can be conceived both in terms of skin colour (e.g. Black and Asian – regardless of whether the individual carries British citizenship or not) and in other terms that are in vogue within the nation at the time. For example, the politically motivated Othering of groups such as Polish migrants and Muslims (Alexander, 2002b, 2004; Alexander, Edwards and Temple, 2007; Però, 2013:6) etcetera.

Alexander (2002b:564) asserts that Muslims have become 'the ultimate "Other", transfixed through the racialization of religious identity to stand at the margins: undesired, irredeemable, alien'. As Goldberg (2002:196) argues, white nation states are ones that plan and enforce the 'social, political, economic, legal and cultural' situations that favour white privilege and power. The 'codes, norms and rules' that support these privileges are made to appear universal, whereas in actuality they only serve to benefit the prevailing group (Solomos, 2001:199). The UK's minority groups are subsequently blamed – overtly and/or covertly – for the nation's problems, and this is reflected in attitudes towards (sur)names. Race and nation differ as concepts but they are used to mutually reinforce one another. As Però (2013:8) asserts, 'the state's management of diversity and cohesion in contemporary Britain has been actively centred around and defined against migration and ethnicity'. I discussed this in Chapter One with regards to the replacement of multiculturalism in the UK with neo-assimilationism. This change has led to a dominant rhetoric that excludes minorities and migrants from being part of the nation whilst, at the same time, attributing the nation's problems to them (Però, 2013). This also serves to demonise the super-diversity of the British nation (ibid.)

I discussed in Chapter Two about existing theory on hierarchies of embodied race, whereby since the Enlightenment, humans have been ranked in terms of worth/intelligence by some Western thinkers in accordance with their respective skin colours (white at the top, black at the bottom) (Dyer, 1999; Ratcliffe, 2004; Bulmer and Solomos, 1999). I have suggested in this thesis that there is a racial hierarchy of (sur)names, which works via the attribution of levels of access to privilege within a particular society (in the case of my project, in the UK) on the basis of (sur)name - in its function as a signifier of embodied race. Chapter Four revealed some of the extreme reactions to the apparent racial disjuncture between some participants' (sur)names and their embodied appearances/accents. These episodes further suggested that for a white British person to have a surname that is deemed Other/foreign/not white British, is something of importance. Otherwise, why would it be so remarkable, so commented upon, so questioned – often in a most insistent way?

This in turn proffers up the question of what are the usual consequences for people whose surname is deemed to match their embodied racial identity: what kind of discrimination is practiced, or privilege accorded, on this basis?

I have thereby asserted that at the top of the racialised hierarchy of (sur)names in the UK are those (sur)names conceived as white British, but within that category there may be further classifications (as illustrated in Figure One below). Those (sur)names understood as white British names are the ones that within the UK are deemed normative, invisible and therefore powerful. I have included (sur)names from all parts of the UK within this category, although I am aware that there may be anxieties around Englishness in Scotland (McIntosh, Sim and Robinson, 2004). However, I feel – subject to further research – that these (sur)names would most probably carry the privileges of being categorised as white British. Also in this group are those (sur)names, which are considered white British and are borne by citizens of ex-British colonies such as the USA and the Caribbean.

The historical, and perhaps current, discrimination against Irish-ness (particularly Catholic-based concerns) in England (Ghaill, 2000) has led me to place Irish (sur)names in the second tier. In the category below this are (sur)names that are considered white, but not white British. This category includes (sur)names from the more politically and economically powerful countries within Western Europe in accordance with the current time and context. Beyond these, Eastern European names, whilst belonging to those considered physically white, do not at this moment in time necessarily enable full access to the white privileges belonging to those with the normative, white British (sur)names. As I mentioned above in relation to embodied notions of whiteness, to have a (sur)name that is normative and invisible is to be viewed as unquestionably white British on paper. At the bottom of the hierarchy would apparently be those (sur)names that are deemed unquestionably Other, such as those (sur)names perceived as African, Asian and Islamic. The table below presents an idea of how the UK (sur)name hierarchy could be structured. More research needs to be conducted in order to substantiate and theorise this claim, however. It would also be interesting for further research to consider the notion of a racial hierarchy of

(sur)names in other countries. As I mentioned earlier, identities are not static, but changeable according to time and context. Thus a longitudinal study that looks at (sur)names in relation to racism would also be helpful in order to gauge the ways in which the meanings and social standing of (sur)names change over time.

Figure One. Potential Racial Hierarchy of Names in the UK

Conclusion Five: Name, Skin Colour and Accent Interact in Determining Access to White Privilege

In Chapter Four I discussed the ways in which accent, bodily appearance and (sur)name apparently interacted in determining the name-changers' level of access to white British privilege. It seemed that in some situations to be white, to have a British accent, but to bear a foreign surname was sufficient to deny some participants the entitlements they had been used to with their maiden name. For example, Natalie Pavlović (white British; Croatian married surname) reported that she has been singled

out for extra security checks at airports since taking her married name (see Chapter Four). For others, such as Kayla Brackenbury (Zimbabwean born and raised, Zimbabwean maiden surname) who considered herself to be black British, to have a surname considered white British appears to have positively impacted upon her rate of being called for job interviews. Such an experience supports the Correspondence Test research findings (e.g. Wood *et al.*, 2009; see Chapter Two), which implied that CVs with white British names on them have a much better success rate than those with names deemed to be foreign. Nonetheless, in other respects, such as when her skin colour and/or Zimbabwean accent were noticed, Kayla reported that her access to privileges was lessened accordingly.

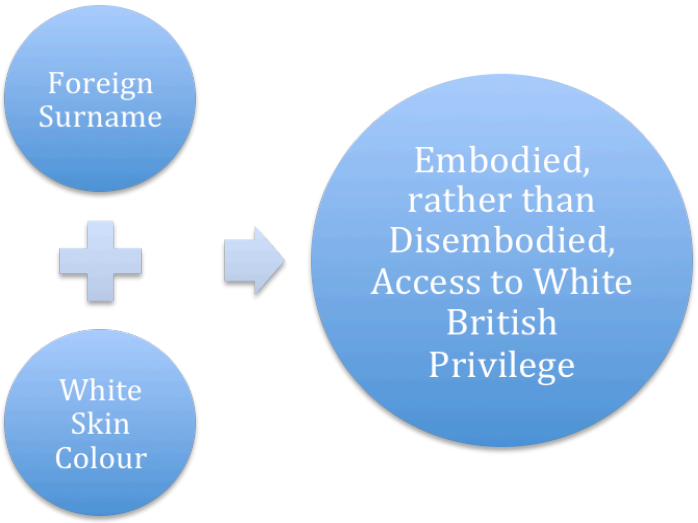
Thus it is a context-specific, quite flexible (within limits) relationship between name, skin colour and accent in the process of determining the levels of access an individual may have to white British privilege. As I discussed in Chapter Two, during certain periods Gypsy, Jewish and Irish peoples have variably been considered to be white or not white (Reed, 2005; Belluscio, 2006; Babb, 1998). Such individuals have thereby rested upon the margins of whiteness, but have been excluded on other grounds. Their racial categorisation has been subject to the whims of those in the position to judge (that is, those who are unquestionably conceived as white) (Dyer, 1999; Clarke and Garner, 2009). The inbetween people thesis further illustrates this conception of the uncertainty of racial categorisation: to be conceived as physically white but not white in other senses (Roediger, 2005): to be close to the privileges of whiteness, but not to have access to them (ibid.). I have asserted that this status of inbetween-ness is also experienced by those who change their (sur)name to one that is not deemed to reflect their embodied racial identity. My project has thereby extended the notion of inbetween people to include (sur)names as a factor in racial categorisation.

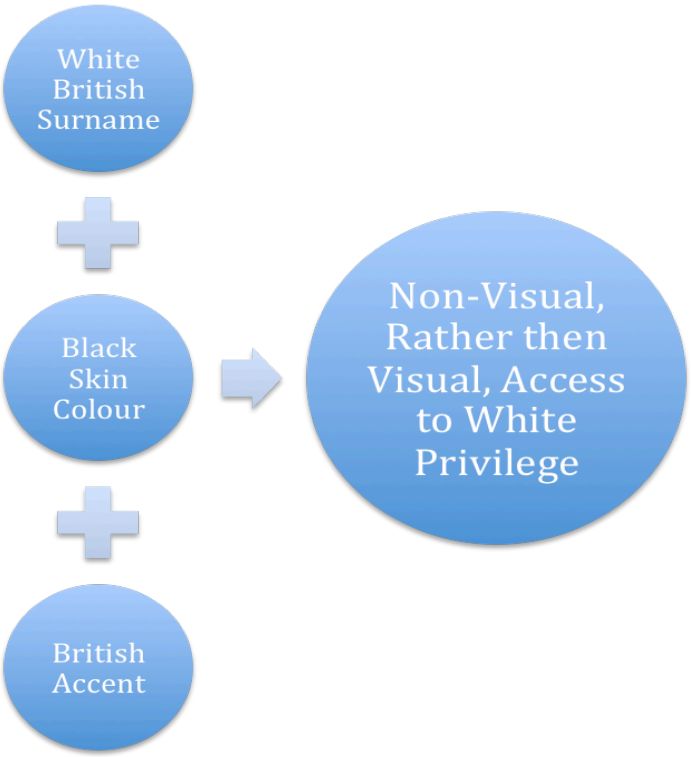
However, the experience of inbetween-ness was not uniform for my participants. Arguably those white British participants who took their partner's foreign name were using foreignness as an accessory. If they removed the surname considered Other and reverted back to the surname considered white British, they

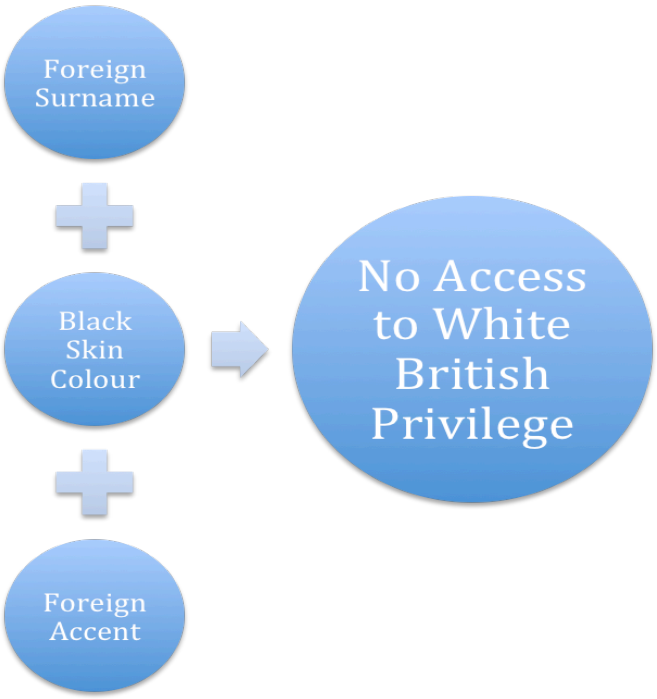
would seemingly encounter no difficulties in terms of their access to white privilege. They would embody normalness in both its racially embodied and disembodied senses. Thus tanned blackness, or Otherness through name, is not a permanent stigma for a white person, but rather something removable, something added and disconnected at will, not being fundamental to their identity and thus being admissible because the person still remains authentically white beneath 'the luxury of a brown veil' (Ahmed, 1998:59-60). The same would apply in reverse to the Asian and black participants: their white British surname gave them a disembodied privilege but when their embodied racial identity was apparent, this privilege disappeared. If they changed back to their Asian/African maiden names, they would not be questioned, but merely returned back to their wholly disadvantaged position, both in the disembodied and embodied aspects. This is in line with literature on tanned white bodies, in the sense that white bodies merely take darkness as a removable adornment (ibid.): the darkness is temporary and does not change that person's racial status (ibid.).

I have provided on the following pages some example combinations of racial markers and suggested how the interaction of these markers may affect an individual's access to white British privileges. This is in order to demonstrate the importance of (sur)names in this process of racialisation and in the name bearer's subsequent access to privilege. I also intend this to underline the socially constructed notion of race (as demonstrated by my participants' inbetween racial position on the basis of a perceived disjuncture between their (sur)name and embodied race) as well as its parallel societal importance.

Figure Two. Examples of Racial Marker Combinations & Presumed Access to White British Privilege







Conclusion Six: Strategies Are Often Developed for Avoiding or Coping with the Racialisation of Name e.g. Racial Passing through (Sur)name

Another of my research questions contemplated if coping strategies are developed by those who bear (sur)names (potentially) considered Other. This question was most certainly relevant in the light of my interviewees' data. I discussed coping strategies at length in both Chapters Five and Six, such as those proposed by parents who made attempts to racially pass their children as white British by giving them a name/names they felt would signify such an identity. In Chapter Six I explored the ways in which parents approached issues of naming their children in the light of their experiences of bearing a surname deemed not to match their embodied racialised identity. The prevalent concern amongst the participants was, as one participant aptly stated: 'What would it be reasonable for the kid to be called?'. There was a common assertion made by the participants that name choice could not be as simple as choosing names that may be familiar/meaningful to, or liked by, each respective parent, but that the difficulties of giving a child a foreign name must be considered. Whilst many participants asserted their desire to reflect the racial heritage of both parents within the child's name, this was not always felt to be fair to the child

or sensible. This perception was often expressed in relation to practical issues of pronunciation and spelling but also in terms of fears that their child would be perceived as foreign and/or discriminated against.

Some interviewees consequently opted to try to help their child(ren) racially pass by giving them names they felt would be deemed white British and which would therefore not mark them out as foreign/Other. Suzanne Balester (white British; Moroccan married name during former marriage), for example, provided an interesting description of how and why she deceived her husband into choosing a first name for their son that, whilst it was a Muslim name, could be shortened in order to appear white British (see Chapter Six). This research finding adds to the existing theory of racial passing that I discussed in Chapter Two. Whereas that theory related to African American racial passing (Belluscio, 2006; Kennedy, 2004; Sollos, 1997) in an embodied sense (Ginsberg, 1996), my project has highlighted disembodied racial passing (through (sur)name) in a UK context. My thesis has also looked at racial passing in terms of (sur)names and their interaction with embodied indicators of race such as skin colour and accent, rather than just in terms of skin colour alone, as the existing literature had done. This is therefore a significant contribution to race literature.

Furthermore, many participants reported that they had encountered such difficulties with their surnames that they were prepared to avoid using them in certain situations. This is suggestive that the disjuncture between a person's (sur)name and the perception of their embodied race does have everyday consequences to the extent that decision making is affected. In a similar vein, some participants indicated that they had developed coping strategies in an attempt to avoid the intense interest and uneasiness felt around issues encountered due to the asserted disjuncture between their married surname and their embodied racial appearance. This mostly involved using a pseudonym surname in certain situations: Victoria Ravanbaksh (white British, Iranian/Persian married surname) reported that she held bank cards for many years in both her married surname and her maiden surname. Victoria said that

she would often use the card in her maiden name when she wished to avoid being questioned about her (racial) relationship to her married surname (see Chapter Six).

This is reminiscent of the history of name-changing, which I discussed in Chapter One, whereby names have been altered or Anglicised by migrants to the UK, or British citizens with names conceived as foreign (such as the British Royal Family; Rohrer, 2007) in order to try to avoid discrimination and/or the stigma associated with bearing (sur)names considered foreign. Thereby, in some cases it was easier for my participants to use a (sur)name that was perceived to match their embodied racial identity than it was to answer questions about the disjuncture between that identity and their married name. This is also an example of the way in which my project has gone beyond existing research into names and racial discrimination (Wood *et al.*, 2009; The Runnymede Trust, 2012). My thesis has not just looked at the notion of foreign names in relation to employment concerns. It has provided an original contribution to existing literature by presenting a fuller understanding of the everyday experiences, in a more holistic sense, of individuals who have borne a (sur)name perceived as foreign.

Conclusion Seven: Name-Choice can Alternatively be Used in Order to Resist Racism

Some participants indicated a desire not to let discrimination against, or the difficulties of having, a foreign (sur)name prevent them from using it or giving it to their children. A particularly interesting example of this was articulated by Lynsey Bridger (white British, did not take her husband's Kashmiri surname upon marriage). She described how she had feared her first child would face discrimination and had accordingly chosen to give him a white British first name and her white British maiden surname. Upon having her second child many years later, she reported that she still felt that the child would face racism, but chose to give her a fully Arabic name. She said she made this decision because she felt that trying to help her child racially pass as white British would not make any difference in the fight against racism (see Chapter Six). Furthermore, Jamal Hassan Hamdaoui (mixed-race British) explained how he chose to revert as an adult to his Arabic name given to him at birth, after his

mother had Anglicised his name throughout his childhood in an attempt to help him racially pass as white British. He reported that he had made this decision on the basis that he did not want to hide his given name because of the fear of racism. Jamal spoke of feeling that he had the right to bear such a name and that he should not live according to the comfort of those around him. Nonetheless, in a similar way to those participants who tried to avoid name discrimination, in trying to fight it these participants also affirmed the significance of the racialised classification of names.

However, in both this and the previous conclusion I have highlighted that those categorised as foreign or Other (via name) are not necessarily passive in respect of racism or discrimination. This is in contrast to some literature, which tends to highlight the passivity of minorities and migrants (as mentioned by Però and Solomos, 2010). For example, I made the point in Chapter Two that Said (2003) appears to underestimate the Other's ability to resist the Western discourse, which asserts their inferiority. My participants, in apparently developing strategies to fight against perceived name discrimination and problems, did not act the role of marginalised subjects, but instead showed agency.

Conclusion Eight: (Sur)names Should Be Recognised as a Tool of Racial Categorisation Alongside Embodied Factors (Skin Colour and Accent)

In the light of the above conclusions, it would appear that in relation to my remaining research question, (sur)names should indeed be considered alongside well-known indicators of racial classification such as skin colour and accent. My participants' experiences suggest that there is a strong relationship between (sur)names and embodied indicators of race (skin colour, accent etcetera), and that this relationship varies, and is changeable, according to particular situations and contexts. Existing literature argues that the importance of embodied markers of race should not be forgotten (Alexander and Knowles, 2005) in the light of new racism's move away from biological differences based in the body and towards alleged cultural differences (Lentin and Titley, 2011a). My project supports this call in the fact that it has underlined the ever-present racialisation of the body. My thesis also, however,

argues that skin colour and accent are not the only markers of race, and that (sur)names are integral in the process of racialising an individual. In this sense, (sur)names can be used both as a designator of embodied race and as a disembodied signifier of race. An example of the disembodied function of names is a job application form, as this uses a person's name without the applicant's skin colour or accent necessarily being known. In this regard, names are used on their own as a marker of race and may be used as a factor in determining whether that person is invited for an interview or not. It would only be at the interview that the person's skin colour and accent could be assessed. Consequently, names interact with skin colour and accent in different ways and in different contexts and should thereby be acknowledged within the literature as doing so. As I expressed in Chapter Two, existing research (Wood *et al.*, 2009; The Runnymede Trust, 2012) asserts that names play a role in racial discrimination. However, it does not specifically look at the impact of names in a person's everyday life. My project has filled this gap in existing theory and therefore represents a significant contribution to the literature.

Concluding Remarks

As I outlined in Chapters One and Two, it appears that there is a general weariness within the UK regarding the concept of racism and a readiness to pronounce that it has been overcome (Solomos, 2003). Anti-racism initiatives have been attacked by politicians, press and public as curbing white Britons' freedom of speech (Gilroy, 1987). Moreover, the subtlety of modern day racism in practice has not been matched in terms of common understandings of it. Whereas racist abuse shouted on tubes by white individuals towards black or Asian people may be publically condemned and punished (*The Guardian*, 2012), there is little apparent awareness of less obvious forms of exclusion. The example I provided in Chapter Two regarding the lack of racial minority characters on a popular UK drama supports this point. It was not until the director admitted that this was a deliberate casting policy on his part that there was any outcry (Jones, 2011). Seemingly nobody had noticed or cared about the exclusion of black/Asian actors previously. Consequently, the white backlash, the

attacks on anti-racism measures and the lack of appetite for understanding what racism actually is, is equivalent to ideological manipulation and racist behaviour (Macedo and Gounari, 2006; Lentin and Titley, 2011a). My thesis has added weight to the point that racism is far from being over. My project has also added names to the list of racial markers, alongside skin colour and accent. The process of racialising names in order to assess a person's supposed embodied racial identity is one which usually works silently and subtlety. It covertly works away within the background societal processes of racialisation. My thesis has, however, revealed the role names play by disrupting the usual – socially constructed - associations between names and embodied race.

The data I have presented constitute a strong argument that race is very much an active and integral part of the way British society is constructed. This is in contrast to the assertion made by Samir Shah (2009), the former Runnymede Trust chair – as I cited in Chapter One – that race is no longer relevant in the UK. His argument was that it is a person's 'Style, background, accent, dress sense and cultural (as opposed to ethnic) background and – most of all – [their] manner' that count in terms of getting a job. This assertion has been challenged by my findings, which suggest that the notion of biological race, as something grounded very much in the body, is still essential to the way in which difference is understood, and racism is perpetrated, in the UK. My findings also question the government's move towards a colour-blind, race-less approach – as I mentioned in Chapter Two, the Runnymede Trust Report (2012:9) has called for an end to the UK government's '"colour-blind" approach with regards to racism in the employment sector. Also, as I discussed in Chapter One, the Children and Families Bill, 2013 denies the relevance of race (and racism) in terms of placing children with adoptive parents. That is, the Bill asks for social workers to ignore children's deemed racial difference. However, I have asserted that racialisation is still very much prevalent, that people seem to think in terms of the concept of embodied racial difference. If this is ignored, then racism may well become even more rampant.

In addition, my thesis has asserted the socially constructed nature of race (Garner, 2010) throughout. The fact that it is even possible to racially pass is demonstrative of the fact that race is not a biological phenomenon. The inbetween/racial passing status of my participants and in some cases the removal from some white participants, and the attainment for some black participants, of certain privileges of whiteness purely on the basis of their name-change, has clearly shown that race is ascribed rather than fixed.

Furthermore, I have suggested that in parallel with embodied racial passing, racially-based name-changing can reveal and embarrass racial thinking. Nonetheless, this does not in any way challenge the power of such racialising processes or take away the desire to exclude or discriminate. Racism is based upon power and access to that power and privilege. Historical name-changing, as I discussed in Chapter One, has perhaps enabled people to racially pass as white British, but it does not necessarily take away the stigma that those people carry. This was demonstrated with the example I gave in Chapter One of those Jewish people who Anglicised their surnames, and how these surnames then subsequently bore the perceived stigma of Jewishness (Wilson, 1998). It is not the names in themselves that are an issue. Indeed, as I argued in Chapter One and throughout this thesis, one cannot unproblematically identify what a white British name could be, just as one cannot determine what a race is (Salkeld, 2011). This is because they are both socially created and are consequently changeable and flexible according to the needs of those in economic, political and media-based positions of power (Però, 2013): the excluders. Racism thereby changes according to time and context. It is not particularly sophisticated in terms of how it excludes, but the historical power racism carries (such as the legacy of slavery: Gilroy, 1987; Casciani, 2007; Roediger, 2003) ensures that it is not often acknowledged in any meaningful way by those in power (white elites). An example of this can be seen in the white backlash of recent years against the notion of racism (Garner, 2007, Clarke and Garner, 2009). The argument being that the fight against racism has led to racial minority groups being advantaged at the expense of white people, and that white people are now the disadvantaged group (Garner, 2007;

Clarke and Garner, 2009). This is despite the fact that minority groups in the UK are by far more disadvantaged than the white majority (e.g. Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2010; Ramesh, 2010).

In Chapter One I discussed the UK's recent move away from multiculturalism and its introduction of a more assimilationist attitude towards difference (Però, 2008a; Grillo, 2005; Vasta, 2007). In addition, this neo-assimilationist movement includes an asserted rebuttal by the UK government (Cameron, 2011) and media of the celebrated national trait of tolerance. Tolerance is a paradoxical term. Whilst it is admirable to practice restraint towards something one does not approve of, at the same time when the concept is used in relation to human beings this takes on the connotation that there is something about those people that is negative and inferior. It further implies that the ingroup has the power to alter or subdue the Other's ways of living (McKinnon, 2006), but so as to be virtuous it does not do so.

This is the tolerance that British Prime Minister David Cameron referred to as 'passive' (Cameron, 2011), which he has urged should be replaced by a more 'muscular liberalism' (ibid.). It is worth repeating Cameron's words that what is "at stake is not just lives, it's our way of life"' (ibid.). British minorities (in his view), such as Muslims (all tarred with the brush of terrorism) have taken advantage of British passiveness and are a real threat to 'our' lives. In addition, Cameron appears to be using 'our' to indicate that there is a specific British way of life that the outgroup of British minorities is not adhering to and should be made to do so. It would seem that a major driver of this attitude is that politicians want the population they govern to conceive that they are a community (Smith, 1998), and one of the ways of doing this is to construct an ingroup to contrast with those constructed as being Other.

This outgroup is changeable according to time and context. As I suggested above, in the UK at the present time Muslims are most definitely placed within this group, as are Eastern Europeans. Research findings further indicate that those individuals conceived as black British and Asian British tend to also be Othered, in the sense that they do not have the same life chances (for example, in terms of employment opportunities) as their white counterparts (Macedo and Gounari, 2006;

Chryssochoou, 2004). Racism, as I discussed in Chapter Two, has moved somewhat away from its biological base and towards a cultural conception of difference (Solomos and Back, 2000; Miles, 1999). My thesis has asserted that racism can refer to religious and national (e.g. Eastern European) based exclusionary rhetoric (Ratcliffe, 2004) as well as that directly based upon traditional indicators of race, such as skin colour and phenotypical features.

As I argued in Chapter Two, I have referred to race rather than to ethnicity throughout this thesis, in the belief that ethnicity essentialises cultural and national characteristics as though they were racial, and that ethnicity thereby merely serves to mask racialised thinking (Lentin, 2008, 2012; Lentin and Titley, 2011a; Gunaratnam, 2003). An interesting example of this Othering of racial minorities on the basis of name, skin colour and religion, can be found in the initial media reports of the murder of the white British soldier, Lee Rigby in London on the 22nd May 2013. Before photographic images and mobile phone footage of the two perpetrators had been seen by the media, Nick Robinson, the Political Editor for the BBC, said live on air that they were '"of Muslim appearance"' (Robinson 2013). A small outcry ensued and Nick Robinson made an apology for his use of the phrase (ibid.). As anyone of any appearance can believe in a religion, it is incoherent to say that someone has a 'Muslim appearance'. Nonetheless, the phrase suggests that there is a particularly dominant image in the British national domain of what a Muslim looks like: 'An Asian man with a backpack and a beard, or perhaps a woman wearing a hijab' (Lodge, 2013). This is also an instance of the way in which race is discussed in other terms, as mentioned above, such as culture and in this case religion. Thereby religion is racialised. When it became apparent that the two men were not Asian, the focus quickly turned to their blackness. It would seem that their Nigerian-origin surnames made the prominent labelling of the men as being of 'Nigerian origin' not so conspicuous, in spite of the fact that both men were heard to speak with distinctive London accents in camera footage released on the same day as the murder had taken place (Hartley-Parkinson and Dolan, 2013). As the days went by and the media continued to report details about the two men, their British citizenship was

acknowledged, but the 'Nigerian origin' tag remained alongside this description (e.g. *BBC News*, 2013). In killing a white British soldier in the name of (a warped version of) Islam, the men had placed themselves outside of national understandings of Britishness – a construction that their skin colour and names also greatly contributed to.

I have placed my participants' experiences within this UK context of exclusion and racism in this thesis. I have asserted that their reported experiences are indicative of the enduring relevance of race and racism to the ways in which individuals are categorised. Also, that the current attitudes towards difference inform the consequences of this categorisation, in the sense that those names deemed Islamic, African, Asian or Eastern European etcetera will have negative connotations, in contrast to those names conceived as white British. In addition, my contribution to racial theory is the suggestion that names are an important part of the racialisation process of individuals. I have asserted that the racial assessment of names goes hand in hand with perceptions of embodied indicators of race such as skin colour and phenotypical features.

Moreover, it is self-evident that it is skin colour that still stands as the most important determiner of an individual's life chances: 'Only those who possess, or appear to possess, certain phenotypical characteristics experience the full force of racism' (Ratcliffe, 2004:29; also see Lentin, 2008). My thesis affirms such an assertion by outlining the surprising power of (sur)names, whilst also acknowledging that it is the combination of (sur)names with other factors that influences one's everyday experiences. For example, as I discussed above, if a person is white with a foreign (sur)name, their experiences may nonetheless not be so negative as a black person who bears a white (sur)name. Consequently, racism is an integral topic for research: we must continue as social scientists to seek to understand its dominance (Bulmer and Solomos, 1999). Goldberg (2000) asserts that race and racism are primarily concerned with the creation of difference. If a system is so focused on difference, then it will come to see race as natural and easy (ibid.), no matter what terms are used to refer to it.

As I mentioned earlier, and as I have expressed throughout the thesis, I have made sense of my findings in relation to racial power through the theory of whiteness. As Garner (2007:64) argues, whiteness contains 'patterns of power relations…the power to name, the power to control and distribute resources'. As I outlined previously, (sur)names cannot be unproblematically categorised as white/British etcetera, yet this is the system that one lives by in the UK (and indeed perhaps in other respective countries with their own notions of majority versus Other names). Seemingly in the UK one is socialised from birth by the idea that some (sur)names belong and some are foreign, and it has yet to be uncovered exactly how much damage such a system has caused to those deemed non-white or foreign. This is a matter of great importance for those who research into the social effects of race and racism. Put simply, whiteness has always thrived on maintaining the authority and advantage for those deemed white (Ferber, 1999). As Wemyss (2009:11) asserts, there is a need for more 'grounded research' in relation to whiteness in order to 'expose the different and shifting ways that whiteness functions and what it means to be the subjects of its discursive dominance'. Whilst this project did not begin with the desire to investigate whiteness, I felt that my participants' experiences of name-changing uncovered hidden power structures of the normative qualities of whiteness, its universality and remit to talk for, and judge, all of humanity (Garner, 2007; Ware and Back, 2002).

Although I have acknowledged the socially constructed nature of race, nonetheless I have asserted that racialisation processes still tend to be biologically based. It is important to consider that race still has its basis in notions of skin colour and is not just culturally based (Lentin, 2008). The tendency to not talk in terms of race, but to use ethnicity, religion, culture etcetera (ibid.), is not to have defeated the exclusionary and discriminatory nature of race, but is rather just not to have addressed it: to have '"buried it alive"' (Goldberg, 2006:338, quoted in Lentin, 2008:497). As Alexander and Alleyne (2002a:548) argue, if researchers ignore the concept of race, then racism also becomes 'invisible'.

This project increases awareness of the continuing prevalence of racist thinking and practices in a society that is often acclaimed as being post-racial (Lentin, 2011b, 2012). Although this project has a small sample group and therefore is not representative of the UK population, I feel that it raises interesting questions for future research both in the UK and elsewhere. Other researchers can make use of the thick descriptions of my methodology and research findings, which I have provided within this thesis, in order to carry out similar work in other contexts and/or along the lines of the suggested new sample groups I have outlined briefly in this chapter and in Chapter Three. The influence of social research upon public policy is not usually particularly potent (Hammersley, 2000). Nonetheless, my thesis contributes towards making a case that the reigns of whiteness, and consequently of racism, continue to thrive. (Sur)names are just one part of the racialising process but nevertheless they are an important one, which seems to have been ill-acknowledged. The racialisation of (sur)names is an important finding in raising awareness of the role that race still plays within British society: in relation to the life chances of not just migrants, but British born people who happen to bear a (sur)name that those they come into contact with, often conceive as foreign.

Denzin (2001:24) articulately envisions a place where 'humans can become who they wish to be, free of prejudice, repression and discrimination'. Sadly my study's findings – and the evidence of inequality I mentioned in Chapter Two - suggest that the UK is nowhere near being such a place. For racism to be challenged, there must be a common appetite within society to openly admit that there is a problem. It is integral for it to be acknowledged that racism actually exists, that it is not imagined, and that it really does impact in a significant way upon people's life chances, in spite of the socially constructed nature of race. The words from my participants' mouths, which are presented in this study, colourfully demonstrate their lived experiences of race and racism. Britain can be described as super-diverse (Vertovec, 2006, Però, 2013) – that is, as 'inextricably and irrevocably multiracial, multicultural, multifaith' (Alexander and Alleyne, 2002a:543). The data I have presented provide a new and concrete reminder that Britain is not yet, however, a post-racial society. (Sur)names

are one of the tools that the UK as a racial – perhaps racist – society uses in order to categorise and allocate privilege to its members.

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APPENDIX ONE: (SELF-IDENTIFIED) PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

NAME	NATIONALITY OF 'NON-WHITE BRITISH' SURNAME	GEND.	AGE	HIGHEST QUAL.	PROFESSION	SOCIAL CLASS	PARTIC.'S NATIONALITY	PARTIC.'S RACE	SPOUSE'S NATIONALITY	SPOUSE'S RACE	CHANGED NAME WHEN MARRIED?	WHEN MARRIED	CHILDREN	INTERVIEW LENGTH	INTERVIEW TYPE
Linda ABADJIAN	ARMENIAN	F	54	CERTIFICATE	STAY-AT-HOME-MOTHER, WAS DENTAL THERAPIST	MIDDLE	BRITISH	WHITE	BRITISH/ ARMENIAN	WHITE	YES	1983	3	58 mins	Phone
ANNA ALADEOJA	NIGERIAN	F	22	A-LEVELS	STUDENT	MIDDLE	BRITISH	WHITE	NIGERIAN/ BRITISH	BLACK	YES	2007	0	36 mins	Phone
Stephanie ALASADI	KUWAITI	F	23	BA	MA STUDENT	MIDDLE	BRITISH	WHITE	KUWAITI	ARAB	YES, ONE YEAR AFTER	2011	0	25 mins	Face to Face in Private Room in Library
Suzanne BALESTER	MOROCCAN	F	46	O-LEVELS	BA STUDENT	WORKING	BRITISH	WHITE	MOROCCAN	BLACK AFRICAN	YES	1990, DIVORCED AFTER 4 YEARS	1	48 mins	Face to face in Public Café
Kayla BRACKENBURY	ZIMBABWEAN	F	28	BSc	NURSE	MIDDLE	BRITISH/ ZIMBABWEAN	BLACK	BRITISH	WHITE	YES	2010	0	72 mins	Face to Face Participant's Home
Lynsey BRIDGER	KASHMIRI	F	40	PGCCE, MA	EDUCATION MANAGEMENT	WORKING	BRITISH	WHITE	BRITISH BORN, KASHMIRI	KASHMIRI MUSLIM	NO	1989	2	50 mins	Face to Face Private Room in Business Hub building
Bryony CHIAMAKA	NIGERIAN	F	70	BA	RETIRED BANK QUALITY FACILITATOR	WORKING/ MIDDLE	BRITISH	WHITE	NIGERIAN/ BRITISH	BLACK AFRICAN	YES	1965	3	117 mins	Skype
Sophie CLARKE	ITALIAN	F	29	BA	TEACHER	MIDDLE	BRITISH (ITALIAN HERITAGE)	WHITE	BRITISH	WHITE	YES	2010	0	39 mins	Face to Face in Public Café
Ailsa CZERNIAK	POLISH	F	65	NVQ	CHEMIST COUNTER ASSISTANT	MIDDLE	BRITISH	WHITE	SCOTTISH/ POLISH	WHITE	YES	1968	1	35 mins	Face to Face Public Sports Hall

NAME	NATIONALITY OF 'NON-WHITE BRITISH' SURNAME	GEND.	AGE	HIGHEST QUAL.	PROFESSION	SOCIAL CLASS	PARTIC.'S NATIONALITY	PARTIC.'S RACE	SPOUSE'S NATIONALITY	SPOUSE'S RACE	CHANGED NAME WHEN MARRIED?	WHEN MARRIED	CHILDREN	INTERVIEW LENGTH	INTERVIEW TYPE
Naze EDGERLEY	N/A	M	21	A-LEVELS	STUDENT	WORKING	BRITISH	MIXED - WHITE/ BLACK AFRICAN	N/A	N/A	NOT MARRIED & HASN'T CHANGED NAME	N/A	0	53 mins	Phone
Katia EVANS	POLISH	F	39	PGCE	TEACHER	MIDDLE	BRITISH (POLISH PARENTS)	WHITE	BRITISH	WHITE	YES	2004	YES	53 mins	Face to face in Public Café
Jamal Hassan HAMDAOUI	ARABIC	M	31	HND, BSc	BA STUDENT, CHEF, MUSIC TEACHER	WORKING/ MIDDLE	BRITISH	OTHER (MIXED)	N/A	N/A	NOT MARRIED, BUT CHANGED NAME AT ABOUT AGE 20	N/A	0	148 mins	Phone
Chloe HARDY-MATHIESEN	NORWEGIAN	F	37	BA	STUDENT - IT PROF.	MIDDLE	BRITISH	WHITE	NORWEGIAN	WHITE	YES	2009	0	96 mins	Skype
Lars HARDY-MATHIESEN	NORWEGIAN	M	24	A-LEVELS	STUDENT	MIDDLE	NORWEGIAN	WHITE	BRITISH	WHITE	YES, BEFORE MARRIAGE	2009	0	N/A	Written Response to Questions
Sally HASANI	ALBANIAN	F	34	MA	POST-GRAD STUDENT	WORKING	BRITISH	WHITE	BRITISH/ ALBANIAN	WHITE OTHER	YES	2002	2	36 mins	Phone
Amy JAMMEH	GAMBIAN	F	47	BA, MA NEARLY COMPLETE D	CIVIL SERVANT, HEALTH MANAGER	MIDDLE	BRITISH	WHITE	GAMBIAN	BLACK AFRICAN	YES, WHEN CHILD BORN	2005	1	59 mins	Face to Face Private Room in Participant's Work Place
Abigail KOSLACZ	POLISH	F	41	QTS	TEACHER	WORKING	BRITISH	WHITE	BRITISH (POLISH HERITAGE)	WHITE	YES	2007	0	40 mins	Face to Face Public Sports Hall
Charlotte LEARY	ZIMBABWEAN	F	35	ACCA Part Qual + BA	FINANCIAL ACCOUNTANT	MIDDLE	ZIMBABWEAN/ BRITISH	BLACK	IRISH	WHITE	YES	1999	2	32 mins	Phone

NAME	NATIONALITY OF 'NON-WHITE BRITISH' SURNAME	GEND.	AGE	HIGHEST QUAL.	PROFESSION	SOCIAL-CLASS	PARTIC.'S NATIONALITY	PARTIC.'S RACE	SPOUSE'S NATIONALITY	SPOUSE'S RACE	CHANGED NAME WHEN MARRIED?	WHEN MARRIED	CHILDREN	INTERVIEW LENGTH	INTERVIEW TYPE
Jenny LEGRIS	MAURITIAN	F	54	PGCE	TEACHER	UPPER MIDDLE	BRITISH	WHITE	MAURITIAN	ASIAN	YES	1984	3	104 mins	Skype
Alice MELISSINOS	GREEK	F	67	ECDL	RETIRED FROM NON/SEMI-SKILLED JOBS	MIDDLE	BRITISH	WHITE	BRITISH/ CYPRIOT	WHITE	YES	1965	YES	47 mins	Phone
Mandy MUNDRA	INDIAN	F	55	City & Guilds Hairdressing & Operation Department Qualfs	SHOP OWNER/ SELF-EMPLOYED	MIDDLE	BRITISH	WHITE	INDIAN	INDIAN	YES	1986	2	11 mins	Face to Face Private Room in Participant's Work Place
Elinor MURLEY	SPANISH/ PERUVIAN	F	32	PHD	ACADEMIC	MIDDLE	SCOTTISH	WHITE	BRITISH/ PERUVIAN	SOUTH/ LATIN AMERICAN	ONLY FOR GP SURGERY	2003	0	83 mins	Face to Face Private Room in Participant's Work Place
Natalie MUSTAPIĆ	CROATIAN	F	47	PHD / QUAL. SOLICITOR	ACADEMIC	MIDDLE/ UPPER-MIDDLE	BRITISH	WHITE	BRITISH/ CROATIAN	WHITE OTHER	YES	1996	2	48 mins	Face to Face Private Room in Participant's Work Place
Claire NEGEV	ISRAELI/ HEBREW	F	38	GCSEs	FULL-TIME PARENT	MIDDLE	BRITISH	WHITE	ISRAELI/ BRITISH	WHITE OTHER	YES	1995	3	41 mins	Phone
Victoria RAVANBAKSH	IRANIAN/ PERSIAN	F	45	PhD	ABORO-CULTURE, RETAIL	WORKING-MIDDLE	BRITISH/ IRANIAN	WHITE	BRITISH/ IRANIAN	IRANIAN/ PERSIAN	YES, BUT NOT INITIALLY	1989	2	62 mins	Face to Face in Private Room in Library

NAME	NATIONALITY OF 'NON-WHITE BRITISH' SURNAME	GEND.	AGE	QUAL.	PROFESSION	CLASS	PARTIC.'S NATIONALITY	PARTIC.'S RACE	SPOUSE'S NATIONALITY	SPOUSE'S RACE	CHANGED NAME WHEN MARRIED?	WHEN MARRIED	CHILDREN	INTERVIEW LENGTH	INTERVIEW TYPE
Carol SIDIBEH	GAMBIAN	F	66	NONE	RETAIL MANAGER/ WORKER	WORKING	ENGLISH	WHITE	BRITISH/ GAMBIAN	BLACK BRITISH	YES	2004	3 -FROM PREV. MARRIAGE	54 mins	Face to face in Public Café
Marion STAMATIS	GREEK	F	61	PGCE	ARTIST, WRITER	MIDDLE, WAS WORKING	BRITISH	WHITE	GREEK/ BRITISH	WHITE	YES, AFTER 11 YEARS	1981	1	94 mins	Face to face in Public Café
Rebecca TRAVERS	POLISH	F	49	MASTERS	PHD STUDENT	WORKING	BRITISH	WHITE	BRITISH/ POLISH	WHITE OTHER	YES, BUT NOW DIVORCED	1987, DIVORCED AFTER 4 YEARS	0	47 mins	Face to Face in Semi-Public University Building
Rose URZICA	ROMANIAN	F	62	BA	CULTURAL CONSULTANT	MIDDLE	BRITISH	WHITE EUROPEAN	BRITISH/ ROMANIAN	WHITE EUROPEAN	YES	1994		102 mins	Face to Face Participant's Home
Beth VILLIERS	DUTCH	F	33	MA	PHD STUDENT	MIDDLE	BRITISH	WHITE	DUTCH	WHITE	NO	2007	1	25 mins	Face to Face in Private Room in Library
MARIANNE WATSON	CHINESE	F	27	DIPLOMA	COMPLIANCE OFFICER	WORKING	MALAISIAN	CHINESE	BRITISH	WHITE	YES, BUT AFTER 2 YEARS	2006	2	78 mins	Phone
Nicola ZHEUNG	CHINESE	F	33	MA	IT MANAGER	MIDDLE	BRITISH	WHITE	BRITISH	CHINESE	YES	2006	0	63 mins	Phone

APPENDIX TWO: INTERVIEW GUIDE

How long ago did you get married?

Have you changed your surname to your partner's upon marriage?

Was this a decision you thought about a lot?

For those who changed their name

When did you change your surname?

Why did you change your surname?

What is your new surname? What racial/national/ethnic associations do you think this name has (if any)?

What was your surname before you changed it? What racial/national/ethnic associations do you think this name has (if any)?

What were your feelings towards your new surname before you changed it? Have these feelings changed now?

What does your new surname symbolise/represent to you (e.g. nationality/colour/accent…)? Has this changed?

How about your previous name? What did/does that represent/ symbolise
to you?

What do you think your old/new surnames symbolise to others?

How have your family members/friends reacted to your name change?

How did your work colleagues react to your name change?

Has your circle of friends changed after you've changed your surname and do you feel like members of the 'race'/ethnic minority associated with your adopted (ethnic minority) surname have embraced you/been more friendly towards you as a consequence of changing your name?

If have children: How do you feel about naming your children? Have you/would you give them your new surname? How do you feel about making this decision?

If have talked about discrimination:
Have you considered changing your name back to your former surname?

Do you think some surnames are more advantageous than others? E.g. in work/life opportunities?

How do you think name discrimination compares to discrimination based on appearance (e.g. skin colour) or accent, nationality etc. in the UK context?

<u>For those who did not change their name</u>

Why did you decide not to change your surname?

What would have been your new surname? What racial/national/ethnic associations do you think this name has (if any)?

What is your current surname? What racial/national/ethnic associations do you think this name has (if any)?

What does your current surname symbolise/represent to you?

What does your spouse's surname symbolise/represent to you?

How have your spouse/family members/friends/work colleagues etc. responded to your decision not to change your name?

How do you and your spouse feel about the name choice for your (potential) children? Would you consider giving them your spouse's name?

Do you think some surnames are discriminated against? If so, how does this compare to other markers of discrimination e.g. skin colour, accent, discriminations etc.?