

Consequences Diverse to Mosaic Britain



A hand reaches through a torn Union Jack flag to hold a small child's hand. The hand is dark-skinned, and the child's hand is light-skinned. This imagery symbolizes the diverse nature of British society and the connection between different ethnic groups.

by Susan Popoola



PRESS RELEASE - for immediate release
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Author examines why Britain has become such a diverse country

When the London riots of August 2011 started to spread across different parts of the country, people questioned whether or not the riots were really about the shooting of a young black man by the police.

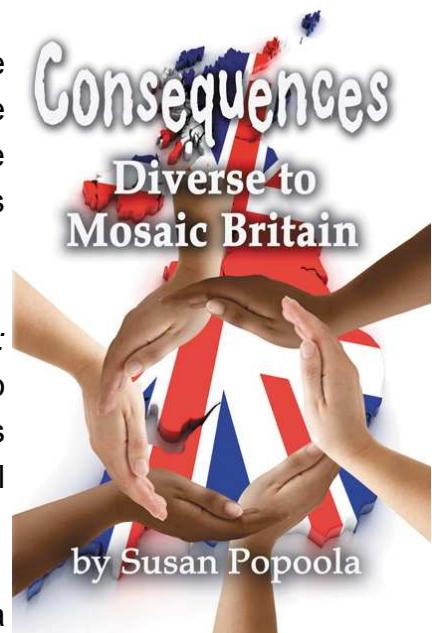
That is open to debate, but what is unquestionable is that there are segments of society that are disengaged from the mainstream.

With some people looking at the riots as just the latest in a series of passing incidents, others were concerned about the levels of discontent that are likely to be reflected across the country for years to come.

Susan Popoola's latest book, *Consequences: Mosaic to Diverse Britain* represents a journey to gain some understanding into what it is that leads everyday people to support the BNP, the National Front or other similar parties/groups.

She examines how Britain has come to be such a diverse country, and looks into how we ultimately need to live and work together.

Susan says: "My objective in writing this book is not to provide a complete historical account. Rather, my hope is to create a greater awareness and understanding of the issues in order to encourage people to look beyond the surface, openly discuss the issues and seek solutions."



NEW BOOK LAUNCH INFORMATION



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Susan Popoola has established a successful career primarily as a Human Resources Capital Optimisation Specialist. She has worked on numerous private, public and voluntary sectors HR related projects. She owns her own Human Resources Consultancy, Conning Towers and its subsidiary, Leverage Points, which is focused on social and community research and development. Susan is also the author of *Touching the Heart of Milton Keynes*.

"Susan meticulously quotes her sources to prove that her opinions (of which she is not slow in putting forward) are bedded in thorough research yet she is mindful that the reader may not want to be bogged down in technicalities or mental gymnastics. This is an easy read, with self-contained chapters that can be dipped in & out of with consummate ease. It does not set itself up to be the last word on political economics, rather a social commentary on the world we see today as lived in contemporary Britain." Kriss Akabusi



NEW BOOK LAUNCH INFORMATION

Consequences: Diverse to Mosaic Britain by Susan Popoola £12 157 pages

ISBN 978-1-908691-08-8 Published by Filament Publishing Ltd

Available in paperback from all good bookshops, on Amazon Kindle and all other ebook formats. Published 21st May 2012.

Filament Publishing, 16 Croydon Road, Waddon, Croydon, Surrey, CR0 4PA.
Telephone 020 8688 2598 email info@filamentpublishing.com
www.filamentpublishing.com

Consequences

Diverse to Mosaic Britain?

Susan Popoola





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Croydon, Surrey, CR0 4PA UK
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© Susan Popoola 2012

Printed by Berforts Group - Stevenage and Hastings
Distributed by Gardners

ISBN 978-1-908691-08-8

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Contents

Dedication.....	3
Acknowledgements.....	5
21 st Century Britain.....	9
Introduction - What's Going On!.....	11
A Bit of Context - British Demographics.....	15
Nationalist Cry.....	23
BNP - Fringe Politics or Critical Viewpoints?.....	25
The Fear ... that Ultimately Leads to Confusion.....	29
British Heritage and Loss of Sovereignty.....	33
The Defecation of the Face and Values of Britain.....	37
Immigration and Immigrants.....	41
Foreign Languages, Islam ... But What About Me??.....	43
A Forced Marriage of Fact and Fallacy Leading to the Conclusion.....	47
The Legacy of an Empire.....	51
Original Immigrants.....	53
British Empire.....	55
North Americas and Australia.....	59
Asia.....	61
The Caribbean.....	65
Africa.....	67
To and From The Continent i.e. Europe.....	71
Globalisation - Two-edged Sword.....	73
So Let's Really And Honesty Talk About Race.....	79
Superior and Inferior Races.....	81
Institutional Racism.....	85
Is It Because I is Black? The Race Card.....	89
Living in Rome.....	93

Shades of Grey Mean It's Too Late to go Back.....	95
My Identity.....	97
Ok, Truly Mixed Race.....	101
Accepted Influences or Double Standards.....	105
A Richer Society: All Just Being.....	109
The Concept of Being.....	111
Identity.....	115
How Different are We After All?.....	119
The Need for a Reality Check.....	121
A Richer Society.....	127
The War for Talent.....	131
Social Capital in the Workplace.....	137
What About Them Youth?.....	141
To Conclude.....	145
In Addition - Don't Forget.....	149
About the Author.....	151
References.....	155

21st Century Britain

Introduction - What's Going On!

*We've got to find a way
To bring some lovin' ...*
Marvin Gaye, What's Going On

The end of the first decade of the 21st century (2010) in Britain was sadly marked by students demonstrating over Government proposals and the eventual legislation on increased tuition fees. Whether you agree with tuition fees or not is one thing. But something that I believe is undeniable is the fact that the demonstrations were a reflection of the wider frustrations which started growing across the populace in 2008 and 2009; with the recession which has been made more painful to many, not so just because of the loss of work, but more so by the bonuses awarded to the employees within the banking sector that irked the public who had paid for the bail out of banks; the scandal over the inappropriate expenses of elected representatives i.e. MPs, followed up the austerity measures and the threat of loss of public sector jobs which while many see as crucial to economic recovery, others see as a threat to recovery from the recession. The feelings of shock and horror were possibly best portrayed on the face of the wife of Prince Charles, Camilla, when their car was unfortunately attacked during the student demonstrations in December 2010.

Sadly the discontent continued into 2011 with further demonstrations against the way in which spending cuts were being made, organised by the Trades Union Congress (TUC) in March 2011 and the largest public sector strike in five years in June 2011. Worst still

were the August riots that started off in London which spread across different parts of the country. People questioned whether or not the riots were really about the shooting of a young black man by the police. That is open to debate. What is, however, unquestionable is that there are segments of society that are disengaged from the mainstream.

While some may believe that these are just passing incidents, there are many who look at the situation and are concerned that the levels of discontent are likely to be reflected across the country for years to come. The unfortunate thing is that for others discontent within this country is nothing new. They have been battling with it for years, if not decades. They feel undervalued, if not completely devalued, and question the future of the country and what it will be like in years to come for them and, most pertinently, for their children. It could be argued that they have a distorted understanding of the “what’s” and the “why’s”, but many people do not feel represented or listened to.

To be honest, I’ve always known this, but this was really and truly brought home to me during the summer of 2009. There were local elections that year and during the campaigning period I noticed that the British National Party (BNP) kept trending on Twitter¹. Reading the tweets (i.e. Twitter messages) I realised that most of the people writing messages were not writing to declare their support for the BNP and to encourage people to vote. Rather, they were typically cursing and threatening people

¹Just in case you don’t know, Twitter is a social media tool which enables people to provide short updates on what’s going on, what they’re thinking about, etc.

who may have been considering voting for the BNP, calling them racist and stating in no uncertain terms what they believed should happen to them.

I must say, I in no way support the BNP and what they or other similar political parties and groups stand for, but the comments that I read did not sit well with me. This led me to think that there is a need to stop and try to understand what it is that would lead a mass of people to support the BNP, before we all start to sharpen our knives, as, though sometimes racism is very blatant and straightforward, I believe that at times it's actually difficult to determine what is racism or racist and what is people's ignorance and/or lack of understanding, or even mere desperation for help.

The questions in my mind were heightened when I happened to come across a list of local BNP members. Normally, I wouldn't have even looked at it, but because of the online communications that I had seen, I was curious. I was, however, surprised to see the name of a lady that I recently lunched with on the list. I was most especially surprised because she had actually asked me to work with her on a project. I was therefore left wondering was she a racist who simply thought that for whatever reason I was ok to work with? Alternatively, was she a person who had aligned herself to the BNP, not because she shared its root values, but because she believed it was the political party that came closest to representing her wider interests?

I haven't seen this particularly lady since the day that I had lunch with her, but the thoughts and questions in my mind have led me

to the writing of this book. This book represents a journey to gain some understanding into what it is that leads everyday people to support the BNP, the National Front or other similar parties/groups, to understand how Britain has come to be such a diverse country and to look into how we ultimately need to live and work together.

My objective in writing this book is not to provide a complete historical account. Rather, my hope is to create a greater awareness and understanding of the issues in order to encourage people to look beyond the surface, openly discuss the issues and seek solutions.

A Bit of Context - British Demographics

*Living life is fun and we've just begun
To get our share of the world's delights
High hopes we have for the future
And our goal's in sight...
Sister Sledge, We Are Family*

Before I talk in more detail about groups such as the BNP and the typical issues and concerns that they and people who may feel inclined to support them have, I would like to set some further context by having a look at some of the characteristics that make up the British population.

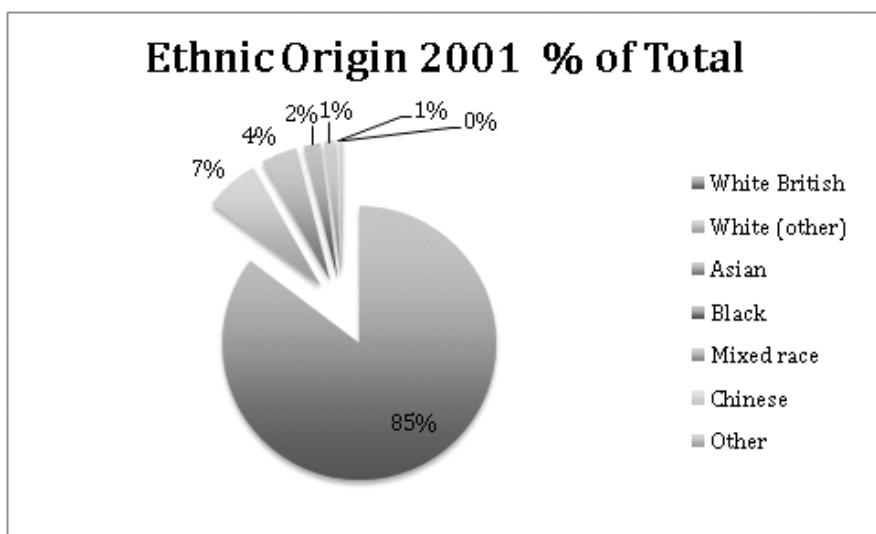
The characteristics that I have focused on relate to ethnic origin/race; social economics; religion and age. Though I may later make mention of gender, sexual orientation and disability, I have not focused on them as I do not see them as the key areas of concern to this particular study.

I believe that the most precise information that is available comes from the 2001 population Census. This is, however, now 10 years old and therefore quite dated, as anyone who visited or lived in Britain in 2001 and has subsequently come back or lives here now, would know: within that timeframe the face of Britain has changed significantly. Over time, the way in which people identify themselves has also changed. For these reasons I've also looked at estimates and projections of demographics from sources such as the Office for National Statistics.

On Census Day 2001, Britain had a population of 58,789,194 - an increase of 1.5 million people (2.5%) from 1991. At the same time, 2007 projections for the 2008 population were 61.4 million, rising over 10 million to 71.6 by the year 2033. Of the additional 10 million, 7 million were projected to be based on migrants and additional population arising through the new migrants.

The ethnic breakdown was as follows:

Ethnic Group	Percentage
White British	85.67%
White Irish	1.20%
White (other)	5.27%
Indian	1.80%
Pakistani	1.60%
Bangladeshi	0.50%
Other Asian (non-Chinese)	0.40%
Black Caribbean	1.00%
Black African	0.80%
Black (other)	0.20%
Mixed race	1.20%
Chinese	0.40%
Other	0.40%



Since 2001, the population was estimated to grow to over 54 million by the year 2007. In percentage terms, the White British of the population was predicted to change from 85% to 84%.

Ethnic Origin	Percentage
White British	84.26%
White Irish	1.08%
White (other)	3.39%
Indian	2.46%
Pakistani	1.70%
Bangladeshi	0.67%
Other Asian (non-Chinese)	0.64%
Black Caribbean	1.11%
Black African	1.36%
Black (other)	0.22%
Mixed race	1.65%
Chinese	0.76%
Other	0.71%

